

# **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

## **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 28 MARCH 2000**

### **OFFICE ACCOMMODATION**

#### **Report by the Chief Executive**

#### **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To recommend priorities for expenditure through the capital allocation for corporate office accommodation.

#### **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 At its meeting on 25 January the Policy and Resources Committee agreed to allocate £400,000 for office accommodation from the capital plan for 200/2001. A separate report is submitted to this Committee by the Director of Corporate Services identifying expenditure of £225,000 for the costs of installing information technology infrastructure into new and refurbished corporate office accommodation. This report makes recommendations in relation to the remaining £175,000.

#### **2 LOCAL OFFICE PROGRAMME**

- 2.1 As one of its commitments to providing local offices in communities throughout East Ayrshire the Council undertook to establish an office in the New Farm Loch area of Kilmarnock. A range of options, both new build and conversions, have been evaluated, and consultations have been undertaken with local community representatives. It has been concluded that the most cost effective option would be conversion of the former Buildings & Works Depot at Murray Place.
- 2.2 The local office facility would only require to occupy a portion of the complete structure. Conversion of the remaining space to office accommodation would be relatively cost effective as a means of forming additional office accommodation for Council use. It is, therefore, proposed to implement the local office project as a first phase of a possible two stage project involving the remainder of the building. The first stage local office project is expected to cost estimated at £75,000.
- 2.3 Following a recent incident at the Muirkirk local office involving a robbery the counter and security facilities at all local offices are being re-assessed. This will result in a requirement to re-construct the facilities in some offices. It is proposed to earmark a provisional sum of up to £50,000 for this work.

#### **3 OTHER OFFICE ACCOMMODATION REQUIREMENTS**

- 3.1 A number of moves have recently taken place or are about to take place. These will result in the establishment of a HATS headquarters at Civic Centre North and a Social Work headquarters at Civic Centre South. The formation of

an integrated Education and Social Services Department, and an extended Chief Executive's Department will require the re-appraisal of central office requirements. Consideration will now be given to drawing up a longer term office development strategy.

**3.2** In the short term it is proposed that the Chief Executive, in conjunction with the Director of Development Services, should be authorised to undertake small scale investments to:

- ◆ Accommodate small scale staff moves at various locations
- ◆ Address high priority health and safety issues
- ◆ Improve access to corporate office accommodation in line with the Council's equal opportunities policy

#### **4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

**4.1** The recommendations contained in this report will be funded from the allocation approved by the Policy and Resources Committee for office accommodation from its capital plan for 2000/2001.

#### **5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**5.1** There are no immediate legal implications from the recommendations in the report.

#### **6 RECOMMENDATIONS**

**6.1** It is recommended that the Committee:

- (a) authorise the expenditure estimated at £75,000 on the provision of a local office at Murray Place, New Farm Loch; and
- (b) authorise the Chief Executive, in conjunction with the Director of Development Services, to undertake small scale upgrade projects at local offices and other corporate office accommodation as set out in paragraphs 2.3 and paragraphs 3.2 above.

**David Montgomery**  
**Chief Executive**  
**22 March 2000**

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS** **Nil**

For further information on the contents of this report, please contact Stephen Chorley, Director of Development Services, on 01563 576011.

**AGENDA**