

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE - 15 MARCH 2000**

#### **SCOTTISH AWARDS FOR QUALITY IN PLANNING**

##### **Report by Director of Development Services**

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

- 1.1** To advise members of the result of the submissions for the Scottish Executive's Awards for Quality in Planning.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** The Scottish Executive's Awards for Quality in Planning commenced in 1997 and this year attracted 47 nominations in the three categories of Development Control, Development Plans and Development on the ground.

- 2.2** East Ayrshire Council submitted three nominations namely

- Ayrshire Structure Plan
- Opencast Coal Subject Plan
- Delivery of a Decentralised Planning Application System

### **3. REPORT OF THE JUDGES**

- 3.1** The Ayrshire Structure Plan received a commendation in the category of Development Plans. The judges were particularly impressed by the plans brevity and clarity, by the involvement of key agencies in its preparation, by the high degree of community involvement actively sought and by the speed with which a strategic voice for Ayrshire had been established and expressed.

- 3.2** The judges looked carefully at the Open Cast Coal Subject Plan and were particularly interested in the general approach and innovative concepts and ideas. They commented that while on the surface this subject plan might be considered part of the everyday work of a Planning Authority, the judges really appreciated the key importance of opencast coal in East Ayrshire and warmly supported the many underlying arrangements which goes towards securing good working practice, community involvement and protection. They believe that the Subject Plan will be a useful example to others in this field.

**3.3** The judges were interested to learn of the Decentralised Approach to Planning Applications and in particular to the Division's openness to ideas for improvement from all quarters. They appreciate that decentralised arrangements offer benefits to the public yet are not easy to operate.

**3.4** In presenting the Awards Sarah Boyak, Minister for Transport and Environment commented that next year it is hoped to recognise the day to day work of Planning Authorities which underpins the success of the Planning System to withstand its many challenges in a difficult field of activity.

**4. RECOMMENDATION**

**4.1 It is recommended that members note the report**

**Stephen Chorley  
Director of Development Services**

23 February 2000 (AN/SA)

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**1. Report of the Judges on the 1999 Scottish Awards for Quality in Planning**

For further information please contact Alan Neish on Extension 6767.

**AGENDA**