

# **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

## **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 30 SEPTEMBER 2004**

### **EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT**

#### **Report by the Chief Executive**

#### **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1** To advise members of action being taken in conjunction with other organizations to take advantage of the Scottish Executive's Efficient Government initiative.

#### **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** Efficient Government is the title given to the Scottish Executive's initiative to ensure that Scottish Government works efficiently and effectively. The main theme of the agenda is public sector organisations realising efficiencies by joining up in areas such as purchasing, accommodation and back-office functions.
- 2.2** In support of this the Executive has announced the establishment of a £60m Efficient Government Fund (EGF) which will be available on an "invest to save" basis. This will be directed to the introduction of proven ways of working to achieve benefits of scale from joining up through partnership arrangements.
- 2.3** It has been indicated that the EGF will normally only consider projects having a total value of £1m or more and involving two or more organisations. Whilst consideration will be given to anything that is "joined up" priority areas are procurement, support services and transactional processing.
- 2.4** Initial bids are invited by 29 October 2004 and will be indicative only with a more developed stage 2 application being required in early 2005.

#### **3 INITIAL ACTION**

- 3.1** The Chief Executive has had an initial discussion with counterparts from North Ayrshire, South Ayrshire and Dumfries and Galloway councils on the kinds of options which could be pursued and it is felt that there may be merit, in the first instance, in exploring whether opportunities exist in IT and/or Financial Services which may lead to enhanced capacity or contingency, sharing best practice or reducing costs.
- 3.2** It is proposed that officers be authorised to progress discussions in these and such other areas as may be identified and report back to this committee if viable options become apparent.

## **4 FINANCIAL/LLEGAL/POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None at this point.

## **5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members:

- 6.1 authorise officers to investigate opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness by collaborating with other organisations in line with the Scottish Executive's Efficient Government initiative;
- 6.2 authorise the Chief Executive to register any interest in EGF funding by the closing date and advise this committee at its next meeting; and
- 6.2 otherwise note the contents of this report.

**Fiona Lees**  
**Chief Executive**

AMcP/JP  
13 September 2004

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 1. Letter from Scottish Executive date 2 September 2004

Members wishing further information should contact Alex McPhee, Executive Head of Finance Tel: (01563) 576300.