

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

JOINT SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE

**Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 24 May 1995 at 1000 hrs
in the Council Offices, Lugar**

PRESENT: Councillors George Turnbull (Chair), Ronald Brailsford, Robert McDill, George Smith, John Smith, David Sneller and Robert Taylor

ATTENDING: D Montgomery, Chief Executive; M C Reed, Interim Clerk; T Stone, Chief Executive's Department, Strathclyde Regional Council and A M Carr, Administrative Officer, Chief Executive's Department.

APOLOGIES: Councillors William Cree, Thomas Farrell, Andrew McIntyre, Robert Stirling, Gordon McCredie and Douglas Reid.

1. QUORUM

The members unanimously agreed that the quorum for the meeting be four members.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Submitted and approved Terms of Reference for the Joint Services Sub-Committee as shown in Appendix I to this Minute.

3. JOINT SERVICES

Submitted and noted the following documents:

(a) POLICE - STRATHCLYDE POLICE AREA AMALGAMATION SCHEME: Scottish Home and Health Department letter dated 13 April 1995 and report dated 23 May 1995 from Strathclyde Regional Council (circulated).

(b) FIRE - MID AND SOUTH WESTERN COMBINED FIRE SERVICE AREA ADMINISTRATION SCHEME: Scottish Office Home and Health Department letter dated 21 April 1995 and report dated 23 May 1995 from Strathclyde Regional Council (circulated).

Timothy Stone, Chief Executive's Department, Strathclyde Regional Council, outlined the salient points of the report in relation to the Secretary of State's proposals for the establishment of Police and Fire Joint Boards for the 12 Unitary Authorities and highlighted the main issues which required to be addressed by the new Council, viz:-

- Comments from East Ayrshire Council to be submitted by 30 June 1995.
- Secretary of State would prefer there to be consensus amongst the 12 Unitary Authorities for any proposed changes.
- The Boards will be separate legal entities controlling their own budgets.
- The 12 Authorities will only be able to exercise their influence via their representatives on the Joint Boards and will be required to meet the Board's expenditure.

- Boards should be established by August 1995.
- A decision regarding the size of the Boards is required and a consensus on the numbers if change is proposed.
- Timeous submission of annual estimates for the Boards.
- The desirability of obtaining consistency in the provision of both schemes in relation to appointment/removal of Chairs, Clerks and Treasurers, quorum, technical alterations on superannuation and Interim Treasurer functions.

Having noted that membership of the Boards was flexible, the main area of concern raised by members regarding the operation of the Joint Boards for Police and Fire Services related to the funding and servicing of the Boards.

Reported by Tim Stone that the Joint Boards would set their own budgets and each Unitary Authority would be responsible for paying their proportion of the overall budget to cover the Board's expenditure.

Also reported that the provision of services was heavily skewed towards Glasgow and that the Secretary of State had required Strathclyde Regional Council to provide notional 1995/96 budget splits on a Unitary Authority area basis which would be used for rate capping comparisons for the financial year 1996/97.

Reported by Chief Executive that it had been arranged for the Chair of the Committee to meet with the Fire Service to discuss the scheme for administration.

It was agreed that East Ayrshire's membership of the Joint Board should not be less than its pro rata share of the population of the Board's area. It was further agreed to support any arrangement whereby each Unitary Authority's contribution to the Joint Board budgets should reflect the proportion of service actually being delivered on average within the authority's area.

Councillor Sneller joined the meeting during discussion of the above item.

(c) PASSENGER TRANSPORT AUTHORITY

Submitted report by Interim Clerk (circulated) regarding the background to the present Passenger Transport Authority.

Reported by Interim Clerk that it had been hoped that the consultation document issued by The Scottish Office in December 1994 would have allowed at least an option for the Passenger Transport Authority (PTA) to be retained to cover the whole of the Strathclyde area but this had not proved to be the case.

The consultation document outlined two options: the first option would have excluded East Ayrshire thus threatening the Glasgow-Kilmarnock rail service, resulting in higher fares and reduced frequencies. The second option would have secured the Glasgow-Kilmarnock route but would have created anomalies such as excluding large areas of East Ayrshire, resulting in the Authority's inability to provide a common concessionary travel scheme in all parts of the Council's area creating difficulties, for example, with cross boundary support for local bus services.

Agreed that the Chief Executive write on behalf of the East Ayrshire Council to the Secretary of State:

1. to express the Council's concern regarding the proposals for a revised Passenger Transport Authority boundary;

2. to state that a further option currently being canvassed involving the 'Zonecard area' is not a satisfactory option; and
3. that East Ayrshire as a whole should be included within the new Passenger Transport Authority area.

Agreed that a presentation from Strathclyde Passenger Transport Executive be made to the next meeting on possible developments within East Ayrshire together with an overview of East Ayrshire rail services and associated issues.

Councillor Sneller left the meeting at this point.

(d) STRUCTURE PLANNING

Submitted reports by the Regional Council's Director of Physical Planning (circulated) regarding proposals for structure planning.

Reported by Interim Clerk that comments had been requested by the Secretary of State regarding his proposals to create three structure plan areas across Strathclyde, one of which will be for Ayrshire.

Also reported by the Interim Clerk that there may be specialist services currently provided by the Regional Council which they may wish to consider grafting-on to the Structure Planning Service, eg the specialist archaeological service.

Noted the reports and agreed that a report be requested for submission to the next meeting by the planning department in consultation with both District Councils, providing a comprehensive update on the Government's consultation paper on Structure Plan Areas and outlining any issues requiring early decisions by East Ayrshire Council.

(d) ASSESSOR'S SERVICES

Submitted report dated April 1995 (circulated) from The Scottish Office Environment Department regarding issues to be addressed by the Unitary Authorities when establishing Joint Boards for valuation purposes, which will be a statutory function.

Reported by Interim Clerk that the total number of elected members eligible to serve on the Joint Board would be five.

Also reported that at present the provision of the Electoral Registration and Assessors Service is currently carried out jointly and that the Council would need to decide whether to retain this method of service provision or devise options for consideration.

Agreed to continue consideration of this matter until further information was available. It was agreed to invite the Regional Assessor to make a presentation to the next meeting which would update members on relevant consultations and set out the issues, options and timetable for decisions for East Ayrshire to consider in relation to the electoral registration.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Councillor Turnbull, on behalf of the Sub-Committee, expressed their thanks to Dr Malcolm Reed for carrying out his duties as Interim Clerk and extended best wishes for his continued success in his career.

APPENDIX I**JOINT SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE****TERMS OF REFERENCE**

All matters relating to services which, in terms of the Local Government etc (Scotland) Act, 1994 will be provided by joint boards or committees, including police, fire, passenger transport authority, structure planning, assessor etc.