

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE - 21 OCTOBER 2003

RESTORING COMMUNITIES PROGRAMME (RCP)

PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT SCHEME, MAIN STREET & WELL ROAD, AUCHINLECK.

Report by the Director of Development Services

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** The purpose of the report is to inform Committee of progress with the Property Improvement Scheme for Main Street and Well Road, Auchinleck. The scheme is being implemented as part of the Restoring Communities Programme, through the Planning & Building Control Division in conjunction with the East Ayrshire Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP).
- 1.2** The report also seeks the necessary authority for the Council to enter into legally binding agreements with owners of private residential and commercial property for the purpose of implementing improvements to their property. In addition the report seeks approval to set up a financial management system to deal with the income from the property owners and from the SIP to pay for the proposed improvements and the management of the project.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1** £150,000 has been agreed by the SIP for the production of Community Environmental Improvement Action Plans and implementation of associated environmental improvement projects, As part of this process the Restoring Communities Programme is being implemented within Auchinleck as a pilot project. This was reported to the Development Services Committee of the 26th August, as part of a report titled "Community Environmental Improvement Action Plans & Projects 2003/2004". At the time of the Committee report the details of the scheme were being developed.

3 MAIN STREET, AUCHINLECK "PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT SCHEME"

- 3.1** In order to tackle the issue of the poor quality environment in Main Street it is proposed to set up a Property Improvement Scheme which will aim to implement environmental improvements to properties in partnership with property owners. The scheme is based on similar schemes such as that undertaken at Bank Street, Kilmarnock. This will complement the action being taken to remove a number of prominent derelict properties through the separate funds available for such projects (see separate report to this Committee).

3.2 The scheme will include private residential and commercial property on Main Street, and commercial property on Well Road, Auchinleck, (between Main Street and the Community Centre). A Project Manager and professional design team have been appointed to produce and implement detailed proposals for improvement works to be carried out in the above locations.

3.3 This process will include the following steps:

1. Initial assessment of properties in Main Street and the Well Road shops, including the production of a photographic record justifying the selection of priority business and residential properties,
2. Production of a schedule of suggested works and estimated costs in conjunction with the professional design team,
3. The drafting of a standard legal agreement between EAC & property owners to formalise private contribution (20% of total cost), with assistance from EAC Legal Services,
4. The establishment of a financial system through EAC's Finance Department to ensure the receipt of the property owners contribution prior to the commencement of the contract(s),
5. Consultation with property owners to gauge their interest in participating in the scheme and their ability to contribute to the cost of works proposed,
6. Prioritisation of proposals for properties for Phase 1
7. Applying for all necessary planning permission and building warrant consents,
8. Instruction of HATS to carry out the tendering and appointment process for contractor(s) to carry out the schedule of agreed works, on the basis of best value and past performance,
9. Project managing the successful contractor(s), with planning supervision & Health & Safety responsibilities provided by HATS
10. The production of a report for the Restoring Communities Programme detailing the improvement works carried out in phase 1 and any other information as East Ayrshire Council identify as required.

3.4 The following factors will be taken into consideration when formulating the proposed design of the Main Street Improvement Grant Scheme, Auchinleck:

- Cost factors and best value should be borne in mind throughout the assessment and implementation process.
- Eligible works are general repair, replacement of doors and rainwater goods, repair of external stone and brickwork, cleaning of stone and brick

work, smooth render, dried dash render, wet dash render, external finishes, external joinery, signage and advertising and security shutters. The eligibility of works will be confirmed for each property by the consultant in liaison with the Policy & Projects Section.

- The Policy & Projects Section will provide guidelines for acceptable improvements.
- Roofing, replacement windows, and damp proofing are not eligible works.

4. FINANCIAL & LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1** The project will be funded by the East Ayrshire Coalfield Area Social Inclusion Partnership. Additional funding will be sought from Community Scotland and Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire. The Finance Department will require to establish a financial system to manage both the SIP funding and the property owners contribution in relation to each property included within the scheme.
- 4.2** The Council's Legal Services will require to draw up legal agreements between EAC and each property owner included within the scheme.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1** It is recommended that the Committee:-
- (a) note the progress with the development of the Property Improvement Scheme, and
 - (b) authorise the Director of Development Services to arrange for grant payments for the proposed property improvements based on the programme and criteria set out in paras 3.3 and 3.4; and
 - (c) authorise the Head of Legal Services to enter into any legal agreements necessary for the implementation of the scheme.

Stephen Chorley
Director of Development Services
6 October 2003

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Report to Development Services Committee "Restoring Communities Programme" – 13 March 2002.
2. Report to Development Service Committee "Community Environmental Improvement Action Plans & Projects 2003/2004" – 26 August 2003.

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