

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

HOUSING COMMITTEE – 5 NOVEMBER 2003

REVIEW OF OUTDOOR RENT COLLECTION SERVICE

Report by Director of Finance

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To seek approval from the Committee for revised Outdoor Rent Collection arrangements.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** On 21 May 1997 Housing Committee agreed revised Cash Collection arrangements resulting from the expansion of Local Offices in the South of East Ayrshire. This resulted in the retention of the Outdoor Rent Collection Service for:-

- a) identified vulnerable people, and
- b) the communities of Sorn, Logan, Lugar, Rankinston, Dalrymple and Ochiltree.

- 2.2** The Outdoor Rent Collection Service is still being provided to these communities, with the exception of Logan where alternative arrangements were put in place in 2002 to address identified Health and Safety and Security risks.

- 2.3** A further risk assessment of the Service has identified the need to revise operational practices. The most significant of these is the need to ensure that 2 Officers collect the Rent together rather than the current practice of Officers collecting Rent alone.

- 2.4** To achieve this with current resources will require alternative collection arrangements in some areas to reduce the number of visits required. This can be achieved by withdrawing the Collection Service from the communities of Rankinston, Dalrymple and Ochiltree. The Collection Service in these areas can be replaced by collection through the local Post Office. This is in line with the arrangements for payment of Council Tax in areas without a Local Office. The Council will meet the Girobank charge imposed by the Post Office because there is no Local Office available in the community.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1** The additional annual costs of transferring collection to the Post Office, estimated at £4,000, can be met from current budgets.

4. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1** There are no Policy or Legal implications arising from this report.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1** Members are asked:-

- i) to approve the replacement of Outdoor Rent Collection in the communities of Rankinston, Dalrymple and Ochiltree with collection through the local Post Office with the Council picking up the Girobank fee; and
- ii) to approve the Rent Collection Service being kept under continuous review with a view to ensuring that the Service is provided only to identified vulnerable people.

Alex McPhee
Director of Finance

IM/JB
9 September 2003

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Any Member wishing further information should contact Iain MacMillan, Head of Exchequer Services (Tel: 01563 576443).