
**AYRSHIRE JOINT STRUCTURE PLAN AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
7 SEPTEMBER 2001**

Structure Plan Monitoring – Next Steps

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To advise the Committee of the principles around which the next Monitoring statement will be based.

BACKGROUND

- 2 When submitting the Structure Plan for approval by the Scottish Ministers the three Councils gave a commitment that a systematic monitoring programme would be put in place which would incorporate a regular reporting framework as well as the development of performance indicators. Monitor 2000 which was issued last year by the Committee continued the rigorous foundation on which the Structure Plan has been developed and took forward the approach advocated in the Strategic Environmental Appraisal (SEA) which was undertaken in conjunction with its preparation.
- 3 It is however recognised that much further progress is required in the implementation of the Structure plan if the vision and objectives on which the Structure Plan is based are to be realised. It is therefore useful prior to embarking on a future review of Structure Plan policy to “step back” and review current progress. In order to set the context for the next Monitoring Report in March 2002, therefore, three key tasks have been defined:
 - (i) the further development of Monitor 2000;
 - (ii) a management review of the policies within the plan and achievement to-date and lastly;
 - (iii) the preparation of a “State of the Environment Report for Ayrshire” which will provide the economic, environmental and social parameters on which the future review can be based.

MONITOR 2000

4 Monitor 2000 sought to present a monitoring framework that was linked to the Strategic Environmental Appraisal of the Structure Plan. It sought:

- to distinguish between topic and performance monitoring;
- establish measurable criteria for the Statements of Strategic Intent;
- simplify and make coherent the vision objectives, SSI and SEA;
- provide a baseline directory of indicators; and
- move the discussion towards targets.

Accordingly the structure of the report was:

- Based on the 4 statements of strategic intent
- Each section in the report identified and presented the
 - (i) challenges faced;
 - (ii) objectives to be met;
 - (iii) the baseline measurable criteria chosen;
 - (iv) progress toward sustainability; and an
 - (v) impact statement

Consistent with the approach of the Structure Plan the document was made widely available to “stake-holders” and to others “On-Line”.

The next steps in this process are:

- evaluate existing indicators in the light of consultation;
- develop new indicators, if appropriate, for certain topics;
- draw in transport into the monitoring framework. (There are currently a number of indicators within Monitor 2000 but these will be expanded and issued as a separate document); and
- incorporate targets¹ and an “Action Plan”

The developing of this latter point will be difficult but, if successful, it will help mitigate some of the criticism that Structure Plans do not accurately reflect the spending priorities of enterprise companies and water authorities. It should also “reinvigorate” the structure plan toward being an “action oriented” document.

¹ Targets are about achieving a specific objective within a stated time. An action plan documents how this will be achieved in the short to medium term.

MANAGEMENT REVIEW OF STRUCTURE PLAN

- 5 There are many components of the Structure plan which have “action” against them. Critically assessing the progress of these elements would be the intent of this internal review. This review would incorporate many of the “traditional” elements of monitoring as well as the action that has been reflected in local plans in the delivery of policy.

Critical questions could be aired and answers sought. Examples could be:

How much progress has been made in identification of the industrial opportunities within the Structure Plan and the extent that surplus industrial land has been reviewed?

How have the housing provisions been made - which sites?

What proposals for the protection, enhancement and management of the coast have been taken forward?

To what extent have policies and proposals (within development plans) in support of the implementation of the Local Biodiversity Action Plan been taken forward?

What progress has been made in the preparation of an Indicative Forestry Strategy?

What progress has been made in the development of a freight transport strategy?

- 6 It is hoped that for many elements of the plan a positive story can be told. In other areas the review will highlight where further action will be necessary.

This review will require staff in the three Ayrshire Councils to provide necessary inputs and will be put in train through the establishment of working groups almost immediately. It is recognised this will need to take account of current staff priorities.

“STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT REPORT”

- 7 The aim of this document would be to describe the current state of environment in Ayrshire (this would encompass economic, environmental and social parameters). It would seek to encompass in greater detail elements that were covered in the SEA but which could not be covered in Monitor 2000. It would set the framework for a future SEA which will require to be undertaken in any future review and provide a context for any strategic environmental capacity assessments that may be required as a result of change to national planning guidance. In conjunction with this work it will also be necessary to commission further research on the housing, retail and mineral markets within Ayrshire. It would be envisaged that this work would commence after March 2002 and would seek to encompass any new information forthcoming from the 2001 Census.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8 It is recommended that the Committee;
- note the content of this report; and
 - approve the further development of the monitoring framework of the Structure Plan as outlined in this report.

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