

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 14 JUNE 2001

COMMUNITY PLANNING – THE NEXT SIX MONTHS AND BEYOND

Report by Chief Executive

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To provide an update on Community Planning and make proposals on the Community Planning process, the preparation of a Community Plan for East Ayrshire and related decision-making issues.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1** East Ayrshire does not yet have a community plan, as such, but it does have a good track record of community planning and the realisation of innovative joint projects. We can point to good partnership working with our local public sector partners and effective ad-hoc relationships with the voluntary sector. The council also has a good track record of public consultation
- 2.2** In the spring of 2000, a group of core community planning partners was brought together to map out how the community planning process could be taken forward in East Ayrshire. In December of last year a seminar was held with field work staff from the council and some of its partners to discuss the issues around community planning and identify any barriers to joint service planning and service delivery. Participants in the seminar were keen to continue to contribute to the Community Planning process and will play an important role in the proposed consultations with Community Planning Partners scheduled to take place over the Summer.
- 2.3** The Scottish Executive has just concluded a consultation period on the power of community initiative and community planning. The consultation paper sought views on whether councils should be given a statutory power of community initiative which would allow them to develop a community leadership role. This role would go beyond the delivery of specific services to promote the well-being of their communities through the development of cross-cutting strategies and the pursuance of effective partnerships with other agencies. It also requested comment on whether there should be a statutory power or duty of community planning, and if so, whether this statutory duty should be extended to the key partners of local authorities.
- 2.4** The council in its response to the consultation welcomed the proposed introduction of a statutory power of community initiative. It also recognised the role of other agencies and the important part which they would play in the

community planning process. The council suggested that the national Community Planning Task Force should take responsibility for drafting guidance to underline the importance of full participation by all partners in the community planning process and to ensure the mutual understanding of roles and responsibilities.

- 2.5** The council also sought a statutory duty of community planning for local authorities, in order to underline the importance of community planning as a key mechanism for securing strategic governance within our communities. The councils view is that, in time, this duty should be extended to all public partner organisations.
- 2.6** The Executive is committed to legislate on these matters at the earliest possible opportunity and it is expected that draft legislation will be published later this year for inclusion within a wider Local Government Bill next year.

3.0 THE COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS

- 3.1** It is expected that specific guidance on the community planning process will be contained within the forthcoming legislation. However, in the interim period, it is important to continue to move the community planning agenda forward, with a view to producing the first East Ayrshire Community Plan. The process and timetable outlined below are suggested as a mechanism for formalising community planning in East Ayrshire.

3.2 Core Partners

It is suggested that the community planning process in East Ayrshire should be led by East Ayrshire Council with direct involvement from the undernoted core partner organisations:

- Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire
- Ayrshire and Arran Primary Care NHS Trust and representatives of the Local Health Care Co-operatives
- Ayrshire and Arran Health Board
- Strathclyde Police

3.3 Community Planning Core Partnership Group

It is proposed that a Community Planning Core Partnership Group should be established to consist of up to two representatives from each of the core partner organisations, ideally at leader/chair level plus chief executive. It will be the responsibility of this group to agree the principle components of the first East Ayrshire Community Plan, to endorse a final Community Plan and to meet on a 6 monthly basis to take overall strategic decisions and monitor progress in implementing the community plan. It is suggested that this group should meet during the second half of June. At that meeting the group should: -

- agree its remit and membership;
- agree expenditure priorities for the Better Neighbourhood Services Fund;
- agree the community planning process;
- consider and agree the resources required to deliver both community planning and the community planning process, and
- discuss main themes/priorities for the East Ayrshire Community plan that will then be subject to wider consultation.

3.4 Joint Officer Support Group

At officer level it is suggested that each of the core partners should nominate one or two senior/chief officers who will form a Joint Officer Group. It will be this Joint Officer Group's role to prepare all reports for the core partner group and to ensure that any decisions are fully implemented throughout the community planning process. This group should be established immediately with a view to preparing the agenda and papers for the meeting of the Core Partnership Group in June. The Joint Officer Group will also be responsible for managing the consultation process set out below.

3.5 Community Planning Partnership

Whilst the organisations referred to above are the core community planning partners, there are a number of other organisations and agencies who should also be involved in preparing the initial community plan and subsequent review. It is proposed that the following organisations be consulted on the draft community plan. The scope of the consultation should be that which is agreed by the Core Partnership Group but it should be made clear that any additional initiatives or themes that arise from the consultation could be included within the final community plan. During this consultation process, the themes should be fully discussed and a measurable action plan prepared.

The additional partners who could join this consultation process are:

- MPs' MSP's, MEP's, the public
- Strathclyde Fire Brigade
- NHS Acute Trust
- Ayrshire and Arran Health Council
- West Of Scotland Water
- Scottish Homes
- Scottish National Heritage
- Council for Voluntary Organisations
- Inland Revenue
- Benefits Agency
- Community Councils
- East Ayrshire Business partnership
- SEPA

- Strathclyde Passenger Transport Authority
- Local Volunteer Development Agency
- Ayr College
- Kilmarnock College
- Local committee representatives
- Public

3.6 It is proposed that this consultation should take place at a range of workshops centred around the themes. Field work staff from the core partners (many of whom were involved in the December seminar) would be involved in these workshops.

3.7 The output of the consultation process should be a draft community plan and associated action plan which will be presented to the Core Partnership Group.

4.0 TIMETABLE FOR COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS

June	Community Planning Core Partnership Group agrees community planning process, arrangements for producing community plan, Better Neighbourhood Services Fund, and Community Planning Resources
June-October	Consultation with all partners and the public on key themes of community plan. Action plan prepared.
November	Core Partners Group approve and publish East Ayrshire Community Plan.
May 2002	Core Partners meet to review programme against action plan for Community Planning.
November 2002	Core Partners meet to review programme against action plan for Community Planning.
May 2003	Community Planning conference involving core partners and other partners to review progress and revise East Ayrshire Community Plan.

5.0 ASSOCIATED ISSUES

5.1 The relationship between the proposed Community Planning Core Partnership Group, the Ayrshire Health Summit, and the Ayrshire Joint

Structure Plan and Transportation Committee and the Ayrshire Economic Partnership require to be addressed.

5.2 Meetings have taken place at officer level with the core partners and there is support for the establishment of the Community Planning Core Partnership Group. There is also support for the Community Planning process and timetable as set out in this report including the need to hold the first meeting of the Community Planning Core Partnership Group by the end of June.

5.3 Whilst the key themes of the Community Plan will emerge through consultation with all partners they will be informed by the priorities contained within the Council Plan and other strategic documents.

5.4 The proposed membership of the Community Plan Core Partnership Group is at Leader/Chair level plus the Chief Executive of the respective partners. Accordingly, it is recommended that the Leader of the Council represent the Council on this Forum and that progress be reported to the Policy and Resources Committee.

6.0 FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None associated with this report.

7.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The key themes of the Community Plan will be informed by the priorities contained within the Council Plan and other strategic documents.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 It is recommended that the group:-

- i)** note the Scottish Executive's intention to bring forward, at the earliest date, legislation on the power of Community Initiative and Community Planning;
- ii)** agree the proposals contained within the report to formalise the community planning process;
- iii)** agree the establishment of the proposed Community Planning Core Partnership Group and to agree to recommend to Council that the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive, or their nominated representative, represent the Council on this Forum;
- iv)** note the establishment of a Joint Officer Support Group to facilitate arrangements proposed within the report for involving other partner organisations in the preparation of the first community plan for East Ayrshire;
- v)** agree the timetable of action required as outlined within the report;

- vi) note that the Community Planning Core Partnership Group will consider the resources required to deliver both community planning and the community planning process;
- vii) agree that reports on progress be submitted to the Policy and Resources Committee; and
- viii) otherwise, to note the terms of the report.

David Montgomery
Chief Executive
8 June 2001
FL/JL/AMD

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil.

Any Members wishing further information on this report should contact David Montgomery, Chief Executive, Telephone: 01563 576002

AGENDA