



SIP TRANSITION/INTEGRATION UPDATE

Board Meeting – 23 June 2004

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the Board with an update in respect of the Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) transition/integration with Community Planning.

2. ACTION PLAN UPDATE

- 2.1 The guidance in relation to integrating Social Inclusion Partnerships (SIPs) with Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) was issued at the end of August 2003, considered by the Board at its meeting on 18 September 2003 and at a half-day planning session in December 2003. The guidance sets out the key principles and an outline of the process of integrating SIPs within the CPP framework. In broad terms, there will be a three stage integration process as follows:

- an assessment of readiness of CPPs to integrate SIPs into the community planning framework; with the production of a Statement of Readiness;
- resource allocation, based on the new 2004 Index of Deprivation (to be published in June 2004), and
- the development of a Regeneration Outcome Agreement (ROA), to provide a strategic framework that links national and local priorities for tackling disadvantage with spend and activities; draft by September 2004, with final ROA required by December 2004.

- 2.2 The overall integration process must be completed by 31 March 2005.

- 2.3 To ensure the smooth integration of the Coalfield Area SIP to the local Community Planning process the SIP Board at its last meeting approved an Action Plan. An update on progress against the agreed actions is presented at Appendix 1.

3. STATEMENT OF READINESS

- 3.1 The purpose of the Statement of Readiness is to clearly demonstrate that Community Planning Partners are ready to integrate SIP structures and resources into the community planning framework.

- 3.2 In this document, Community Planning Partners are required to demonstrate that real and tangible progress in being made against the following criteria:

- focus on disadvantage;
- partnership working;
- community engagement; and
- financial, performance and outcome monitoring.

3.3 Attached at Appendix 2 is the draft Statement to Readiness in respect of the transition/integration of the SIP to community planning in East Ayrshire.

3.4 The draft Statement has been approved by all of the Community Planning Core Partners and the SIP Implementation Group and is presented to the Board for consideration and endorsement.

3.5 Once endorsed, the Statement will be submitted to Communities Scotland for processing.

4. PARTNERSHIP ASSESSMENT SCORECARD

4.1 As reported at the last meeting, Communities Scotland has provided a Partnership Assessment Scorecard to assist with the integration process.

4.2 Communities Scotland is currently working to 'web enable' the Scorecard and once available the Scorecard will be issued to SIP Board members and the Coalfield Communities Federation to complete over the summer period.

4.3 The results of this exercise will be considered at the planned 'Working Together Learning Together' session in August 2004.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 The Board is asked to:

- i) note the progress in respect of the SIP transition/integration, as detailed at Appendix 1;
- ii) endorse the draft Statement of Readiness, detailed at Appendix 2, subject to minor textual changes;
- iii) note the timescale for the distribution and completion of the Partnership Assessment Scorecard; and
- iv) otherwise, note the content of the report.

Gwen Barker
Community Planning and Partnership Manager
14 June 2004

East Ayrshire Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) Transition Action Plan

Action	Task	Timescale	Comment
SIP Transition 'Awareness Raising'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise a half-day seminar to discuss the implications of the guidance issued by Communities Scotland and the Scottish Executive. 	4 December 2003	Seminar convened – full SIP Board participation.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise a dedicated briefing session for the Coalfield Communities Federation. 	12 February 2004	Briefing session convened – full participation of CCF.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise a seminar for Elected Members on the SIP transition to Community Planning. 	1 April 2004	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare a 'Quick Word About' the SIP Transition. 	1 April 2004	Copies to be issued at SIP Board.
SIP Transition 'Awareness Raising'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare briefing papers on the SIP Transition for the Community Planning Joint Officers' Group. 	6 October 2003	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare briefing papers on the SIP Transition for the SIP Board. 	18 September 2003 11 March 2004	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare briefing paper on the SIP Transition for the Community Planning Core Partners' Group. 	26 April 2004	
SIP Transition Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Action Plan for consideration/endorsement by the SIP Board. 	11 March 2004	Action plan developed – SIP Board endorsement gained 11 March 2004.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare paper on staff realignment to ensure appropriate staff structure for integration. 	11 March 2004	Paper presented to SIP Board 11 March 2004. Recommendations currently being implemented.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Action Plan is a standing item on SIP Board and Community Planning Joint Officers' Group meetings. 	Ongoing	Agreement reached with JOG and SIP to keep Action Plan as standing item at meetings.

Action	Task	Timescale	Comment
Statement of Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse the 'Partnership Self Assessment' and if appropriate implement. 	March/April 2004	Implementation summer 2004, once 'web-enabled'.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft the 'Statement of Readiness' for consideration – sign off. 	April/May 2004	Draft statement signed off by all Community Planning Core Partners. Presented to SIP Board 23 June 2004 for endorsement.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit 'Statement of Readiness' to Communities Scotland. 	Late Spring 2004	Target date for submission end June 2004.
Community, Project, Partner Agency and Private Sector Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise a series of participative workshops to identify future priorities. 	Summer 2004	29 July 2004– Full day: 2 sessions Railway Hotel, Auchinleck. 4 August 2004 – Evening Cumnock Town Hall.
Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out a comparative analysis of the new deprivation index. 	Summer 2004	Due to be issued by the Scottish Executive 14 June 2004.
SIP Transition Working Together/Learning Together Planning Session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise a two day 'Working Together/Learning Together' session to consider the findings of the transition consultation exercise. 	September / October 2004	Proposed date 24 August 2004. All SIP Board members and Joint Officers' Group.
Regeneration Outcome Agreement (ROA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare draft ROA for consideration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Community Planning Joint Officers' Group. ➤ SIP Board. 	September 2004 23 September 2004	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit ROA to Communities Scotland for sign off. 	December 2004	
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare implementation plan linked to ROA for consideration/sign off. 	Jan/Feb 2005	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure effective implementation. 	March 2005	

Italics – represent actions completed.

Community Planning in East Ayrshire

Statement of Readiness

June 2004

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INTRODUCTION

This Statement of Readiness demonstrates the readiness of the Partners in East Ayrshire to integrate the East Ayrshire Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) into the community planning process and close the gap between disadvantaged communities and other communities in the local authority area.

In East Ayrshire, there is a longstanding commitment to and experience of regeneration and addressing disadvantage. In addition, there is a solid foundation of partnership working and particularly of involving communities in identifying and addressing the issues and problems that they face. Much has already been achieved in East Ayrshire. However, it is recognised that much still requires to be done to realise our vision that:

“East Ayrshire will be a place with strong, vibrant communities where everyone has a good quality of life and access to opportunities, choices and high quality services which are sustainable, accessible and meet people’s needs.”

The East Ayrshire Community Plan is a blueprint for how we will improve the lives of people living in East Ayrshire from 2003 to 2015. The Plan has been agreed as the sovereign planning document for the East Ayrshire area by all of the partners. It builds on the strengths of the area, its people and the partners to tackle the problems that communities are facing. Community planning offers us the opportunity to build on the experience and success of the SIP, and our local assets and tackle the challenges facing East Ayrshire.

In this submission, the Community Planning Partners in East Ayrshire demonstrate the progress already made against the following criteria:

- Focus on disadvantage
- Partnership working
- Community engagement
- Financial, performance and outcome monitoring.

In addition, the submission highlights how these criteria will continue to be progressed through Community Planning in East Ayrshire.

FOCUS ON DISADVANTAGE

Since its inception in 1999, the SIP has had a clear focus on disadvantage, addressing the consequences of the erosion of the employment base within the Coalfield Area with the demise of coal mining, which left communities with high unemployment levels, a low skills base, low income and poor environmental conditions. These issues in turn gave rise to a range of social problems, including poor health, low educational attainment, benefit dependency, high crime levels, poverty of aspiration and migration of the young and more able people out of the

area. Within this context, the key priorities for those living in the SIP area were identified as:

- People into work
- Positive health opportunities
- Community learning
- Living in a quality environment
- Community participation.

The independent evaluation of the SIP found that the adopted strategy was appropriate to the needs of the area and that unemployment in the Coalfield Area is now only marginally worse than East Ayrshire as a whole. Although there has been some stabilisation of economic decline and some evidence of employment and population coming back into balance, the social consequences of economic decline are still being felt. In the longer term, the integration of the SIP into the community planning process offers an opportunity to focus mainstream funds to a greater extent on the problems of the area and to reprioritise resources into areas of disadvantage in general.

This commitment to tackling disadvantage has been carried forward into Community Planning in East Ayrshire, as is clearly demonstrated by the Plan's Guiding Principles, particularly those of social justice and social inclusion, which demonstrate our commitment to the principles of equality and to a future where everyone matters.

We recognise that much work still requires to be done to address the issues highlighted above in the Coalfield Area and in East Ayrshire as a whole. The Partnership continues to progress these issues in line with the themes of the East Ayrshire Community Plan. These are:

- Promoting community learning
- Improving opportunities
- Improving community safety
- Improving health
- Eliminating poverty
- Improving the environment.

In addition to continuing to address the disadvantage that is still experienced in many of the communities in the Coalfield Area, it is recognised that there are other communities within East Ayrshire facing similar issues. Consequently, a successful bid was made for Better Neighbourhood Services Funding (BNSF) for Shortlees/Riccarton and Northwest Kilmarnock), in recognition of the fact that they are highlighted in the Index of Deprivation as being in the top one hundred most deprived communities in Scotland. The Community Planning Partners will, therefore, also continue to build on the significant progress already made within these communities.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

East Ayrshire has a history of partnership working, both at strategic and local level, and can already point to many successes from taking this approach. The recent

independent evaluation of the SIP, commissioned by Communities Scotland, highlighted partnership working as one of the major strengths of the SIP and noted the high level of involvement of key decision makers from the main partner agencies.

The fact that these key partners, with others, are represented within the community planning structures augurs well for Community Planning in East Ayrshire. The trust and effective working practices already developed through participation on the SIP Board over a number of years have resulted in effective structures being put in place quickly to take community planning forward and will facilitate the SIP transition/integration with Community Planning.

In all of this, the Partnership's drive to continue with its nationally acclaimed strategy for co-location of public services remains a priority area. An outstanding example of this is our Dalmellington Area Centre, housing Council, NHS and Police services in one building, enabling a significantly increased uptake of public services amongst disadvantaged people in the community. We have other examples of co-located services and others planned for roll-out.

Clearly articulated in the Community Plan, as a guiding principle, is a commitment to joint working and involving people. The following structures have been put in place to take community planning forward and to ensure the widest and most appropriate involvement of all sectors.

Core Community Planning Partners

The core Community Planning Partners in East Ayrshire are:

- The Community
- East Ayrshire Council
- Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire
- NHS Ayrshire and Arran
- Strathclyde Police
- Strathclyde Fire Brigade
- Communities Scotland
- Strathclyde Passenger Transport Authority

In addition, a range of local and national partners are involved in the Community Plan Action Plan Working Groups in taking forward initiatives and programmes to improve the quality of life of the people who live and work in East Ayrshire.

Community Planning Process

Within East Ayrshire, the community planning process is being taken forward through:

- the Core Partners' Group, which sets the strategic direction at the highest level;
- the Joint Officers' Group, which agrees operational activity and ensures the implementation of the Action Plans; and

- the Action Plan Working Groups, which prepare and implement action plans to address the priorities of the Community Plan and ensure that progress is being made within identified timescales.

Local Partnerships

At a local level, the SIP Board and the East Ayrshire North Social Inclusion Initiative Board (North Board) have been working to address the social inclusion agenda throughout the authority. Both Boards will be redesignated as Local Community Planning Forums. They will be the main focus of local activity in relation to setting priorities and ensuring that initiatives and projects, developed to address them, are driven forward.

Community Planning and Partnership Unit

The Community Planning and Partnership Unit has been established within the Council to ensure effective operating systems for community planning; service the Community Planning Core Partners' and Joint Officers' Groups; take forward the actions which arise from these groups; and co-ordinate activity in relation to awareness raising, monitoring and evaluation, and community engagement in the overall process. Already the work of the Unit has been developed and strengthened by the ten-month secondment of an officer from Strathclyde Police locally. It is anticipated that over time, further secondments from the Police and other partner agencies will significantly enhance partnership working.

Review of Structures

The systems and structures that have been established have been successful to date. This is, however, a period of transition and over the coming months, as the Regeneration Outcome Agreement (ROA) is being developed, structures and priorities will be reviewed and refined to ensure the success of community planning as a framework to regenerate disadvantaged communities and improve the quality of life for all those who live and work in East Ayrshire. The Partnership is also committed to ensuring effective community participation at every level.

Discussions are ongoing in respect of rationalising planning structures and ensuring effective links between other plans and strategies and the Community Plan, the overarching and sovereign planning framework for East Ayrshire. In this regard, for example, discussions are currently taking place among Community Planning Partners at a strategic level and with local communities in respect of setting the Community Health Partnership within the community planning framework. The steps being taken locally to realign the general planning agenda are covered later in the Statement in the 'Capacity Building and Support Mechanisms' section.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Partners in East Ayrshire have an unshakeable commitment to community engagement and this has been one of the key findings of the independent SIP Evaluation.

“The strength and depth of community engagement is the single biggest achievement of East Ayrshire Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership”.

“Community representatives feel that their influence on decision making has grown and developed and that they are genuine partners”.

“The community has a voice and uses it”.

As these quotes indicate, we already have a good track record and a wealth of experience in community engagement on which we can build. We are committed to listening to people and involving them in the decisions that affect them. We recognise that to bring about real and lasting change, the people and communities of East Ayrshire must be at the heart of the community planning process, and must be fully involved and represented in decision making structures.

We will build on and improve the systems, which we already have in place in the SIP and in the partner agencies to ensure that people know what is happening and, more importantly, are enabled and supported to play an active part in achieving the shared vision for East Ayrshire.

Community Consultation

The Community Planning Core Partners’ Group has given a commitment to carrying out, where possible, joint community consultation. The following proposals for community consultation are being considered.

Community Consultation		
Proposal	Purpose/Outcome	Timescale
Commission of a Community Planning Residents/ Survey	Increased understanding of local priorities and views on public service provision/satisfaction	Four yearly from early 2005
Establishment of a representative Residents’ Panel and geographic focus groups	Increased understanding of residents’ views and increased involvement of communities in the planning and development of services	Routinely, minimum of twice per year
Establishment of a joint annual consultation plan; a screening group; and operating arrangements linked to Public Performance Reporting arrangements	Effective co-ordination of community consultation across agencies and attainment of Best value	As soon as possible
Establishment of a citizens’ forum/question time	To receive feedback on existing plans and activities and identify new priorities	Every two years at the mid-point of the Action Plan cycle

Community Engagement

The need to move from consultation to effective engagement and participation has been recognised by Community Planning Partners from the outset. To ensure effective and routine engagement of the community in the overall community planning process, it is proposed that existing structures and systems be utilised, namely:

- local committees
- equality forums
- partnership groups
- Dialogue Youth, as the main means of involving and consulting young people
- community councils
- community associations, and
- community and voluntary groups.

It is further proposed that the SIP Board and the North Board be redesignated as Local Community Planning Forums, each underpinned by a federation of community groups. In the SIP area this would be the Coalfield Communities Federation (CCF), which already plays a key role in community engagement. It brings together and articulates the views of each of the communities and settlements, and creates a representative structure for community involvement in the SIP Board. Activity is underway in the north of the Authority to replicate this structure to ensure that the work of the proposed Local Community Planning Forum in the north is also grounded in the communities that it will serve.

There is an unshakeable commitment at all levels to ensuring that the framework for community consultation and engagement is fit for purpose and meets local need. A series of workshops, which have been planned to run over the summer months of 2004, to involve communities in the SIP transition and in setting priorities for the ROA, will also allow us to seek the views of the people who live in these communities on how they would wish to be involved in the process.

In addition, the experience of agreeing a Local Outcome Agreement with the BNSF Pathfinder, and the successful engagement of local people in the process and ongoing review, give us confidence in our ability to truly engage the community in the community planning process over time.

Capacity Building and Support Mechanisms

The Scottish Executive's guidance for Community Learning and Development (CLD), "**Working and Learning Together to Build Stronger Communities**", articulates much of what we have already proposed in terms of capacity building for communities, and the staff of the partner agencies, to ensure that they are able to participate in achieving the vision for East Ayrshire through community planning.

Within the East Ayrshire context, it is our belief that, with slight modification, the Promoting Community Learning Action Plan and the local Community Learning Plans fulfil the requirements for both the Community Learning and Development Strategy and the Action Plans. These will be reviewed to encompass the CLD

guidance and will be underpinned by the existing strong commitment by the Community Planning Partners to the effective involvement and participation of communities in the community planning process.

An **Aspirational Learning Programme**, utilising the materials of the Pacific Institute, operates successfully in the SIP with community representatives and participants in initiatives addressing addiction and unemployment, to build confidence and self-esteem, raise aspirations and effect attitudinal and cultural change. It promotes new ways of thinking and works on the premise that in order 'to do differently we need to think differently'. It is our intention to pilot this material with staff to build their capacity to work in new ways together and with communities to engage them effectively in the community planning process.

We are aware of the work currently being undertaken to develop and test "**Standards for Community Engagement**". Although we are not involved in piloting the draft standards, we already see them as highlighting good practice and will aim to ensure that we achieve these standards as a minimum.

Key to the effective empowerment of community representatives and ensuring their fullest involvement in the SIP has been access to Information Communication Technology, including e-mail and the Internet, and the provision of a budget for expenses, encompassing, travelling, loss of earnings, subsistence and childcare. Our experience and feedback from community representatives has emphasised that this provision is critical to ensuring that they have the capacity to fully engage in the process.

The Business Community

It is recognised that the role of the private sector in the SIP has been limited to that of a partner in the various employment initiatives and on the management committees of the various projects. A working group, comprising members from the Ayrshire Economic Forum, the Federation of Small Businesses, Ayrshire and Arran Tourist Board, Ayrshire Business in the Community, Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire and the Council, has been established to ensure the engagement of the business community in the community planning process and to develop a framework for ongoing engagement.

Community Engagement in the Integration Process

To ensure the widest possible engagement in the integration process an Action Plan has been developed, which includes:

- the organisation of a half-day seminar for the SIP Board (completed);
- the organisation of a briefing session for the Coalfield Communities Federation (completed);
- the preparation of briefing papers for the Core Partners' Group, the Joint Officers' Group and Elected Members (completed);
- the organisation of a series of participative workshops to identify future priorities, which will involve:

- communities
 - SIP projects
 - partner agencies
 - the private sector; and
- the organisation of a two-day Working Together Learning Together session for the SIP Board and Community Planning Partners to consider the findings of the transition consultation exercise.

FINANCIAL, PERFORMANCE AND OUTCOME MONITORING

Continuous improvement and Best Value are guiding principles within our Community Plan. It is essential that we learn from our experiences of joint working and build on our successes. We must be able to show that the services provided have contributed to a better quality of life for everyone living and working in East Ayrshire. We have set out our vision for East Ayrshire from 2003 to 2015. Each priority has an agreed Action Plan which we will review every four years. We will show that we have made progress on the Action Plans and our planned outcomes by producing public performance reports and detailing our achievements against targets.

FINANCIAL MONITORING

Rigorous and effective systems are already in place for the management and administration of SIP funds. The Community Planning Partners will nominate a grant recipient in respect of future funding and these robust and transparent arrangements will be replicated in respect of future regeneration funding. Systems will be developed to ensure that resources are managed and targeted to maximise the effectiveness of spend in terms of achieving the agreed outcomes of the Community Plan.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

The community planning process requires to be monitored and subsequently evaluated on a number of levels, namely:

- the partnership, to ensure the effectiveness of joint working;
- the Community Plan Action Plans, to ensure that progress is being made against targets;
- the Community Plan itself, to ensure that it is making a difference over time and measuring progress towards achieving the overall vision; and
- initiatives jointly funded by local and national partners.

Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group

A multi-agency, multi-disciplinary working group has been established to ensure that robust systems are in place to measure progress towards meeting the targets identified in the Action Plans over time.

In addition, this group is preparing a standard toolkit, which will be utilised to monitor and evaluate jointly funded initiatives and will act as a reference group to ensure the appropriate monitoring and evaluation of such initiatives.

Research and Information Group

This is also a multi-agency, multi-disciplinary working group, which has been established to collate the necessary statistical information and identify performance indicators to ensure that progress is being made towards achieving the overall outcomes and the vision of the Community Plan. By comparing these over time with the baseline position, we will know whether we are making a real difference.

This group will also facilitate the dissemination and sharing of data to ensure that the Community Plan is being monitored and evaluated against a robust data set.

Performance Reporting

Progress will be reported to the community on an ongoing basis through regular and routine performance reports.

The Effectiveness of Partnership Working

It is our intention to utilise the 'Partnership Assessment Scorecard' developed by Rocket Science for Communities Scotland to assess our readiness to integrate the SIP and Community Planning during the transition period and develop an Action Plan for areas where results indicate that action requires to be taken.

Should this tool prove to be effective, initial discussions with Rocket Science have indicated that, following the transition of the SIP to Community Planning, it could be tailored to set a baseline for partnership working in East Ayrshire and to monitor the effectiveness of partnership processes and structures at regular intervals from a number of perspectives, including the Core Partners' Group, the Joint Officers' Group, the community and operational staff.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Community Planning Partners believe that this submission clearly demonstrates their readiness to integrate the SIP into the community planning process.

The Statement of Readiness demonstrates:

- a commitment to tackling disadvantage and closing the opportunity gap;
- robust partnership structures and processes for effective partnership working at both a strategic and a local level;
- an effective framework for community engagement, which will build on the recognised success of the partners in the SIP, and continue to develop the capacity of those who live in our communities to participate in and influence decision making; and
- a systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating partnership working, the progress being made through the activity in the Action Plans and the progress over the longer term towards meeting the outcomes and realising the vision in the Community Plan over its twelve-year lifespan.

14 June 2004

DRAFT