

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE – 10TH APRIL 2002

CULTURAL STRATEGY FOR EAST AYRSHIRE

Report by Director of Community Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of the progress being made in developing a Cultural Strategy for East Ayrshire to replace the existing Leisure Strategy produced in 1997.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council's current Leisure Strategy has underpinned the development of Leisure Services since 1997. However, the many significant changes that have taken place since the document's publication have necessitated a thorough review of the strategy.
- 2.2 Internally there have been changes in the departmental structure, budget realignments and the corporate planning process. Externally, the establishment of the Scottish Executive, the availability of targeted external funding opportunities and the increasing importance of community involvement and partnership working, have all altered the Council approach to the delivery of leisure services.

3. CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 Cultural Services is now the term increasingly used to describe Leisure Services, and this was reflected in the Scottish Executive's document 'Creating Our Future ... Minding our Past', Scotland's National Cultural Strategy.
- 3.2 The National Cultural Strategy requires a response from Local Authorities and guidelines are currently being developed to clarify Council's roles in implementing the national strategy. This guidance will be taken into account in the Council's Cultural Strategy.
- 3.3 The new strategy will have several functions:-
- To define our interpretation of culture and its importance to the delivery of the Council's objectives
 - To identify strengths and weaknesses in current cultural provision
 - To ensure that the roles of external providers are recognised and supported
 - To draw together the elements of the Council's cultural provision
 - To establish, via consultation, priorities for the development of cultural services in the future

- To underpin decisions on the future funding and development of cultural services
- To form the basis for future Best Value Service reviews of Leisure Services

3.4 The process of developing the Cultural Strategy for East Ayrshire is in its initial stages. A consultation document is currently being developed to stimulate discussion with partners, community groups and within the Council. This document will emphasise the role of Cultural Services in addressing the Council's priorities and will point to achievements made since 1996. At this stage it is envisaged that several focus groups will be set up to examine key areas and the work of these groups will inform the new strategy.

3.5 From the outset it should be made clear that the Cultural Strategy for East Ayrshire is not just about Council Services but will also encompass the work of other providers in both the voluntary and private sectors.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Nil.

5. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The new Cultural Strategy for East Ayrshire will update and replace the existing Leisure Strategy.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The current Leisure Strategy requires updating and renewal. The changing environment the Council operates in and the need to focus on key issues require the development of a new strategy, now called 'A Cultural Strategy for East Ayrshire'.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 The Committee are invited to note the contents of this report.

William Stafford
Director of Community Services
20th March 2002
WS/JAG/JS

AGENDA

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil.

Implementation Officer – john.griffiths@east-ayrshire.gov.uk