

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 7 FEBRUARY 2007

BEST VALUE AND COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPROVEMENT AGENDA

Report by the Chief Executive

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek committee's agreement to the detailed improvement plans, which underpin the Council's Improvement Agenda resulting from the recent Best Value and Community Planning Audit.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Committee will recall that the Accounts Commission published its report on the findings arising from the East Ayrshire Audit of Best Value and Community Planning in September 2006.
- 2.2 The conclusions arising from the audit and the Council's proposed response to the Accounts Commission was considered at the Special Meeting of the Council on 20 September 2006. In summary, the Council agreed to accept in whole the findings arising from the audit, including the Improvement Agenda. The Council agreed further that a detailed report on the improvement plans be brought to a future meeting for consideration prior to submission to the Accounts Commission.
- 2.3 The Chief Executive wrote to the Secretary of the Accounts Commission on 29 September 2006, advising of the Council's decision in respect of these matters and confirming that it was the intention to submit this further, more detailed report on the improvement plans underpinning the Improvement Agenda to the Accounts Commission, once approved by the Council.
- 2.4 The Accounts Commission acknowledged receipt of the Council's response in a letter dated 19 October 2006, and this then subsequently formed the basis of a very constructive meeting with the Accounts Commission on 15 November 2006.

3. THE COUNCIL'S IMPROVEMENT PLANS

- 3.1 The important aspect of this stage of the Audit and Improvement Planning Agenda is the further development of proposals to underpin the broad outline improvement agenda approved by Council on 20 September 2006. Action owners in respect of each of the 14 Improvement Plans resulting from the Council's Improvement Agenda now provide the required further detail, demonstrating clearly that all actions are specific in their purpose and capable

of being monitored for achievement against stated timescales. The 14 detailed improvement plans are included as an appendix to this report.

3.2 A number of matters in respect of the Improvement Plans are worthy of specific note:-

- all actions have been assigned, as appropriate, against specific lead Chief Officers, thereby ensuring clear lines of responsibility;
- eight of the fourteen improvement agenda topics had previously been identified by the Council through its own Strategic Self-Assessment of Performance process conducted in September 2005, demonstrating the rigour of the Council's own assessment process and ensuring that particularly in these areas, the Council's proposals are well advanced;
- where appropriate, Officers have ensured continuing progress in aspects of the Council's Improvement Agenda following the 20 September 2006 meeting of Council; in this respect, this report is very much an update on current progress on taking forward the 14 improvement agenda areas;
- the detail included in the improvement plans responds to and reflects the relevant key issues identified within Audit Scotland's Priorities and Risks Framework, 2006/07 document;
- all improvement plans have been developed to an agreed corporate house style to ensure consistency;
- progress monitoring of implementation of the 14 improvement plans will be co-ordinated through the Corporate Management Team, utilising an agreed monitoring framework;
- an annual report on progress against the 14 improvement plans will be brought to Policy and Resources Committee, commencing around August 2007; and
- progress on implementing the improvement plans will be reviewed annually by Audit Scotland, emphasising the importance of action owners maintaining a clear audit trail of progress.

4. FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. East Ayrshire Council has a statutory duty under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, both to consider the Accounts Commission's Report on the Audit of the Council's Best Value and Community Planning Position and also to act on its findings. The detailed improvement plans set out in the appendix to this report demonstrate the Council's commitment to implement fully the findings and conclusions arising from the Commission's audit report.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The detailed actions set out within the appendix to this report demonstrate the Council's continued commitment to Best Value and continuous improvement, including the links to the East Ayrshire Community Plan.
- 5.2 The Council's Corporate Management Team has considered and approved the contents of this report.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Committee is asked to:-
- (i) consider and agree the detailed improvement plans contained within the appendix to this report;
 - (ii) agree to forward the improvement plans to the Accounts Commission for information and noting, and to assist the follow up review by External Audit;
 - (iii) agree to receive annual update reports in respect of the implementation of the improvement plans, commencing around August 2007; and
 - (iv) otherwise note the terms of this report.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. The Council's Best Value/Community Planning Audit Submission Document, January 2006.
2. East Ayrshire Council – The Audit of Best Value and Community Planning, prepared for the Accounts Commission by Audit Scotland, September 2006.
3. Audit Scotland Publication – Priorities and Risks Framework, November 2006.

Any person wishing to inspect the above background papers or seeking further information on this report should contact John Clayton, Head of Corporate Development and Communication (Tel: 01563 576165).

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: Head of Corporate Development and Communication

JF/MO'R/JC/AP

Fiona Lees
Chief Executive
17 January 2007

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL: BEST VALUE AND COMMUNITY PLANNING AUDIT, SEPTEMBER 2006
IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

No 1. Effective Use of Resources

Purpose of Action: Effective use of resources: ensure maximum efficiency across Council services, maintain accurate information on activity costs and redistribute resources in line with community plan priorities. Address recommendations arising from the current spending review. (Owner: Chief Executive)				
Action		Action Owner	Time / Target	Comments
1.1	Carry out a detailed review of GAE and grant.	EHF&AM	March 2007	Professor Arthur Midwinter commissioned to act as Independent Adviser on this review. The Strategic Review of the Revenue Budget Working Group chaired by the Chief Executive.
1.2	Carry out a fundamental review of council spending.		March 2007	All departments to contribute to the process and CMT to consider and agree final outcomes for all service programmes with spend of 10% or more above GAE assessments.
1.3	Integrate Service Planning and Budgeting processes, in line with core Council business and Community Plan priorities.		March 2008	Existing arrangements to be reviewed and strengthened.

December 2006

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL: BEST VALUE AND COMMUNITY PLANNING AUDIT, SEPTEMBER 2006

IMPROVEMENT PLAN

No 2. Performance Management

Purpose of Action: Consolidate the various elements currently used for managing performance to provide a more consistent and streamlined system, including: clearer links between service plans and community plan priorities, customer feedback and resources; and better utilisation and development of the Executive Directors' Performance Review process. (Owner: Chief Executive)			
Action	Action Owner	Time / Target	Comments
2.1 Review and add to the current portfolio of local service related performance indicators to reflect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance against strategic / service plan objectives. • Performance against operational objectives (monitoring of day to day management information systems). • Performance against meeting stakeholder expectations. 	Heads of Service supported by EHF&AM	Review to be completed by August 2007 for inclusion in "Performance Review Template for Executive Directors" in September 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A short-life working group led by the Executive Head of Finance will assist in taking this forward. • A root and branch review, at departmental level, of information provided by services is required. This will ensure services have identified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Their own stakeholders. ▪ The information needed by these stakeholders. ▪ The information needed to monitor / improve operational performance. • The design of more robust indicators will inform Action 2.2 below. • The results of this exercise will help populate the Public Performance Report (Improvement Agenda - High Priority - Action Point 3). • The progress against local performance indicators will feed into Section 2 of the Performance Review for Executive Directors.

Purpose of Action: Consolidate the various elements currently used for managing performance to provide a more consistent and streamlined system, including: clearer links between service plans and community plan priorities, customer feedback and resources; and better utilisation and development of the Executive Directors' Performance Review process. (Owner: Chief Executive)

Action	Action Owner	Time / Target	Comments
			All with a view to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improving operational management of individual services.• Communicating appropriate performance information to the Council's senior management.• Communicating appropriate performance information to stakeholders.• Securing further improvements in services provided.

Purpose of Action: Consolidate the various elements currently used for managing performance to provide a more consistent and streamlined system, including: clearer links between service plans and community plan priorities, customer feedback and resources; and better utilisation and development of the Executive Directors' Performance Review process. (Owner: Chief Executive)

	Action	Action Owner	Time / Target	Comments
2.2	<p>Further develop consistent individual Service Plans across the Council to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links to Community Plan objectives • Analysis of consultations with stakeholders • Statutory and local performance indicators (from 2.1 above) • Analysis of current and future service pressures • Public Performance Reporting 	<p>Heads of Service supported by Executive Head of Finance and Asset Management</p>	<p>Annually from October 2007 with in-year monitoring</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The closer correlation between a current service plan and previous results, customer consultation and future service related pressures, will ensure that services delivered more closely match stakeholder demand and available resources. • In line with 3-yearly Spending Review (commencing SR 2007), any significant shift in resource allocation to reflect new and changed priorities can only be considered in the first year of the Spending Review; only marginal shifts in resource allocation can be accommodated in years 2 and 3. This strategy is in line with the 4-yearly review of the Community Plan and its related thematic action plans. • Refer also to Action Plan No 1 – 'Effective Use of Resources', EHF reviewing links between Service Plans and the Council's budgeting process. <p>All with a view to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informing the annual budget setting process through planning/resource allocation for key priority areas. • Setting new measures for service related performance (baseline data). • Tracking resultant service delivery outcomes and impacts. • Improving the format and quality of service plans across the Council. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The results of this exercise will help populate the Public Performance Report (Improvement Agenda - High Priority - Action Point 3). • The progress against periodic plan objectives will feed into Section 5 of the Performance Review for Executive Directors.

Purpose of Action: Consolidate the various elements currently used for managing performance to provide a more consistent and streamlined system, including: clearer links between service plans and community plan priorities, customer feedback and resources; and better utilisation and development of the Executive Directors' Performance Review process. (Owner: Chief Executive)

	Action	Action Owner	Time / Target	Comments
2.3	Develop the content and utilisation of the Performance Review Template for Executive Directors.	Heads of Service supported by Executive Head of Finance and Asset Management	September 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This action will inform, and be informed by, the processes involved in 2.1 and 2.2 above. • The process will follow the outcomes from 2.1 above. • The current Performance Review Template will continue in its current form on the lead up to any re-design. • The development of the Performance Review Template may require the redesign of management information systems, probably supported in due course with a bespoke software solution. <p>All with a view to producing information that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflects departmental performance at both a strategic and operational level. • Is relevant to all parties. • Informs departmental service plans. • Becomes the focus of a corporate Council-wide integrated performance management framework. • Links to best practice at the national level. • Addresses the key areas in Audit Scotland's Priorities and Risks Framework document – 2006/07 and beyond. • Better informs and engages Elected Members in the process.

December 2006

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL: BEST VALUE AND COMMUNITY PLANNING AUDIT, SEPTEMBER 2006

IMPROVEMENT PLAN

No 3. Public Performance Reporting

Purpose of Action: Improve Public Performance Reporting throughout the Council in line with statutory guidance. (Owner: DCE/EDCS)				
Action		Action Owner	Time / Target	Comments
3.1	Undertake a mapping exercise in relation to current Public Performance Reporting throughout the Council.	EHF&AM	April 2007	<p>The Council already publishes an online list of 'how we intend to report' for the following year on its website. It is anticipated that this will form the basis of the scoping exercise as a way of determining what is already being done in relation to Public Performance Reporting throughout the Council.</p> <p>The existing Working Group on Public Performance Reporting will take this forward.</p> <p>All with a view to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing the scope and objective of current Public Performance Reporting at a Corporate, Departmental and Service level throughout the Council. • Informing what gaps may exist in terms of current practice.
3.2	Further develop and improve the Council's Public Performance Reporting in line with Statutory Guidance and Best Practice nationally.	EHF&AM	September 2007	<p>Officers in the Best Value and Performance Section - in consultation with the Officer's Working Group on Public Performance Reporting - will review the outcomes from the research, mapping exercise and consultation and, informed by this information, will begin the implementation of the Council's Strategy (as agreed at Policy and Resources Committee, 14 November 2006).</p> <p>All with a view to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the Council provides the right balance of information (What). • Ensuring we provide this information to the right people (Who).

Purpose of Action: Improve Public Performance Reporting throughout the Council in line with statutory guidance. (Owner: DCE/EDCS)

Action		Action Owner	Time / Target	Comments
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that we provide this information in the right format (How). • Ensuring that we provide this information at the right time (When).
3.3	Produce a Public Performance Reporting strategy for the Council.	EHF&AM	September 2007	The Strategy, and in particular the means by which this might be fully implemented, will form the basis of consultation which would involve Council Departments, Elected Members, Community Planning partners, East Ayrshire Residents and other relevant stakeholders. This will ensure that all relevant stakeholders have the opportunity to inform the review process.

December 2006

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL: BEST VALUE AND COMMUNITY PLANNING AUDIT, SEPTEMBER 2006

IMPROVEMENT PLAN

No 4. Equal Opportunities

Purpose of Action: Improve the accessibility of buildings for people with physical disabilities in line with statutory requirements and mainstream equal opportunities requirements more effectively into the Council's operational planning and performance management framework, ensuring that impacts are monitored. (Owner: DCE/EDCS)				
Action		Action / Owner	Time / Target	Comments
4.1	<p>Put in place comprehensive Asset Management arrangements and procedures to ensure access for everyone, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring each new build and altered building project is fully accessible. • Identifying any access issues and producing upgrading proposals as appropriate. • Making provision in the Capital Programme for upgrading work. 	EHF&AM	December 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DDA compliance is an integral part of the Asset Management Strategy Action Plan (Control Document) • This Action Plan will inform Asset Management Action Plan (No.6) and contribute to the Asset management Database. <p>All with a view to ensuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council's property portfolio is progressing towards being inclusive. • Each department produces, reviews and implements a schedule of upgrade priorities. • Senior management are regularly apprised of progress in accessibility issues. • Adequate budgetary resources are allocated for accessibility issues. • The number of Council buildings meeting the SPI definition increases annually. • Compliance with Regulations ensuring "the health, safety, welfare and convenience of persons in or about buildings" in terms of Statutory Legislation: Building (Scotland) Act 2003 and Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004.

Purpose of Action: Improve the accessibility of buildings for people with physical disabilities in line with statutory requirements and mainstream equal opportunities requirements more effectively into the Council's operational planning and performance management framework, ensuring that impacts are monitored. (Owner: DCE/EDCS)

Action		Action / Owner	Time / Target	Comments
	Further develop the Council's Equality and Diversity Action Plan by:	HP		
4.2	Preparing a Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan.		December 2006	Scheme submitted to and approved by the Policy and Resources Committee on 14 November 2006. The Disability Action Plan contains specific reference to elements which will contribute to the continuing mainstreaming of disability issues into operational planning and performance management frameworks.
4.3	Preparing Gender Equality Scheme and Action Plan.		April 2007	Currently being developed in advance of effective date of 1 April 2006. The Action Plan will deliver the mainstreaming of gender issues into operational planning and performance management frameworks.
4.4	Preparing a Corporate Training Plan.		April 2007	Draft approved by Chief Executive's Equality Strategy Group on 20 July 2006.
4.5	Putting in place appropriate equalities and diversity scrutiny arrangements.		December 2007	The Chief Executive established an Equalities Strategy Group in February 2006 to oversee equalities issues at officer level. Arrangements for elected member scrutiny will be examined as part of the scheduled review of political management structures.
4.6	Implementing Impact Assessments.		December 2007	This action will be implemented having regard to the requirements of the Disability Equality Duty and the Gender Equality Duty. An integrated impact assessment toolkit is currently being developed along with Community Planning partners.

December 2006

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL: BEST VALUE AND COMMUNITY PLANNING AUDIT, SEPTEMBER 2006
IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

No 5. Political and Management Structures

Purpose of Action: Review these in the context of the 2007 local authority elections and prepare appropriate member development programmes. (Owner: DCE/EDCS)				
Action		Action Owner	Time Target	Comments
5.1	Analyse past local election results to predict potential make up of Council/multi-member wards at 2007.	HDS	June 2006	Completed August 2006.
5.2	Review management structures to determine if fit for purpose/achieved aims.	CE	February 2007	Review carried out and recommendations made to Special Policy and Resources Committee on 23 November 2006 and Special Corporate Governance Committee on 28 November 2006. Policy and Resources recommendations ratified by Council at its meeting on 7 December 2006.
5.3	Develop a protocol for the operation of multi-member wards, emphasising the focus on addressing community needs.	HDS	March 2007	Desktop research and consultation carried out with a number of English Authorities. Contact maintained with the Improvement Service, who are conducting research on multi-member wards and have provided relevant information as appropriate. MSP protocol for dealing with constituency interests is also under review. Participation in discussions through SOLAR Best Practice Group in connection with the development of multi-member ward protocols.

Purpose of Action: Review these in the context of the 2007 local authority elections and prepare appropriate member development programmes. (Owner: DCE/EDCS)

	Action	Action Owner	Time Target	Comments
5.4	<p>Review role/function of each element of existing structures and review and analyse traditional and alternative decision making structures. Consider options for the management and governance of Council business taking into account a multi-member ward structure and consider governance implications of options.</p> <p>Key elements will cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political leadership. • Community leadership. • Scrutiny. 	HDS	March 2007	<p>Desktop research carried out on other decision making structures and scrutiny arrangements. Aim of the review is to provide for the Community Plan thematic objectives to be linked to the decision making structure and to provide for more open and systematic scrutiny. Three options being developed for consideration. Update report submitted to Council Meeting on 12 October 2006. Member/Officer Working Group established to progress review. First meeting held on 5 December 2006.</p>
5.5	<p>Put in place a Member Development Programmes for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ward Management Initiatives. • Member Training and Development Scheme. • Individual Member's Training Plan. 	HDS	August 2007	<p>Ward Management Initiatives - The Improvement Service pilot e-tracking facility is now in place within five pilot Authorities. Pilot project ongoing through December/January 2007 with feedback due in February 2007 with a view to the system being made available to other Authorities in March 2007. Participation through Scottish Members' Services Network Benchmarking Group ongoing. Demonstration on Clackmannanshire Council's and Aberdeen City Council's electronic systems for logging and tracking Members' enquiries provided to key staff within East Ayrshire Council. Further information obtained from Clackmannanshire Council.</p>

Purpose of Action: Review these in the context of the 2007 local authority elections and prepare appropriate member development programmes.
(Owner: DCE/EDCS)

	Action	Action Owner	Time Target	Comments
				<p>Member Training and Development Scheme - The Improvement Service is developing an induction programme. East Ayrshire Council, through Personnel (Training) and Administration, are assisting in development through a Working Group. It is anticipated that an induction pack will be made available to all Councillors in 2007. Further development ongoing on a series of training session materials on key topics to be developed. Contact being made with the Improvement Service in respect of the development of these initiatives.</p> <p>Individual Member's Training Plan - Elected Members Training Forum established. Have considered draft Councillors information pack; draft induction programme for Elected Members; and a draft Personal Development Plan for Elected Members. Further desktop research ongoing through internet on development programmes for Councillors, e.g. the "Idea Knowledge" website. The local review will take cognisance of the work being carried out by the Improvement Service.</p>

December 2006

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL: BEST VALUE AND COMMUNITY PLANNING AUDIT, SEPTEMBER 2006

IMPROVEMENT PLAN

No 6. Asset Management

Purpose of Action: Effectively implement the Corporate Asset Management Strategy and maintain system in accordance with good practice. (Owner: Chief Executive)				
Action		Action Owner	Time / Target	Comments
	In line with the Council's Asset Management Strategy develop a comprehensive Corporate Asset Management Plan for adoption by the Council by:	EHF&AM	March 2008	<p>The Corporate Asset Management Plan will continue from the existing Asset Management Strategy Action Plan (as agreed by P&R Committee 31 May 2006)</p> <p>A project timetable will be developed for all sub actions.</p> <p>Refer to Asset Management – Investment Option Appraisal report approved by P&R Committee on 8 February 2006.</p>
6.1	Reviewing property portfolios to identify future property requirements and resultant surplus assets for disposal.			
6.2	Establishing a Capital Investment Strategy.			
6.3	Establishing a Capital Receipts Strategy.			
6.4	Developing and introducing detailed project Option Appraisal procedures for use by service departments.			
6.5	Developing and introducing procedures for shared use/development with external partners/agencies.			
6.6	Developing and introducing procedures for Community Management of Council assets.			
6.7	Demonstrating, through the introduction of a training programme, clear roles for Elected Members and Officers, in relation to all matters connected with asset management.			
6.8	Implementing the Council's Corporate Asset Management I.T. system, which will provide information that will ensure effective and efficient use of the Council's assets.			

December 2006

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL: BEST VALUE AND COMMUNITY PLANNING AUDIT, SEPTEMBER 2006
IMPROVEMENT PLAN
No 7. Procurement

Purpose of Action: Achieve efficiencies through the application of modern procurement / purchasing methods, including e-procurement and more effective use of consortia arrangements. (Owner: DCE/EDCS)				
Action		Action Owner	Time Target	Comments
7.1	Analyse the outcome of the scoping and readiness assessment to determine budgetary impact and future timescales for implementation of an appropriate electronic procurement solution.	HLP&RS/SC	March 2007	EPS scheduled to go live on a stage 1 implementation in January 2007. Thereafter system to be rolled out on an agreed basis across the Council.
7.2	Review and analyse centralised purchasing records in respect of identified commodities to identify the extent and scope for potential efficiency savings.		March 2007	Partially implemented and continuing to progress.
7.3	Review and analyse report recommendations with a view to localised implementation of, and future participation in, the McClelland Programme.		December 2007	Subject to McClelland Programme timescales as identified by the Public Procurement Reform Board.
7.4	Review and identification of potential 'off contract' commodity/service spend to inform and direct future strategic procurement activity.		December 2007	Identification of any such 'off contract' spend will result in the initiation of an appropriate procurement exercise.
7.5	Review progress towards implementation of priority actions identified in the Council's existing Procurement Strategy document whilst ensuring that any such actions remain consistent with national and sectoral procurement developments.		October / November 2006, initially, completed by March 2008	Refer to the report to the Policy and Resources Committee on 14 November 2006.

December 2006

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL BEST VALUE AND COMMUNITY PLANNING AUDIT, SEPTEMBER 2006
IMPROVEMENT PLAN
No 8. Housing Repairs

Purpose of Action: Improve response times and the quality of of work carried out to address customer dissatisfaction (Owner: EDNS)				
Action		Action Owner	Time / Target	Comments
8.1	Submit report to Housing Committee on outcomes of review of joint officer and tenant representative group. Recommendations to improve housing repairs service approved May 2006.	HH	May 2006	Achieved
8.2	Establish a Cross Cutting Best Value Service Review of Property Maintenance services including housing repairs.		May 2006	Achieved - CMT May 2006
8.3	Appoint consultancy support to assist the work being undertaken in the Cross Cutting Best Value Service Review.		September 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principle approved by P&R Committee 19 September 2006 • Vanguard Ltd appointed to assist with the project - P&R Committee 19 September 2006 • SKG Associates appointed as Independent advisers - P&R Committee 14 November 2006
8.4	Project Plan designed to manage and implement an improved Housing Repairs Service.		March 2007	
8.5	Put in place "fit for purpose" IT solution needed to manage the Housing Repairs Service.		March 2007	Discussions underway with VT / Servitor to ensure robust IT solutions are in place to deliver service improvement actions.
8.6	Implement all recommendations arising from Cross Cutting Best Value Service Review of Property Maintenance.		September 2007	

December 2006

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL: BEST VALUE AND COMMUNITY PLANNING AUDIT, SEPTEMBER 2006
IMPROVEMENT PLAN
No 9. Sustainability

Purpose of Action: Better mainstream sustainable development across Council services to achieve improved outcomes. (Owner: EDNS)				
Action		Action Owner	Time / Target	Comments
	East Ayrshire Council have formed a Sustainable Development Working Group to co-ordinate the Council's approach to sustainability issues. The key areas for improvement identified are: Biodiversity, Waste Minimisation, Sustainable Procurement and Energy Efficiency. The Group's actions include:	EDNS	April 2008	The Working Group has met on 2 occasions (since August 2006) and has a forward meetings team. The work of the Sustainable Development Working Group has been governed by the Scottish Executive Sustainability Strategy, and the CoSLA Guidance on the Sustainability Strategy.
9.1	Undertake a comprehensive Sustainability Audit.		Feb 2007	The working group will report progress to the Corporate Management Team and then to the appropriate service Committee. All with a view to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeking to ensure that all Council policies, strategies and functions are developed in line with the sustainable development strategy.
9.2	Identify and extend areas of good practice from within and out-with the Council.		April 2007	
9.3	Produce a Sustainability Strategy.		April 2007	
9.4	Develop a sustainability action plan that links to the Community Plan, statutory guidance and local and national strategies. The action plan will have smart objectives and measurable outputs.		June 2007	
9.5	Effectively communicate the sustainability agenda within and out-with the Council.		March 2008	

December 2006

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL: BEST VALUE AND COMMUNITY PLANNING AUDIT, SEPTEMBER 2006

IMPROVEMENT PLAN

No 10. Challenge and Review

Purpose of Action: Increase the deployment of the best value review programme around cross cutting priorities and implement more systematic use of benchmarking and other comparative analyses. (Owner: Chief Executive)				
Action		Action Owner	Time / Target	Comments
10.1	<p>Review the implementation of the current 2004 – 2007 Best Value Service Review Programme for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress against programme. • Outcomes achieved. 	Chief Executive	Review to be completed by April 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinate review through Corporate Management Team • Executive Directors thereafter to report on achievement of programme and benefits secured to their respective Service Committees.
10.2	<p>Review the Council's current policy on Cross-Cutting Service Review as set out in August 2004 Guide to Best Value Review and Corporate Management Team report of 26/4/05.</p> <p>Priority areas identified by CMT as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Work Training and Development, linking to Corporate Support Personnel Service Unit. • The reviews for the Education Service and Corporate Personnel should be co-ordinated as regards personnel issues. <p>Give consideration to a major Council-wide cross-cutting cost based review to inform the Council's 2008/11 Revenue Budget process, all linked to SR 2007.</p>		December 2007	<p>The Council has agreed to concentrate primarily on a service unit based approach to review, post the Local Government in Scotland Act, 2003. Opportunities for reviews to reach beyond the boundaries of specific service units are currently determined by Executive Directors on a case by case basis. As the Council moves to a structure of 3 departments, the span of control of Executive Directors will widen further and should extend the opportunities for broader reviews of services.</p> <p>The strategic approach to reviewing the Council's Revenue Budget (Action Plan No 1), which is now being developed, will provide the opportunity for an incremental and measured approach to comprehensive revenue budget review for the Council.</p>

Purpose of Action: Increase the deployment of the best value review programme around cross cutting priorities and implement more systematic use of benchmarking and other comparative analyses. (Owner: Chief Executive)

	Action	Action Owner	Time / Target	Comments
10.3	Co-ordinate the development of a new Best Value Review Programme (2007 - 2010) covering all Council Services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Directors to Review Service Unit configurations in light of Council restructuring. • CMT to determine opportunities for cross departmental reviews. • CMT to consider and agree a revised Best Value Programme. 	All Executive Directors	December 2007	Development of new programme to be co-ordinated through the Corporate Management Team. Process to commence April 2007.
10.4	Extend the use of benchmarking and other performance related comparative analyses in Best Value Service Reviews conducted within the Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review current benchmarking / performance activity and ensure that this is implemented on a systematic basis in future reviews 		December 2007	Benchmarking is an essential requirement in all Best Value Service Reviews. Whilst benchmarking can often be difficult, the Council has to ensure that it forms a key element of each service review.

December 2006

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL: BEST VALUE AND COMMUNITY PLANNING AUDIT, SEPTEMBER 2006
IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

No 11. Scrutiny

Purpose of Action: Develop more systematic scrutiny arrangements to maximise member challenge of performance and decisions made. (Owner: DCE/EDCS)			
Action	Action Owner	Time/ Target	Comments
11.1	HDS	August 2007	<p>Review existing scrutiny arrangements and consider whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are fit for purpose following/as part of Review of Political Structures; and, • Consider further options for change and consider governance implications of any change.
11.2			<p>Review Elected Member development and support mechanisms to ensure maximisation of existing or revised arrangements.</p> <p>Member Training and Development Scheme - The Improvement Service is developing an induction programme. East Ayrshire Council, through Personnel (Training) and Administration, are assisting in development through a Working Group. It is anticipated that an induction pack will be made available to all Councillors in 2007. Further development ongoing on a series of training session materials on key topics to be developed. Contact being made with the Improvement Service in respect of the development of these initiatives.</p>

Purpose of Action: Develop more systematic scrutiny arrangements to maximise member challenge of performance and decisions made.
(Owner: DCE/EDCS)

	Action	Action Owner	Time/ Target	Comments
				Individual Members Training Plan - Elected Members Training Forum established. Have considered draft Councillors information pack; draft induction programme for Elected Members; and a draft Personal Development Plan for Elected Members. Further desktop research ongoing through internet on development programmes for Councillors, e.g. the "Idea Knowledge" website. The local review will take cognisance of the work being carried out by the Improvement Service.

December 2006

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL: BEST VALUE AND COMMUNITY PLANNING AUDIT, SEPTEMBER 2006
IMPROVEMENT PLAN
No 12. Human Resource Management**

Purpose of Action: develop the staff appraisal system around core competencies and develop a more robust approach to longer-term corporate-wide workforce planning. (Owner: DCE/EDCS)				
Action		Action owner	Time/Target	Comments
12.1	Develop a staff Competence and Appraisal Framework.	HP	March 2007	Draft Framework has been produced and will be considered by the Corporate Management Team in February 2007.
12.2	Implement the Competence and Appraisal Framework.		April 2007	Framework will be submitted to the Corporate Governance Committee in early 2007. Consultations with Trade Unions will follow, leading to the Framework being piloted in a number of services. The Competence Framework will support the East Ayrshire General Employee Review [EAGER] by providing points of reference for managers during the review process, in particular in identifying training and development interventions.
12.3	Implement Single Status Agreement.		April 2007	Formal Trade Union consultation period will commence in December 2006.
12.4	Prepare a Workforce Planning Strategy.		December 2007	<p>The Workforce Planning Strategy will address issues of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future human resources needs. • Succession Planning. • Employee development. • Recruitment and retention linked to the 2005/06 PRF work. • Pay and Grading Scheme including Market Premium Scheme. • The 2005 Staff Attitude Survey. • The Equalities Agenda. • The National Strategy for Shared Services. <p>Account will be taken of the work being carried out by the Improvement Service in relation to a Workforce Strategy for Local Government.</p>

December 2006

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL: BEST VALUE AND COMMUNITY PLANNING AUDIT, SEPTEMBER 2006

IMPROVEMENT PLAN

No 13. Trading and Competitiveness

Purpose of Action: effectively use review, benchmarking and option appraisal to improve competitiveness (Owner: DCE/EDCS)				
Action		Action Owner	Time Target	Comments
13.1	Review all existing trading services to determine whether existing arrangements provide best value.	EHF&AM in conjunction with attached schedule	Per attached Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review to link to the CIPFA/LASAAC Guidance Note - a Best Value approach to Trading Accounts Progress to be reviewed by Corporate Management Team Work on Neighbourhood Services and Educational & Social Services completed for 2006/07 budgets
13.2	Undertake a reconfiguration of budgets to reflect change in status where appropriate.		Following outcome of reviews – see attached schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on Neighbourhood Services completed
13.3	Put in place 'fit for purpose' management information arrangements for services for which Trading Operation status is not considered appropriate.		Following outcome of reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on Educational and Social Services to be finalised by December 2006

SCHEDULE OF ACTIONS

Department	Trading Operation	Position
Neighbourhood Services	Leisure Management	Trading classification ceased from April 2006
	Outdoor Amenities	Trading classification ceased from April 2006
	Refuse Collection	Trading classification ceased from April 2006
	Refuse Disposal	Trading classification ceased from April 2006
	Building and Works	Turnover etc. level requires operation under Trading operation guidelines
Educational and Social Services	Onsite Services - Catering Cleaning School Crossing Patrols	Trading classification ceased from April 2006
Development and Property Services	Vehicle Maintenance	The service serves all departments as well as external partners and a full service review is being carried out before deciding upon de-classification. Target date 1 April 2007
	Roads	The service has won a number of private sector contracts and a full service review of both client and contractor functions is being carried out before determining whether de-classification is the best solution. Earliest date 1 April 2007
	Street Lighting	Option to consolidate with Roads will be considered as part of comprehensive Service Review referred to above. Earliest date 1 April 2007.

December 2006

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL: BEST VALUE AND COMMUNITY PLANNING AUDIT, SEPTEMBER 2006

IMPROVEMENT PLAN

No 14. Risk Management

Purpose of Action: Further strengthen the effectiveness of controls for identifying risks and reporting on actions taken in response. (Owner: DCE/EDCS)				
Action		Action Owner	Time / Target	Comments
14.1	Review the existing Risk Management Strategy to ensure compliance with best practice.	EHF&AM	December 2006	Report to Corporate Governance Committee November 2006.
14.2	Promote the effective utilisation of the new electronic Risk Management System.		Review September 2007	System implemented and being populated by Departmental Risk management Groups.
14.3	Monitor and maintain the Council's effective partnership with our insurance provider.		During and following Insurance Contract tender discussions. New contract effective October 2007.	Procurement arrangements to ensure relationship issues are included in tender evaluation.
14.4	Report progress periodically to the Council's Risk and Audit Scrutiny Group.		Twice per year.	

December 2006