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AYRSHIRE JOINT PLANNING STEERING GROUP

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Minutes of Meeting held at 2.00pm on Wednesday 16 December 2009 in South Ayrshire Council, County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr.

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Present: Cllrs Tom Barr and Elizabeth McLardy (North Ayrshire Council); Cllr. Robert McDill (East Ayrshire Council): Cllrs. Margaret Toner and Ian Fitzsimmons (South Ayrshire Council).

In Attendance: Bob Forrest Planning Services Manager North Ayrshire Council; Mike Newall Head of Planning and Enterprise and Christina Cox Planning Manager South Ayrshire Council; Alan Neish Head of Planning and Economic Development East Ayrshire Council; Ian Johnson, Manager, John Esslemont, Senior Policy Officer, Alan Edgar, Policy Officer, Nigel Wallace Policy Officer Ayrshire Joint Planning Unit.

Chair: Cllr. Tom Barr

Item 1 Apologies

Cllr Jim Buchanan (EAC)

Item 2 Approval of Minutes 30 April 2009

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 April 2009 were approved by Cllr Margaret Toner and seconded by Cllr. Robert McDill.

Item 3 Matters Arising

None

Item 4 Work Programme

As agreed at the last meeting a report was submitted identifying the current and prospective future work programme for 2010 for the Ayrshire Joint Planning Unit. In developing the work programme a number of key government initiatives in marine spatial planning, river basin management planning and forestry policy were recognised as providing opportunities for resource sharing together with more specific support for local development plans particularly on retail, housing, habitats and wind farm development. It was further agreed that AJPU would lead on a study of Glasgow Prestwick Airport for South Ayrshire Council and assist East Ayrshire Council in the preparation of the housing section of the local development plan.

The report was agreed as the basis for the work of AJPU for the next six months and the AJPU Manager was asked to bring forward a review of the working of the shared services to the next meeting.

Item 5 Wind Farm Guidance

At the last meeting of the Steering Group a draft report on joint guidance for wind farm developments was presented and agreed in principle subject to individual council approval. This has now happened and brings this piece of work to a conclusion. AJPU will continue to support councils in dealing with individual applications and monitor any potential policy changes.

The report was noted and agreed for publication and display on the AJPU web site.

Item 6 Retail and Shopping Policy

A report was submitted identifying the main findings of a survey of household shopping patterns undertaken during June 2009 across Ayrshire against a similar exercise carried out in 2003. From the 2003 data a retail capacity assessment was carried out for each council area to quantify potential additional retail floorspace and there was agreement to repeat that exercise.

The report was noted and agreement that a further retail capacity exercise carried out. The Steering Group also asked the AJPU Manager to bring forward a report on the future for town centres.

Item 7 Glasgow Prestwick Airport Figures

A report was submitted giving the latest figures for passenger and freight traffic at Glasgow Prestwick Airport showing a considerable drop from comparable figures in 2008. The report however emphasised the significance of the airport to the overall economy and the need to continue to support the opportunities for development with an additional role perhaps for the Ayrshire Business Forum.

The report was noted and agreed

Item 8 Prospects for Future Private Sector House Building

At the last meeting of the Steering Group a report on housing marketability in Ayrshire was requested. The report presented looks at current housing market activity against a background of economic and financial constraint. The report identifies a further decline in house building in Ayrshire over the last year. Along with other commentators it is not known how long these depressed conditions will persist and this may place an increased burden on the need for public sector intervention at a time of severe financial restraint.
The report was noted and agreed and the Steering Group asked the AJPU Manager to add the monitoring of factors affecting the private housing property and financial markets to the work programme for 2010.

Item 9 Garden and Designed Landscape Survey

A report commissioned jointly with the Forestry Commission has identified an initial list of designed landscapes and remnants of designed landscapes in Ayrshire. These locations are

 recognised as of considerable importance in understanding the landscape of Ayrshire, and although few have statutory backing there is an opportunity to promote these areas in forthcoming future work on forestry and green networks.

The report was noted and passed to the Technical Management Team for further consideration.

Item 10 Central Scotland Green Network

In September 2009 the Scottish Government launched the development of a Central Scotland Green Network, one of the 14 national developments included in NPF2. This work will be overseen by FCS and SNH and is expected to include large parts of Ayrshire. Although at an early stage there are considerable opportunities for Ayrshire to become involved, and there is a need to identify how that might best be achieved.

The report was noted and the item remitted to the Technical Management Team for their consideration.

Item 11 Climate Change (Scotland) Act

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act received royal assent in August 2009. The act establishes a legislative framework for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and moving to a low carbon economy by a series of ambitious targets and programmes. These will have an impact on all areas of society and will need careful consideration in developing the new local development plans. Much of the detail on the Government's key intentions is yet to emerge, and as such this item is likely to feature on future Steering Group meetings.

The report was noted and agreed. The AJPU manager was asked to bring forward further reports on the specific work streams and subsidiary legislation associated with climate change and seek a meeting with the three Ayrshire councils to explore common issues.

Item 12 South of Scotland Regional Aviation Solution

Wind farms are known to cause problems for aviation radar. This is a particular problem for Glasgow Prestwick Airport and for air traffic approaching Scotland from the south. The Government and relevant agencies is seeking to find a technical solution to the problem which may well have implications for current policy on wind farms. It is expected a consultation on these proposals will published in January 2010.

The report was noted and the AJPU Manager asked to report back on the implications at a future meeting.

Item 13 Proposed Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere

A major initiative to develop a UNESCO designated biosphere for SW Scotland is proposed. This has developed through a partnership between South and East Ayrshire Councils, Dumfries and Galloway Council, Forestry Commission Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency and Southern Uplands Partnership. The project

has reached a critical stage and over the next six months will see a period of community consultation. It is hoped to submit the application to UNESCO by the end of 2010.
The report was noted.

Item 14 Any Other Business

National Renewables Infrastructure Plan

A report was submitted on the Governments intention to prepare a National Renewables Infrastructure Plan as part of the climate change agenda. This seeks to explore the potential of land–based servicing facilities for offshore energy installations. Ayrshire is well placed to support such developments and a case needs to be prepared.
The report was noted and the AJPU manager asked to explore how a case might be developed.

Steering Group Chair

Cllr Tom Barr was thanked by the Steering Group for his year as chair. The next meeting would be chaired by East Ayrshire Council.

Item 15 Date of Next Meeting: 2.00pm Thursday 13 May 2010

Ian Johnson
Manager AJPU
January 2010