

# **EAST AYRSHIRE NORTH SOCIAL INCLUSION INITIATIVE**

**BOARD MEETING - 24 APRIL 2001**

## **BETTER NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES FUND**

### **Report By Depute Chief Executive/Director Of Corporate Resources. East Council**

#### **0.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To update members on the arrangements for expenditure within the East Ayrshire area from the new Better Neighbourhood Services Fund.

#### **1.0 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 At its last meeting, the Board noted the availability of the new fund and that the chair would write on behalf of the Initiative to the Scottish Executive seeking maximum flexibility for councils to direct the new resources to areas of greatest need.
- 1.2 Clarification has now been received from the Scottish Executive confirming that it is up to the council and its community planning partners to identify those areas that should be supported from the Better Neighbourhood Services Funds. Where councils and community planning partners choose to use the funds outwith formally designated SIPs, then the case should be made on a neighbourhood basis.
- 1.3 East Ayrshire Council has been allocated £1.5M from the Better Neighbourhood Services Fund for the year 2001/02 rising to £3M in 2003/04. The fund is designed to enable local authorities and their community planning partners to improve services to those living in disadvantaged communities. The resources should be used to develop the quality and/or quantity of local services so as to deliver real and substantial improvements for local people. Neighbourhoods should be selected where the funds can be applied in sufficient concentration to make a positive difference within the neighbourhood.
- 1.4 The council therefore intends to meet with its community planning partners to agree where, and how, the funds should be used.
- 1.5 To guide those discussions, the council agreed to identify the Shortlees/Riccarton neighbourhood and the North West Kilmarnock neighbourhood as being the areas most in need of the new resources. These areas were selected using an initial assessment of poverty and deprivation indicators based on unemployment rates, free school meals, and footwear and clothing grants. Using these indicators, it is clear that these neighbourhoods have levels of poverty that are dramatically higher than elsewhere in East Ayrshire.

- 1.6 The council is now preparing the detailed case for the application of the funds in these areas. This case for selecting these neighbourhoods has to be made to the Scottish Executive before the end of June and a period of consultation will follow within the communities concerned on the use of the funds.
- 1.7 Part of the process of discussion with the Scottish Executive and the community will be agreeing on the 'outcomes' that the investment of the new resources would be expected to achieve.
- 1.8 There will be regular reports on the fund to future Board meetings.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Board:

- i) note that spending proposals for the Better Neighbourhood Services Fund centred on the neighbourhoods of Shortlees/Riccarton and North West Kilmarnock are being developed by East Ayrshire Council in conjunction with its community planning partners and community representatives.

18 April 2001

Fiona Lees

**Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources**

**AGENDA**