

**AYRSHIRE JOINT PLANNING STEERING GROUP**  
**25 November 2010**

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**Ayrshire Joint Planning Steering Group: Operational Plan**

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**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To present and approve the operational plan for the forthcoming year 2010/11.

**BACKGROUND**

2. At the last meeting of the Steering Group in May it was remitted to the technical management team to develop a future work programme for the shared planning service in Ayrshire. It was agreed and that this should be developed within the context the minute of agreement between the three Councils, that the tasks identified would be broadly equable between all three Councils and that the programme should provide best value in the implementation of the new planning system.

**WORK PROGRAMME**

3. The Ayrshire councils' shared planning service has been held up to the rest of Scotland as a model of best value practice. It is seen as making an important contribution toward a modern planning system and is a key element of the public sector efficiency agenda. The conclusions drawn from the review of the service in May were that that the minute of agreement between the three councils' remained robust but that with increasing loss of staff at a Council level there is a need to pool resources to offset difficulties and to work together more actively to decide on priorities. It was also recognised that in considering a future work programme for a shared service, a pro-active image for Ayrshire working together could be created by seeking appropriate funding packages, developing new agendas and creating new opportunities that sit at the interface between local and national spatial planning and other land use based initiatives.
4. Within this context it is proposed that the work of the Joint Planning Service will focus on:
  - Supporting national and regional initiatives which offer significant benefit to the Ayrshire economy;
  - Develop and strengthen partnerships which will address and mitigate the impacts of climate change; and

- Strengthen the specialist support and capacity available to the planning service in Ayrshire and introduce a range of improvements to the management of spatial data within the Councils.
5. Specifically the Ayrshire Joint Planning Unit will:
- strengthen partnership working in delivering the “Green Network” for Ayrshire;
  - progress the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere to UNESCO “Candidate Status”;
  - support the Ayrshire Economic Partnership;
  - support the delivery of regeneration initiatives focused on Ayr, Irvine Bay, Kilmarnock and the mining towns of East Ayrshire;
  - support Infratil and South Ayrshire in delivering enhanced facilities and improvements in surface transport and other infrastructure at Glasgow Prestwick Airport;
  - keep under review the implications for Ayrshire of the National Land Use Strategy;
  - support the delivery of national waste targets through representation on the Ayrshire Joint Waste Management Board;
  - support the Ayrshire Leader Programme through representation on the Local Action Group;
  - develop specialist services which support development management and development planning; and
  - produce a bi-annual monitoring report on changes to the physical, economic, environmental and social characteristics of Ayrshire.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

6. The Steering Group is asked to approve the attached operational plan as a basis for the work programme of the Joint Planning Service in the forthcoming year and remit the Technical Management Team to develop further the opportunities which can promote best value.

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# **Ayrshire Joint Planning Service**

## **Operational Plan**

**November 2010 - November 2011**

## Ayrshire Joint Planning Service

### **Who we are**

In 2009 the three Ayrshire Councils established the Ayrshire Joint Planning Steering Group and an associated support team to facilitate and promote the concept of joint working on planning and related matters. The Steering Group consists of two Council members from each Council. The chair of the group is elected by these members and is shared between Councils on an annual three year cycle. The Steering Group meets as required but not less than twice a year.

The work of the Steering Group is supported by the Joint Planning Unit. The unit comprises of seconded staff from the three Councils. The unit manager is responsible to the Head of the Planning Services for each of the three Councils and is responsible for the day- day management and administration of the service. The Heads of the Planning Services and the unit manager (Technical Management Team) have responsibility for preparing the budget for the Joint Planning Unit and for providing technical and professional advice as is required by any member of the Steering Group. The expenses of the Joint Service are shared equally by all three Councils and administered by South Ayrshire Council.

### **What we do**

The main purpose of the steering group is to guide work priorities and to achieve best value for councils in the implementation of a modern planning system. The joint planning unit can undertake a range of functions on behalf of the steering group. This includes taking a lead role in strategic initiatives, advising the three Councils on the impact of legislation and policy as it may affect the general planning of Ayrshire, monitoring the changes to the physical, economic, environmental and social characteristics of Ayrshire, commissioning future forecasts, providing specialist knowledge and expertise, providing evidence on strategic issues at public enquiries and ensuring best practice in maintaining spatial data across the three Council areas.

### **Changes to the Planning System**

In the last two years the planning system has undergone substantial change and reform. The changes brought about were necessary to ensure it met the needs of a modern economy by being fit for purpose, more efficient, inclusive whilst also ensuring development was sustainable.

There is also now an increasing recognition that by providing certainty and confidence for investment, tackling crucial issues such as climate change spatial planning will play a key role in a future economic recovery and in promoting a more sustainable future. Delivering an effective planning service will ensure it plays an effective role in supporting an economic recovery whilst also ensuring development is of good quality and is sustainable.

The joint planning service being developed in Ayrshire is one of the first of its type within Scotland and has a key role in meeting these objectives and ensuring the opportunities to share skills and expertise are maximised. In the current economic times shared services are seen as making an important contribution toward a modern planning system and a key element of the public sector efficiency agenda.

## **Planning Priorities for Ayrshire**

Ayrshire has a population of 368,000 people and a coastline of over 240km and covers some 3,500 sq km. It is an area of great social economic and environmental diversity. Although best known nationally and internationally for tourism particularly through its association with Robert Burns and golf it continues to play a significant part in broader aspects of Scotland's economy and there continue to be strong economic and cultural links with Glasgow. The area functions as an important Western Gateway to Scotland and a key future aim is to build on the successes of Prestwick airport, strengthen investment in key ports and strategic transport corridors, improve the rail capacity and secure better integration with the Central Belt.

There is also a challenge to maintain current population levels which will sustain existing services, create business environments which are competitive and diversify the economic base to replace jobs which have been lost in traditional industries.

There is a need to support the regeneration of communities by providing an economic and development context within which this can happen.

Action is needed to maintain and improve environmental quality and ensure the restoration of vacant and derelict land is integrated with green infrastructure initiatives.

There is a need to ensure future renewable energy developments that are acceptable to communities and local businesses.

There is a need to take forward initiatives which will enhance environmental quality by the creation of multi purpose woodlands and habitat improvement.

There is a need to increase the awareness of climate change, contribute toward green house gas emission reduction and promote new approaches toward the mitigation of its impact.

Over the forthcoming year the work of the Joint Planning Service will focus on:

- supporting national and regional initiatives which offer significant benefit to the Ayrshire economy;
- develop and strengthen partnerships which will address and mitigate the impacts of climate change; and
- strengthen the specialist support and capacity available to the planning service in Ayrshire and introduce a range of improvements to the management of spatial data within the Councils.

The Joint Planning Unit will:

- strengthen partnership working in delivering a "Green Network" for Ayrshire;
- progress the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere to UNESCO "Candidate Status";
- support the Ayrshire Economic Partnership;
- support the delivery of regeneration initiatives focused on Ayr, Irvine Bay, Kilmarnock and the mining towns of East Ayrshire;
- support Infratil and South Ayrshire in delivering enhanced facilities and improvements in surface transport and other infrastructure at Glasgow Prestwick Airport;

- review the implications for Ayrshire of the National Land Use Strategy;
- support the delivery of national waste targets reflected through representation of the Ayrshire Planning Authorities on the Ayrshire Joint Strategic Waste Management Board;
- support the Ayrshire Leader Programme through representation on the Local Action Groups;
- develop specialist services to support development management and development planning; and
- produce a bi-annual monitoring report on changes to the physical, economic, environmental and social characteristics of Ayrshire.

The Ayrshire Councils support the principles of sustainable development and the integration of social, economic and environmental objectives and will seek through the planning system and the Joint Planning Service to achieve quality outcomes in these areas.

### **Achieving these priorities**

The Steering Group will seek to achieve these outcomes:

- By utilisation of the resources within the Joint Planning Unit and the three Councils.
- Through developing partnership arrangements with the Scottish Government, national agencies, business and communities.
- Making the most use of available funding sources to develop programmes and initiatives.

## **Operational Plan 2010/11**

The operational plan for the Joint Planning Unit is set out under the following four headings.

1. National Planning & Regional Actions
2. Specialist Support
3. Co-ordination of spatial data and monitoring
4. Communication

1. National Planning and Regional Actions	Activity	Sub Activity	Lead and Resource Implications	Progress	Tasks/Targets	Commentary
1.1.	Central Scotland Green Network		JPU		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Facilitate partnership working</li> <li>2. Co-ordinate green network activity with Ayrshire</li> <li>3. Develop web based communication strategy</li> <li>4. Develop funding &amp; delivery programme. (2011)</li> </ol>	The central Scotland Green Network seeks to promote a strategic network of woodland and other habitats, active travel routes, greenspace links and to enhance the setting for development and other land uses and improve opportunities for outdoor recreation and cultural activity.
		Integrated Habitat Network	JPU/Green Network IHN Steering Group		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Commission Report</li> <li>2. Disseminate findings (December 2010)</li> <li>3. Confirm habitat opportunities within the green network corridors (Spring 2011)</li> </ol>	The creation of ecological networks and the development of habitat restoration programmes can make a significant contribution to safeguarding and enhancing biodiversity and landscape and allow species adaptation to climate change.

		Woodland Strategy - "Right tree in the right place"	JPU/Green Network Steering Group		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review existing IFS and produce a monitoring statement (Spring 2011)</li> <li>2. Data collection and analysis (Spring 2011)</li> <li>3. Scope of a future forestry and woodland strategy (/2011)</li> <li>4. Draft Strategy (2011/2012)</li> <li>5. Consult on draft strategy (2012)</li> <li>6. Finalise and refine strategy (2012)</li> </ol>	<p>National targets seek an increase in woodland cover to 25% land area of Scotland. The development of a woodland strategy would offer multiple benefits and contribute to national objectives.</p> <p>A review would integrate well with the development of a Green Network partnership.</p> <p>Process will require to be supported by an SEA and an Appropriate Assessment (2010/2012)</p>
1.2.	Progress Biosphere to UNESCO "Candidate Status" for Galloway and Southern Ayrshire		JPU/Biosphere Steering Group/Board/		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop the support from communities and stakeholders (2010/2011)</li> <li>2. Secure delivery of funding through LEADER</li> <li>3. Meeting with Minister (scheduled November 2010)</li> <li>4. Prepare UNESCO application (Vision/Charter/Framework) (March 2011)</li> </ol>	

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Establish Biosphere Partnership Board &amp; support governance arrangements (December 2010/January 2011).</li> <li>6. Submission to UKMAB &amp; DEFRA for approval (May/June 2011)</li> <li>7. Submission to UNESCO (Sept. 2011)</li> <li>8. Approval 2012</li> </ul>	
1.3.	National Land Use Strategy		JPU/Biosphere Steering Group		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Respond to Consultation (November 2010)</li> <li>2. Promote concept of a pilot project (Biosphere)</li> </ul>	<p>The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 requires a land use strategy to be laid by Scottish Ministers before the Scottish Parliament by 31 March 2011.</p> <p>The strategy must set out the Government's objectives in relation to sustainable land use, as well as proposals, policies and their associated timescales for meeting those.</p>
1.4.	Ayrshire I Biodiversity Action Plan		JPU		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attend Local Biodiversity Action Plan and management group meetings.</li> <li>2. Ensure effective communication and co-ordination within ABAP process to enable partnership working.</li> </ul>	

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Ensure effective review and monitoring systems of progress toward implementation are in place.</li> <li>4. Ensure effective communication with Scottish BAP process, UK biodiversity process and other LBAP's.</li> <li>5. Review environmental data management systems</li> </ul>	
1.5.	Deliver enhanced facilities and improvements in surface transport and other infrastructure at Glasgow Prestwick Airport.		Infratil/SAC//JPU/SPT/Airport Working Group		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Publish surface access strategy consultation- Spring 2011.</li> </ul>	Improvements in the surface access and enhancement of other infrastructure and facilities are identified in the Action Programme of NPF2. The unit provides support to the lead partners.
1.6.	Strengthen the role of Ayrshire as Scotland's Western Gateway		Councils/JPU			Identified as a regional action within NPF2. The JPU is identified as a lead partner in facilitating actions which will expand business opportunities by promoting environmental quality and good connectivity, by encouraging a supply of new homes and supporting the regeneration of communities

1.9	Deliver regeneration focussed on Ayr, Irvine, Kilmarnock and former mining towns in East Ayrshire and promote regeneration and diversification in small towns.		Irvine Bay URC/JPU/Councils			The NPF2 action programme identifies Irvine Bay URC and the JPU as lead partners in promoting development which helps regenerate communities and facilitates the adaptation of climate change
1.10	Marine Spatial Planning		JPU		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Respond to consultation on future Scottish Marine Regions</li> <li>2. Attend Clyde Estuary Forum Meetings</li> <li>3. Support Development of Clyde Marine Spatial Plan and its integration with land use planning.</li> </ol>	<p>Firth of Clyde Marine Spatial Plan will be published in September.</p> <p>A consultation on the future Marine Regions is also expected in Autumn..</p>

1.11	River Basin Management Plan		JPU		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Attend Clyde Area Advisory Group Meetings</li> <li>2. Support the delivery of river basin management planning and assist in the co-ordination of river basin planning with other plans and programmes.</li> <li>3. Integrate catchment summaries into GIS systems.(Spring 2011)</li> <li>4. Disseminate information through a presentation by project officer at next steering group meeting</li> </ol>	<p>Planning authorities are legally designated responsible authorities in respect of WFD interests.</p> <p>RBMP's have identified pressures on the water environment and are developing programmes to mitigate impact.</p>
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2. Specialist Support	Activity	Sub Activity	Lead and Resource Implications	Progress	Tasks/Targets	Commentary
2.1	Take an overview of development management on local development plans preparation;		JPU		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide specialist support</li> <li>2. Comment on applications received;</li> <li>3. Track major applications</li> </ol>	
2.2	Develop specialist services to support development management and development planning		TMT		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Report to the joint steering group</li> </ol>	<p>The consultation on “resourcing a high quality planning system” identified the important role joint planning services can play. Partnerships included those that were developing shared services in relation to planning gain, strategic environmental assessment and local review bodies or where there was an opportunity to share expertise on cross boundary issues such as wind farms.</p>
2.3	Advice and assistance at public enquiries		JPU		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As necessary- scheduled support in 2010/11</li> </ol>	<p>The JPU has been asked to support and give evidence at public enquiries in the forthcoming year.. (Ladyland Moor, NAC, January 2011).</p>

2.6	Planning & Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009		Councils/JPU		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To be clarified, identify /SupportCouncil needs.</li> </ol>	<p>This is a developing area of work for Councils and involves preliminary flood risk assessments, flood risk and hazard mapping and flood risk management plans. This will require close collaboration between SEPA, local authorities and bodies involved in managing flooding. A consultation on “Planning for floods-planning the future” closes on the 15<sup>th</sup> October 2010. It sets out geographical areas for “local plan areas” together with partnership working arrangements.</p>
2.7	Ayrshire Residual Waste Project		JPU		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Represent planning authorities on waste issues and attend board meetings</li> <li>2. Monitor waste developments and applications.</li> <li>3. Presentation/briefing by project officer to a future TMT</li> </ol>	<p>Planning authorities have a key role in supporting the delivery of national waste targets and in meeting Council obligations and targets.</p>

2.8	Renewables		JPU/Councils		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Monitor existing and future developments. (2011)</li> <li>2. Advise on any change necessary to existing wind farm guidance.</li> </ol>	
2.9	Aviation		JPU		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide secretarial support to the Airport Consultative Committee.</li> <li>2. Prepare agendas</li> <li>3. Prepare papers</li> </ol>	

<b>3.Co-ordination of spatial data and monitoring</b>	Activity	Sub activity	Lead and Resource Implications	Progress	Task/Targets	Commentary
3.1	Monitor changes to the physical, economic and social characteristics of Ayrshire		JPU		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Publish Monitor 2010</li> <li>2. Maintain supporting data sources</li> </ol>	This would continue the set of baseline reports against which the wider objectives of sustainable development can be measured.
3.2	Review existing web based data systems		Councils/JPU		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify best practice</li> <li>2. Establish an inter authority working group</li> </ol>	The aim of the working group would be to explore the opportunities for maintaining web based spatial data management systems
3.3	Monitor changes to land uses		Councils/JPU		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Publish online audits for housing, retail, industrial and vacant &amp; derelict land and minerals for 2009 &amp; 2010</li> </ol>	The aim would be to co-ordinated data collection and set standards which would allow a consistent approach across the three Councils
3.4	Monitor changes to the function of town centres and the retail market.		Councils/JPU		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Undertake bi-annual survey of floorspace units and publish key findings. Summer 2011</li> <li>2. Prepare retail capacity study (December 2010)</li> <li>3. Maintain information on retail trends (November /December 2010)</li> </ol>	<p>The information provides historical background to changes within retail centres in Ayrshire</p> <p>Purchase MINTEL retail rankings; Purchase Expenditure and Trend Projections</p>

3.5	Monitor changes within the housing market		Councils/JPU		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Monitor house sales (Sasines)</li> <li>2. Publish housing audits for 2009 (Spring 2011)&amp; 2010 (Autumn 2011)</li> <li>3. Maintain information on demographic and housing trends.</li> </ol>	Support for HNDA
3.6	Transport Modelling		Councils/JPU		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support national and regional land use models by maintaining relevant zonal land use data</li> </ol>	The information is require to support LATIS (Land Use and Transport integration model for Scotland)

4. Communications	Activity	Sub Activity		Progress	Task/Targets	
4.1	Annual Report		Councils/JPU		1. Publish an Annual Report on progress toward planning outcomes. (November 2011)	
4.2	Web site		JPU		1. Promote greater awareness of exiting web based systems (2010/2011)	
4.3	Briefings		JPU		1. Provide regular briefings on strategic issues. (2010/2011)	

## Ayrshire Joint Planning Service

Ayrshire Joint Planning Steering Group

Technical Management Team

Joint Planning  
Unit Manager

Joint Planning  
Unit

Inter Council  
Working/Topic  
Groups

Financial  
/Legal/IT  
support