

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING - 24 OCTOBER 2002

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE: REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S DECISION MAKING STRUCTURE

Report by Chief Executive

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To submit in accordance with an earlier decision of Council in terms of the previous review of the Council's decision making structure, a proposal for when the subsequent review of the Council's existing decision making structure should be considered.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** Following the Commission on Local Government (the McIntosh Commission) the Scottish Executive established two advisory panels, one of these panels, the Leadership Advisory Panel (the MacNish Panel) was charged with looking at the decision making structures within councils.
- 2.2** East Ayrshire Council in compliance with the requirements of the Leadership Panel established a Member Officer Working Group to carry out a review of the Council's decision making structure. The review included extensive public consultation including Local Committees, public forums, Community Councils, Local Community Representatives and general public advertisements.
- 2.3** The Council at its meeting on 14 December 2000 approved a revised structure for submission to the Scottish Executive.
- 2.4** The Council's proposals included a streamlined Committee Decision Making Structure which provided for independent quasi-judicial decision making forums and for the further development of the scrutiny and audit mechanism within the decision making structure.
- 2.5** The Leadership Advisory Panel concluded that East Ayrshire Council had carried out a thorough and worthwhile review of its structures and had noted that the Council had been engaged in a process of incremental change over a number of years. The Leadership Panel noted that the Council would continue to systematically monitor the operation of the new arrangements and recommended that the Council carry out a formal evaluation of the system after a period of one year to eighteen months.

3. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

- 3.1** The revised decision making structure was implemented in August 2001 and the initial recommendation of Council was to undertake a subsequent review

of the system after the experience of a full year's operation was available, ie after the Summer recess of 2002.

3.2 It is considered that the present decision making structure has bedded in well and in light of the fact that the next Council elections are now scheduled to be held in May 2003, in approximately six months time, it is suggested that the subsequent review of the decision making structure should be held after these elections.

3.3 The proposed revised timetable for reviewing the Council's decision making structure would tie in with a review of the Council's Corporate Governance Code as it is intended to carry out a review of the Council's Scheme of Delegation targetting the needs of the individual service users and identifying further the role of members within the Council's decision making structure. This review is intended to be completed by March 2003 with a view to submitting the revised Scheme of Delegation and Administration to the statutory meeting of Council in May 2003.

4. FINANCIAL/LEGAL/POLICY IMPLICATIONS - Nil

5. RECOMMENDATION

- (i) that the Council confirm that the review of the Council's present decision making structure be carried out after the Council elections in May 2003; and
- (ii) otherwise to note the report.

David Montgomery
Chief Executive
10 October 2002

BW/JW

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 1. Report of the Leadership Advisory Panel 2001

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers relative to this report or wishing further information on this report should contact Bill Walkinshaw, Administration Manager on telephone number (01563) 576135.

Implementation Officer: Bill Walkinshaw, Administration Manager

AGENDA