

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 21st FEBRUARY 2002

STATUTORY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2002/2003 – DIRECTION 2001

Report by Depute Chief Executive/ Director of Corporate Resources

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To advise the Committee of the publication of the Local Government Act 1992, The Publication of Information (Standards of Performance) Direction 2001 by the Accounts Commission.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** In accordance with the Local Government Act 1992, the Accounts Commission gives such Direction as it thinks fit to local authorities to publish information relating to their activities.
- 2.2** The Accounts Commission issued a consultation paper inviting local authorities to comment on their proposals for the financial year 2002/2003. A report on this consultation process was submitted to this Committee on 4 October 2001, at which time, the terms of a Council response were agreed.
- 2.3** The Final Direction 2001 has now been issued and this contains two new indicators and four amendments to existing indicators. The total number of indicators drops from 65 to 62.
- 2.4** For the financial year 2002/2003 five indicators have been deleted. However, four of these indicators have been moved into a new category of “voluntary” indicators. These are:
- (A) Education – expenditure on each education sector
 - (B) Leisure - percentage of operating expenditure met from income
 - (C) Libraries – expenditure on library stock per 1,000 population
 - (D) Roads – maintenance expenditure across main activities

3. NEW INDICATORS IN THE 2001 DIRECTION

The following are details of the two new indicators that have been added. Departments have now had the opportunity to review the guidance on these new indicators and do not anticipate any major difficulties in implementing these. In accordance with previous practice, trial runs will be carried out for these indicators and any indicators with significant changes in October 2002.

3.1 Finance – Non-Domestic Rates

Indicator 3 : Income

- a) The income due from Non-Domestic Rates for the year, excluding reliefs
- b) The percentage of a) that was received during the year.

3.2 Libraries

Indicator 4 : Learning centre and learning access point users

- a) The number of users as a percentage of the resident population
- b) The number of times the terminals are used per 1,000 population.

4. CHANGES TO CURRENT INDICATORS

- 4.1** As stated previously, four of the existing indicators have been changed; the amendments are relatively minor.
- 4.2** Departments have now had the opportunity to review the amendments to the existing indicators and no potential difficulties in gathering the necessary information have been identified.

5. VOLUNTARY INDICATORS

- 5.1** Four of the deleted indicators have been retained under the new “voluntary” category as they do not meet the criteria for statutory performance indicators, and yet the data is perceived by some as being important for benchmarking purposes. These indicators do not form part of the 2001 Direction. Audit Scotland will collect the data from councils that wish to participate and the data from these indicators will be published at the same time as the Data Compendium.
- 5.2** The Director of Educational and Social Services has indicated that he would intend to supply the information on expenditure across the various sectors of the education service. The indicator on the percentage of operating expenditure met from income at leisure facilities and the indicator on expenditure on library stock have, in the past, been highlighted as poor indicators. The Director of Community Services, therefore, does not intend to continue to supply this information. The Director of Development Services will continue to submit the statistics for roads maintenance expenditure.

6. LEGAL, FINANCIAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** Publication of this information is a legal requirement. The collection and publication of this data enhances the Council’s accountability and facilitates comparisons between the standards of performance achieved by this Council in different financial years and with other appropriate comparators.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1** The Accounts Commission intends to continue to work with the Community Planning Task Force to develop partnership indicators which they hope to bring forward as part of next year's consultation.
- 7.2** The inclusion of new indicators and the amendments to existing indicators has required departments throughout the Council to review their systems in order to ensure that these are adequate to produce the required information for publication.
- 7.3** In line with this ongoing requirement, all departments have also now reviewed the information required for reporting on the 2001/02 indicators contained in Direction 2000. Departments have, where appropriate, conducted trial runs for new and amended indicators, in order to ensure that they are in a position to report on these indicators for the current financial year.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 The Committee is asked to:

- (i) note the publication by the Accounts Commission of the Direction 2001;
- (ii) note the completion of trial runs on new and amended performance indicators contained within the Direction 2000
- (iii) note the planned trial run for new and amended indicators in the Direction 2001

Fiona Lees
Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources

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February 2002

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Accounts Commission for Scotland – Local Government Act 1992 – Consultation on the 2001 Direction
2. Local Government Act 1992 – the Publication of Information (Standards of Performance) Direction 2001 issued by the Accounts Commission in November 2001.

Members wishing further information should contact Fiona Lees, Depute Chief Executive on telephone (01563) 576578.

AGENDA