

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

SOUTHERN LOCAL PLANNING COMMITTEE - 17 JUNE 2005

VENUES FOR MEETINGS OF SOUTHERN LOCAL PLANNING COMMITTEE: AUGUST TO DECEMBER 2005

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

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To advise of the dates on which meetings of the Local Planning Committee are scheduled to take place during the period August to December 2005 and to invite the Committee to determine the venues at which each of these meetings should be held.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** East Ayrshire Council at its meeting held on 14 October 2004 approved the Calendar of Committee Meetings for the period January to December 2005. The calendar includes dates for meetings of this Local Planning Committee.
- 2.2** At the meeting of the Local Planning Committee held on 3 December 2004, it was agreed that, for a trial period of six months beginning in January 2005, venues be determined on a rota basis. The Committee also agreed the venues for meetings during the trial period.
- 2.3** Prior to the trial period, the venue for each Local Planning Committee meeting was determined by the Chair, following advice from the Administrative Officer, and on the basis of a combination of the geographical spread of the application sites and the number of applicants/objectors to be invited to the meeting. The trial rota arrangements were instigated in view of some concerns which have been expressed that this approach had meant that the Local Planning Committee did not visit certain communities within its area on a regular basis or indeed, at all.

3. OUTCOME OF TRIAL PERIOD

- 3.1** The rota arrangement, if continued, will ensure that the Local Planning Committee visits all of the communities within its area on a regular basis, over time. Due to the range of variable factors, it is difficult to provide a detailed analysis of the impact of the rota arrangement on the attendance of applicants and objectors at meetings, whether as participants in a Hearing process, or otherwise. However, in general terms, no particular difficulties have been encountered with the rota arrangements in this regard and while the Administration Section is aware of some comments made by objectors in respect of the distance which they would have to travel to attend the meeting of the Local Planning Committee, this is not to say that the situation would have been significantly different for these particular objectors were the

meeting venues to have been determined in some way other than a rota arrangement.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1** In practical terms, there is nothing to indicate that the continuation of a rota arrangement for determining meeting venues would, overall, have a significant impact on the attendance of applicants and objectors at Local Planning Committee meetings, which must be the main factor to be taken into account by the Committee in considering this report.
- 4.2** Meetings of the Local Planning Committee are open to the general public and, while the numbers of the general public who attend Local Planning Committees is very small, the view could be taken that the rota arrangement would at least more easily afford the public from the different communities throughout the area the opportunity to attend.
- 4.3** Members of the Committee will have their own views on how the rota system impacts upon their own particular arrangements and time.
- 4.4** It is suggested that there is very little difference between meeting venues being determined on a rota basis or on a meeting by meeting basis by the Chair, however, in respect of the latter option, this would allow a greater degree of flexibility to arrange meetings at venues which have regard to the location of application sites and likely attendance by applicants and objectors.

5. MEETINGS PROGRAMME FOR PERIOD AUGUST TO DECEMBER 2005

- 5.1** The dates fixed for meetings of the Southern Local Planning Committee for the period August to December 2005 are as undernoted. Should the Committee wish to continue with the rota arrangements, it is suggested that venues for the meetings concerned be as shown against each date.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>VENUE</u>
Friday 12 August 2005	Drongan Community Centre
Friday 9 September 2005	New Cumnock Community Centre
Friday 7 October 2005	Rankinston Community Centre
Friday 4 November 2005	Ochiltree Community Centre
Friday 2 December 2005	Dalrymple Community Centre

- 5.2** The venues referred to above are suggested as being suitable in terms of likely availability and physical size and layout while at the same time attempts have been made to ensure the meetings would take place at venues which represent a good geographical spread throughout the Local Planning Committee's area. Notwithstanding this, and taking account of recent meeting venues, the allocation of meeting venues to meeting dates has been determined on a random basis.

6. FINANCIAL/LEGAL/POLICY IMPLICATIONS - Nil.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-

- (i) note the dates fixed for the meetings of the Committee for the period August to December 2005, as detailed within paragraph 5.1 above; and
- (ii) consider and determine venues for the meetings of the Committee which will take place during the period in question taking account of the information provided in the report.

Elizabeth Morton
Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

SN/SM
30 May 2005

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. East Ayrshire Council Meetings Calendar January to December 2005.

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers relative to this report should contact Stuart Nelson, Administrative Officer on Tel No (01563) 576151. Any person wishing further information on this report should contact Bill Walkinshaw, Administration Manager on Tel No (01563) 576135.

Implementation Officer: Stuart Nelson, Administrative Officer