

## EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

### NORTHERN AREA LOCAL COMMITTEE - 6 SEPTEMBER 2000

#### LOCAL SOCIAL INCLUSION - PROGRESS AND PROPOSALS FOR FINANCE FROM THE SOCIAL INCLUSION CHALLENGE FUND 2000/2001

#### Report by Chief Executive

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

##### 1.1 The purposes of this report are:

- (a) to report on progress with the Early Action Plan;
- (b) to invite the Local Committee's comments on potential schemes for finance through the Social Inclusion Challenge Fund.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Reports to this Local Committee in November 1999, February 2000 and April 2000 have covered the background to social inclusion, the establishment of the local Social Inclusion Team and the Early Action Plan covering the first six months of local social inclusion work. At the April 2000 meeting it was agreed that reports on progress be submitted to alternate meetings of this Committee. This report conforms to that requirement.

2.2 A report to the meeting on 8 June 2000 regarding the Annual Seminar for Community Representatives explained the procedure for consideration of bids to the Social Inclusion Challenge Fund which comes from the Policy and Resources Committee's budget. In summary, the process is as follows:

Stage 1 - Endorsement of Action Plans by Local Committees - The Early Action Plan was approved at the April 2000 meeting of this Committee.

Stage 2 - Local Social Inclusion Teams carry forward their Action Plans which may, where appropriate, include the development of schemes to be financed from the Social Inclusion Challenge Fund.

Stage 3 - Submission to Local Committees for indication of whether the proposed scheme is supported. (This report discusses certain proposals for the Local Committee's consideration).

Stage 4 - Submission to Social Inclusion Strategic Partnership Group for its views, paying due attention to the recommendation made by the Local Committees.

Stage 5 - Submission to Policy and Resources Committee, including views of Local Committees and Social Inclusion Strategic Partnership Group, for consideration and funding decision.

2.3 At the meeting on 8 June 2000 this Local Committee considered proposals regarding out-of-school-hours childcare and agreed (a) to support the planned bid to the Social Inclusion Challenge Fund for £15,000; and (b) in principle, to

consider a future application for the new Childcare Consortium for Local Committee Funds. This work is being led by the Educational and Social Services Department as a separate process.

### **3. PROGRESS WITH THE EARLY ACTION PLAN FOR THE NORTHERN AREA**

**3.1** The Appendix to this report shows the Early Action Plan with an additional column showing current progress.

**3.2** The major points regarding progress and the resulting developments are outlined below. Actions are italicised.

#### **3.2.1 Issue: Putting the Community at the Heart of the Social Inclusion Process**

It is intended to meet with all Community Councils. *These meetings are being held either side of the summer break.* Concerns raised will be taken into account in developing social inclusion actions in the Northern Area.

In order to extend contacts with the community and learn about the concerns of a wide range of interest groups, it is intended to complete the contact with the Community Councils and also to make contact with more community groups. Dunlop Regeneration Group has already been met and other contacts will be made as an ongoing programme of work.

A question was referred to the local Social Inclusion Team separately regarding whether the current Community Council boundaries are the optimum to meet the needs both of the established local communities and of the newer residential areas on the periphery of Kilmarnock. *This matter has been referred for consideration in the next Community Council Scheme Review.*

#### **3.2.2 Issue: Jobs and Income**

The initial consideration of local issues notes that the unemployment rate for the Northern Area in February 2000 was 6.7% compared to the East Ayrshire figure of 8.6%. However, this figure needs to be fleshed out by a fuller picture of local circumstances.

- Protracted decline in jobs in traditional manufacturing and primary industries over several decades has not been fully replaced by modern industry or services.
- The decline of small town centres and local shops is likely to be linked partly to the reduction in local jobs and partly to the national trend towards car-borne shopping.
- There are large industrial sites in the Northern Area at Northcraig/Rowallan and Meiklewood/ Mosside which are close to Kilmarnock and the A77. Paradoxically, however, a large proportion of the residents of the Northern Area live at some remove from these sites which have their main linkages with Kilmarnock. Modern industry's preference for sites with fast road links means that the A77 corridor will probably remain the most attractive location for employment. Sites for new industrial development in rural parts of the Northern Area are limited to some sites/buildings vacated by older

industry and one small site in Stewarton. The level of self-employment is substantially below the national level.

- Some residents are in economic and personal circumstances which allow them the level of income and the personal freedom to be able to commute. However, the job opportunities for people who are unable to commute are limited. Their problems are exacerbated by a rural context which can create isolation and where transport costs increase the problems of low income households. Access to work is also likely to be inhibited by childcare needs. There are some out-of-school-hours care schemes, a matter which is being considered within the East Ayrshire-wide context (see paragraphs 2.3 and 3.2.5).
- Training facilities are focused on towns outwith the area, although there are some outreach services, eg Kilmarnock College's computer bus.

The particular needs of the Northern Area will be raised within the Council with the Economic Development Division regarding the social inclusion implications of loss of manufacturing jobs and lack of service sector jobs; and with the Planning Division regarding site availability. However, it is intended to focus in the first instance on improving employment prospects in ways which do not have physical infrastructure as a prerequisite. The initial lines of investigation are outlined below:

- *Investigations have been commenced into the viability of developing a scheme for the development of entrepreneurial (self employment) skills for young people aged 16-24. A scheme of this nature would address the circumstances in the Northern Area, but will need a large catchment population to be viable. A scheme to serve the Northern Area, the Irvine Valley and Kilmarnock is being looked at. Therefore, a scheme of this type would require major finance and therefore the likelihood of obtaining European funding is being assessed. A request to the Local Committees to support some matching funding through the Social Inclusion Challenge Fund may be brought to a later meeting.*
- Elsewhere in East Ayrshire a pilot Information Technology training project involving Kilmarnock College and a primary school is due to start in Autumn 2000. The project aims to enhance the IT skills of unemployed and low income people living in a rural area. *Monitoring and evaluation arrangements will be set in place from the commencement of the project so that lessons can be learned from the pilot project with a view to developing actions based upon it. If the pilot project is successful, replication in other areas, including the Northern Area, can be considered.*
- *Developments regarding out-of-school-hours childcare East Ayrshire-wide will also be relevant.*

### **3.2.3 Issue: Crime and the Fear of Crime**

The initial consideration of local issues notes that in the Northern Area between the years 1998/99 and 1999/2000 there has been a reduction in house breaking and vehicle crimes but an increase in drugs related crimes. In addition to drugs offences being crimes in themselves, there are other links

between substance use and crime. Drugs are thought to be linked to crimes of dishonesty, whereas alcohol is thought to play a part in crimes of violence.

In terms of fear of crime, the clear specific identified at this stage, by Community Police, is the concern often expressed by older people about young people gathering in the street. This may on some occasions lead to crime and vandalism but often the police officers have observed no evidence of wrong doing. Other, less systematically gathered information also points to youth issues being one of the most frequently identified concerns across the Irvine Valley and the Northern Area.

Thus, as the “joined up thinking” approach to social inclusion would lead us to expect, there appear to be linkages between crime, drugs and alcohol issues, fear of crime, the needs of young people and the needs of older people.

The existing services tackling drugs and alcohol use problems are the Bridge Project (for drugs users), the Ayrshire Council on Alcohol and the Family Support Group (which provides advice, support and information to the families of people with addiction problems) all of which have their premises in Kilmarnock. These services have not hitherto been actively promoted in the local area. There are issues relating to access to services by those living at some remove from them, not least the cost of the fares.

Thus, the following actions are being developed:

- *An awareness raising programme to raise knowledge of the services which are available to support people with problems arising from drugs or alcohol use either by themselves or family members.*
- *Outreach work in the rural areas which comprise the Northern Area and the Irvine Valley.*

Both these projects are potentially suitable for Social Inclusion Challenge Fund finance and are considered more fully in Section 4 below.

- *It is proposed to integrate links to drugs and alcohol issues into work under the “young people” heading (see below) by raising awareness and providing an opportunity for discussion, and also by providing positive off-street activities.*
- *It is proposed to commence addressing fear of crime issues through linking with work with older people (see below) and circulating a questionnaire amongst older people’s groups which will, it is hoped, give more understanding of some of the specific issues. Consideration will also be given to linking work with older people and contacts with younger people with a view to raising the awareness of young people and raising the confidence of older people.*

Further potential schemes for funding through the Social Inclusion Challenge Fund may emerge, depending on (a) the results of the questionnaire referred to above; and (b) the results of other Council research which will be integrated into the development of actions as the information becomes available. This may result in further funding proposals being developed

### **3.2.4 Issue: Health and Disability**

As the “joined up thinking” approach to social inclusion would lead us to expect, the developments in services relating to drugs and alcohol use problems outlined in paragraphs 3.2.3 and 4.1 also have links to health issues.

*The Forum on Disability has agreed to work jointly with the Social Inclusion Team and has been playing an active part in its work.*

*Local work on auditing accessibility to Council premises has been subsumed within a Council-wide audit currently underway.*

*Other aspects of disability awareness are also being investigated. A proposal suitable for Social Inclusion Challenge Fund finance may be put forward to a subsequent meeting of this Local Committee.*

*A decision on the application to the New Opportunities Fund (Lottery), led by the Community Services Department, of an East Ayrshire-wide mobile Healthy Living Centre, is expected in Autumn 2000.*

### **3.2.5 Issue: Families**

The following issues have been the focus of initial consideration and reporting:

- Childcare - There are three out-of-school groups in the Northern Area. *East Ayrshire Council through the Educational and Social Services Department is presently compiling a consortium bid made up of a mixture of funding - European, Council, Local Enterprise Company etc to cover the whole of East Ayrshire (See paragraph 2.3). East Ayrshire Council also has a bid to the New Opportunities Fund for “wraparound care” and full time nursery care relating to the Council area as a whole. A conference in September is being organised for teachers and parent groups on the topic of after school care. This conference will discuss, amongst other topics, parental management committees, fund raising and the appointment of qualified staff.*
- Homelessness, including Hostel Use and Women’s Aid - *Research on the current position is ongoing.*
- Families with Disabled Children or Adult Offspring - People in these particular circumstances can be at risk of great social exclusion, but individual circumstances are not uniform. *In order to increase understanding of the issues, 12 families have been identified for one to one interviews. Proposals for specific action may emerge as a result of this investigation.*
- Rurality - *Research into the current position regarding access to facilities and other issues affecting low income households in rural areas is being developed.*

### **3.2.6 Issue: Young People**

Commencement of work has been affected by a vacant post in the Community Education Service whose remit includes work with young people. Recruitment is now underway. It is intended that proposals for action be brought forward as understanding of the situation develops.

The research on homelessness referred to under 3.2.5 will also have linkages to young people's needs.

### **3.2.7 Issue: Older People**

The planning of the consultative event mentioned in the Early Action Plan was affected by the need to ensure that the arrangements would be consistent with the arrangements for the East Ayrshire Elderly Forums first Annual Conference. *It is now intended to hold an additional workshop to look at the needs of residents of this area within the main conference on 3 October 2000.* Proposals for specific action may emerge as a result of this work.

## **4. PROJECTS FOR POTENTIAL FINANCING FROM THE SOCIAL INCLUSION CHALLENGE FUND**

4.1 The following proposals for finance from the Social Inclusion Challenge Fund are submitted to the Local Committee for comment in accordance with the process described in paragraph 2.2.

### **4.1.1 Proposal: Raising Public Awareness of Drugs and Alcohol Support Services**

Production of posters and leaflets for display in surgeries, libraries, community venues etc.

Three month campaign of advertisements in local media.

Grant to be administered through the Bridge Project and the Ayrshire Council on Alcohol in collaboration with the Local Social Inclusion Partnership Team.

Area: Northern Area and Irvine Valley.

Finance requested:

1,000 A3 full colour posters and 3,000 A4 full colour flyers	£ 650.00
1 advertisement per week for 3 months in Kilmarnock Standard and Leader. 1 advertisement In other local publications	£4,390.00
Local radio advertising package	<u>£2,000.00</u>
Total	<u>£6,390.00</u>

### **4.1.2 Proposal: Outreach work to drugs and alcohol users in the rural area.**

A pilot outreach serve to take support services to users, with problems or at risk, in the rural area.

The project has been developed with the involvement of the Bridge Project, the Ayrshire Council on Alcohol and ADAT (Alcohol and Drugs Action Team, which involves the Health Service). Grant to be administered through the Bridge Project and the Council on Alcohol.

Area: Northern Area and Irvine Valley.

Finance requested:

Sessional worker(s), two days per week for one year	£7,000.00
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**4.2** Further potential projects are being developed on a number of issues (see paragraphs 3.2.2, 3.2.3, 3.2.4, 3.2.5, 3.2.6 and 3.2.7) and may be brought to subsequent meetings of this Local Committee.

## **5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

**5.1** The proposals in this report are consistent with the Council's approach to social inclusion.

**6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS - Nil.**

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**7.1** The total sum set aside for the Social Inclusion Challenge Fund 2000/2001 is £65,000 for the whole of East Ayrshire, of which £21,000 has already been allocated. In June 2000 this Local Committee agreed to support a bid for £15,000 for out-of-school hours childcare. The applications outlined in paragraph 4.1 above are for a total of £13,390. Other proposals may follow as social inclusion work develops.

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**8.1** The Local Committee is requested to:

**8.1.1** approve the progress and actions reported.

**8.1.2** indicate whether it supports the proposals for potential financing from the Social Inclusion Challenge Fund described in paragraphs 4.1.1 and 4.1.2

**8.1.3** note that further proposals for finance from the Social Inclusion Challenge Fund may be put before subsequent meetings for the Local Committee's consideration.

David Montgomery  
Chief Executive

JO/FM

21 August 2000

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 1.** Minute of Meeting of this Local Committee meeting on 25 November 1999, item titled "Social Inclusion Strategic Partnership Group".
- 2.** Minute of Meeting of this Local Committee meeting on 3 February 2000, item titled, "Irvine Valley/Northern Area Local Social Inclusion Partnership".
- 3.** Report and Minute of this Local Committee meeting on 27 April 2000, item titled "Local Social Inclusion - Early Action Plan".
- 4.** Report and Minute of this Local Committee meeting on 8 June 2000, item titled "Out of School Hours Childcare".

For further information on the contents of this report contact Jane Overton, Irvine Valley/Northern Area Social Inclusion Team Leader, Tel: 01563 551897.

Implementation Officer: Jane Overton, Irvine Valley/Northern Area Social Inclusion Team Leader

**AGENDA**