
**AYRSHIRE JOINT STRUCTURE PLAN AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
3 JUNE 2005**

Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan 2025: Update

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To advise the Committee on progress towards a finalisation of the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan 2025.

BACKGROUND

2. At the last meeting in March the Joint Committee were advised that a number of additional studies would be required before it was possible to finalise the plan. It was agreed that a detailed assessment would be made by officers of a revised likely timescale and reported to the June Committee. It was also agreed that any plan must contain policies on waste management.
3. Further work has been done to identify key completion dates for a series of studies and these should allow decisions to be taken on the finalisation of the plan by the Joint Committee from where it should go to individual Councils for their approval.

FURTHER WORK REQUIRED

4. The Committee will recall that a number of key issues warranted further investigation. These focused on four main areas where it was felt additional work would establish a clearer plan context.

Waste Management

The Committee will be aware of the joint discussions between the three Councils on a future waste management initiative for Ayrshire, and the establishment of a technical officer strategic option review group with the remit to bring forward a waste management strategy. As a result of discussions at this group, and an offer of funding from the Scottish Executive, a major exercise has been started to prepare a Joint Waste Management Feasibility Study through consultants reporting to a small steering group of officials. It is expected that a preferred consultant will be appointed in late June with the Feasibility study available by September. The Structure Plan Manager sits on the steering group of officials, and in that way is in the best position to finalise any policy as soon as possible.

Scottish Water Constraints

The Committee will be well aware there has been a considerable gap in our knowledge about the capacity of water and sewerage system in Ayrshire to support development. In order to break this impasse and provide advice on the suitability of development locations throughout Ayrshire the three Council have agreed to fund jointly the running of Scottish Water's strategic model. WS Atkins have been appointed as consultants to do the work, with technical advice from IT specialists in Scottish Water. This should give us a clear indication at a strategic level of not only the issues but the costs necessary to overcome the problems. Results are expected by early August.

Windfarm Policy and Prestwick Airport

This item will be the subject of presentations at the Committee. In addition a meeting has been arranged in early June with the Civil Aviation Authority to discuss the broader context for the debate, and further information has been requested from Glasgow Airport. As a result of these discussions further attention has been drawn to the broader issues surrounding renewable energy, particularly the growing importance of biomass as fuel, and this is currently being addressed (see Item 10).

Access to Ayrshire

A research study on Access to Ayrshire has recently been proposed by the Scottish Executive. As yet there is no date for completion, but in the interim an exercise is underway with SPT to gain further data on accessibility to confirm potential development locations.

IMPLICATIONS FOR STRUCTURE PLAN TIMETABLE

5. Clearly with some of these critical additional studies not being complete until August or September a date for bringing the finalised plan to a September Committee for approval is optimistic. This is doubly so as the Joint Committee is scheduled for 2 September, with papers prepared by mid August. This would put any formative discussions necessary during July and August when Councils are in recess. However, it is not considered either desirable or necessary to wait until December. In order to resolve this situation it is proposed that a special Joint Committee be arranged in late September/early October to go over the plan in detail and take the decision whether the plan should be recommended to the Councils for approval. This would also allow further meetings of the panel to take place in late summer.

CONCLUSION

6. Further studies are underway to give the Committee a better understanding of key issues that have arisen during the final stages of the plan. It is expected that all will be resolved by September. As a result it is proposed that an additional Committee be programmed for late September/early October to finalise the joint structure plan.

RECOMMENDATION

7. The Committee are asked to note the contents of the report and ask the Committee Administrator in conjunction with the Structure Plan Manager to arrange a suitable date for an additional Joint Committee in late September/early October.

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