

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CHAIR'S SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 25 APRIL 1996 AT 1330 HOURS
IN THE MEETING ROOM, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, LONDON ROAD,
KILMARNOCK**

PRESENT: Councillors Drew McIntyre and David Fulton.

ATTENDING: Roddy Wallace, Head of Administration and James Lally, Administrative Officer.

CHAIR: Councillor Drew McIntyre was appointed to the Chair.

**THIRD STATUTORY REVIEW OF ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS: EAST
AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

1. There was submitted a report dated 22 April 1996 (circulated) by the Director of Support Services advising of a request from the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland to carry out a review of the electoral arrangements for East Ayrshire Council, outlining the timetable for the review and requesting consideration of initial representations to be submitted to the Boundary Commission with regard to their proposal to reduce the size of East Ayrshire Council from 30 to 27 members. East Ayrshire Council had been invited to make any representations by 29 April 1996.

It was agreed:

- (i) that the Director of Support Services, on behalf of the Council, should make strong representations to the Boundary Commission regarding their proposals to reduce the size of East Ayrshire Council from 30 to 27 members and urge retention of the status quo for the reasons detailed in the Appendix to these Minutes and as the Boundary Commission's proposals would result in an increase in the geographical areas covered by elected members and consequently place an undue burden on the workload of elected Members who were already having to deal with the functions for which the District and Regional Councils were previously responsible, and
- (ii) that copies of the representations sent to the Boundary Commission should be sent to the local MP's, the Secretary of State and CoSLA with a request for them to support the Council's stance on the Boundary Commission's proposals for the future size of East Ayrshire Council.

The meeting terminated at 1335 hours.

REVIEW OF ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

- (i) **Date of Last Review** - As explained in Section 3 of this report the last review of electoral arrangements in Kilmarnock and Loudoun and Cumnock and Doon Valley, which were initiated at the request of the Boundary Commission, were only completed in July and October 1994 respectively. It would be totally unreasonable at such an early date to conduct a further review of electoral arrangements aimed at reducing the number of electoral wards by three when at the last review, as recommended by the Boundary Commission, electoral wards were increased by two. A further review would be perceived as imprudent and a waste of valuable resources.
- (ii) **Timing of Proposed Review** - The proposed review comes early in the life of this Council at a stage when the Council is under increased pressure due to the demands of Local Government Re-organisation. The Council is faced with a number of important issues which will take precedence over the proposed review and this could result in problems in providing the required staff and resources required to undertake the review process. A period of initial stability is required in order to allow Departments to concentrate on service delivery and cope with the rapid turnover of staff currently being experienced. Consequently it would be inadvisable to undertake a review at this stage.
- (iii) **Public Perception** - The public too require time to come to terms with Local Government Re-organisation and identify with East Ayrshire Council as the new unitary Authority. A review of electoral arrangements at this juncture could result in public incomprehension and incredulity and it is suggested that a delay in the initiation of the review process would result in more informed judgement on any proposals being received from the public and interested organisations such as Community Councils.