

Press Release: 21 January 2000

**Ayrshire Councils First Past the Post
for Approval of Millenium Plan**

Ayrshire's three local authorities - East, North and South Ayrshire Councils - are the first in Scotland to receive the green light from the Scottish Executive for a jointly produced master plan spanning the first two decades of the new millenium.

In approving the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan, Transport and Environment Minister Sarah Boyack commended the Ayrshire authorities for "working together to provide a vision for Ayrshire".

She said:

"This is a good example of the new generation of clear, concise and precise structure plans which the Executive has been advocating."

Sub-titled "A Framework for the 21st. Century", the blueprint is the result of partnership working between the three Councils, their local communities and all major agencies responsible for development in Ayrshire including Enterprise Ayrshire, Scottish Natural Heritage and the housebuilders organisations.

In setting the scene for how Ayrshire will evolve in the years ahead, the plan acknowledges the need for balance between the importance of economic growth for the area and recognition of Ayrshire's high quality environment.

Included in the plan are proposals to promote six major locations for industrial and business use with a requirement on the part of Councils to bring forward more land for additional local industrial and business opportunities to rectify current deficiencies.

On the housing front, land for an extra 1500 houses must be found by 2005, mostly in and around Ayr, Irvine and Kilmarnock.

Other aspects of the plan bring a more sustainable future to the fore by identifying an increased role for public transport, a shift to the transport of freight by rail and sea rather than road, the promotion of renewable energy and a major revision and updating of environmental policy.

Councillor Sam Gooding of North Ayrshire Council and currently Chairman of the Joint Structure Plan Committee, welcomed the comments of the Minister, saying:

“Only a very small number of minor modifications have been made to the plan, and we are delighted at the very positive response.

“The plan is the first of its kind in Scotland and has been prepared at a time of great change in the government of Scotland and to the planning process itself.

“Ayrshire Councils have shown they lead the way in this type of partnership working”

Councillor George Smith (East Ayrshire) and Councillor Andy Hill (South Ayrshire) echoed Councillor Gooding’s sentiments. Like Councillor Gooding, both regard the plan as important first step in the further development of local plans in their area which are being prepared in parallel.

The Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan, including the minor changes made to it by the Scottish Executive can be seen at all Council offices, and copies have been placed in all public libraries.

It is proposed that the plan will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that it remains up-to-date with changing circumstances.

Note for News Editors

1. The structure plan is the key component of the development planning system laid down by the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. A structure plan sets out a planning authority’s strategic land use policies and proposals and has to be submitted to the Scottish Ministers for approval.
2. The plan replaces the current approved Structure Plan for the area, which comprises part of the Strathclyde Structure Plan approved in 1997.
3. Further information and advice can be obtained from Ian Johnson, Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan Manager, 15 Links Road, Prestwick KA9 1QG Tel. 01292 476716, Fax 01292 671455 E-mail ian.johnson@south-ayrshire.gov.uk

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Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan Takes on new Strategic Transport Role

At a recent meeting of the Joint Structure Plan Committee the three Ayrshire Councils confirmed their wish to extend the remit of the team that has just prepared the successful joint structure plan to include strategic transportation.

This will require a change of name to the Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan and Transportation Committee.

Commenting on the proposal, Ian Johnson, Joint Structure Plan Manager, said:

“This change is in line with new government thinking on partnership in transportation policy.”

“The Councils already have policies in the structure plan acting as guidance for their own Local Transport Strategies. This extended remit recognises that for some aspects of policy there will be a need for joint working both implement existing proposals and to develop new ideas.

“Ayrshire has a complex transport pattern especially for journeys to work. It also has issues associated with the movement of goods by road, but the potential of Glasgow Prestwick International Airport, a good rail network and five ports all with capability of handling more trade. The Councils see important benefits in jointly developing and promoting this infrastructure for wider economic benefit.”

A transport planner has been appointed to the team in order to co-ordinate the work, which will be managed through the setting up of an Ayrshire Transport Group.

Notes for Editors

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