

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

MEMBERS' SERVICES AND CIVIC CEREMONIAL SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

22 MAY 2002

PROPOSED PROTOCOL TO BE FOLLOWED FOR COUNCIL EVENTS

Report by Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To set out for approval, the considerations that should be followed when determining appropriate arrangements for representation at Council events.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The Corporate Resources Department's Communication Section has the core functions of managing council events, organising photocalls, issuing press releases and dealing with publicity for all service departments and the Provost's civic and ceremonial duties. In order to do this the section has in place a process designed to ensure that the appropriate people are invited to events, speak on behalf of the Council in press releases and/or appear in photocalls.
- 2.2** In a typical year, the Council hosts or is represented at around 800 events and will issue around 1000 press releases.
- 2.3** The Council's continued increased partnership working with other public sector and voluntary agencies provides the opportunity to review arrangements and protocols for invitations to attend events and connected publicity photocalls. To this end, the existing arrangements have been re-visited and a revised protocol is noted below for approval.

3.0 PROTOCOL: COUNCIL EVENTS INCLUDING PHOTOCALLS

- 3.1** The Sub Committee is requested to consider the under noted suggested guidance that should be utilised and followed by Service Directors when deciding, in consultation with the relevant Committee Chair, who should be involved in photocalls and other Council events. The broad principles to be observed are that where an event is predominantly service orientated, responsibility for attendance rests with the Service Director in consultation with the Chair of the relevant committee. Additionally, where an event is council wide, responsibility rests with the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council (for Civic Events and the role of the Provost, see paragraph 3.1.7 below).

3.1.1 Council Events

Where an event or photocall is taking place in a local area and relates primarily or exclusively to that local area, then it is recognised that the local member should be involved. However, where an event is taking place in a local area but relates to the whole of the East Ayrshire area, the local member need not necessarily be involved.

For example, if a community safety strategy for East Ayrshire were to be launched at the Council HQ, the local member for the Kilmarnock Central South ward would not necessarily be involved. However, if a local community safety strategy for the Kilmarnock Central South area were to be launched at the Council HQ, then the local member should be involved. The same procedure should be followed in respect of quotes in Council news releases, in line with Council policy.

In terms of council representation at larger events organised by East Ayrshire Council, it is considered that the Council should be represented by the Leader of the Council, the relevant Chair or appropriate nominees, and either the Leader of the Opposition or appropriate nominee.

3.1.2 Council Partners

Consideration should be given as to whether any council partners should be invited to the event/photocall or included in the news release. This will be particularly important for joint funding initiatives.

3.1.3 Ministerial Visits

Ministerial visits usually occur when there is a major initiative or event in East Ayrshire, or are sometimes initiated by the Scottish Executive, reflecting a significant piece of work by the Council (and, in many cases, involving our community partner organisations). The relevant Service Director, in consultation with the Chief Executive, the Service Committee Chair and Leader of the Council will determine Council representation.

3.1.4 Inviting MPs and MSPs to Council events

MPs and MSPs will be invited to Council events where they have a clear involvement. If the Council is inviting a constituency MSP to an event, full consideration should be given to inviting all list MSPs. The Council, in line with the Scottish Parliament, does not distinguish between the duties and responsibilities of constituency and list MSPs. Service Directors shall liaise with the Chief Executive as required. These principles should also apply in cases where MPs/MSPs wish to visit Council facilities.

3.1.5 Events Organised by External Bodies

Where East Ayrshire Council is invited to attend events organised by outside organisations, the presumption should be that the organisation arranging the event is also responsible for the protocols, e.g. the invitation list and who should be included in any photocalls. Nevertheless, it will be legitimate for East Ayrshire Council to liaise with the lead organisation and determine appropriate Council representation and who from the Council should be recognised in any photocall. Most external events will have a clear Service focus and will relate to a specific committee or department. Given this, reference should then be made to our own protocol and the guidelines contained therein should be applied as recommendations to the host organisations.

3.1.6 Royal Visits

Royal visits should be treated as civic events, and as such the Provost or Depute Provost will have the lead role in conjunction with arrangements put in place by the Lord Lieutenant. The Provost or Depute Provost would always represent the Council in the protocol party.

3.1.7 Civic and Ceremonial Events

The Provost or Depute Provost, in recognition of their civic responsibility will represent all of East Ayrshire Council and the people of East Ayrshire in attending events of a civic and ceremonial nature. There may be occasions when it will be appropriate for other elected members to also attend events.

Therefore, when considering requests for civic events or recognition, the Members' Services & Civic Ceremonial Sub-Committee of the Policy and Resources Committee will determine appropriate Council representation. Where appropriate, the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources, in consultation with the Chair of the Members' Services & Civic Ceremonial Sub-Committee and the Provost will determine Council representation.

3.1.8 Official Opening and Inaugural Functions

Consideration may be given to official opening ceremonies or formal inaugural functions being accorded to mark the completion of significant building projects. Where the Service Director, in consultation with the relevant Chair considers this appropriate, invitations should be accorded to the Provost, or in his absence the Depute Provost, and the Leader of the Council, the Chair of the Service Committee, the Leader of the Opposition, and to the local Member, if applicable

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Following the protocol will ensure that the Council's core values of quality, equality, access and partnership are met in full, and will further ensure that the Council maximises all publicity opportunities. It should be noted of course that separate procedures will apply during election periods.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 The Sub-Committee is asked to:-

- (i) Recommend approval of this Protocol to Council; and
- (ii) agree that the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources advise all Director's of the agreed Protocol to be followed when organising photocalls and other publicity related matters.

7 May 2002
DC/DM/JC

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Anyone wishing further information on the content of this report should contact John Clayton, Head of Corporate Development and Communication on Tel. No. (01563) 576195.

AGENDA