Policy and Performance Groups – Discussion Paper

1. The Council has established four Policy and Performance Groups with the Terms of Reference as attached at Appendix 1 –

    A. Social Affairs
    B. Economy
    C. Environment
    D. Organisational Development

    These Terms of Reference mirror those of the Spokespersons.

2. In the model of political management arrangements recommended by the Policy Development Group, the PDG saw the job of Policy and Performance Groups being too –

    -   Consider, formulate and make recommendations to the Council or the Executive on the development of policies, strategies and action.

    -   Review overall effectiveness of the Council's work and the standards and levels of service, keeping under review the need for new services, the expansion of existing services, and the necessity for existing ones.

    -   Encourage effective collaboration and coordination between and within organisations operating within Argyll and Bute with particular reference to the Community Planning Partnership where the relevant PPG would provide the link with the relevant Community Planning Partnership theme group, so that, amongst other things, elected members can be scrutinising the progress and performance of the public body partners.

Question 1	Do you consider the foregoing reflects an adequate remit for PPGs	Yes	
		No	
	Comment (if any)		

3. The PDG envisaged the business of PPGs being taken forward –

    -   from matters referred to them by the Council or the Executive;

    -   from self-selection of areas for investigation and potential policy development;

    -   through an ongoing programme of service delivery and performance monitoring.

    It is envisaged that the Executive should sign off each PPGs work programme and that additions to a work programme would be with the approval of the Executive.

Question 2	Do you agree these are the correct principles on which PPG workplans should be identified and agreed	Yes	
		No	
	Comment (if any)		

4. The PDG felt it was imperative to avoid falling into the trap where PPG's are seen to be latter day equivalents of the historic notion of service committees, micro managing individual services. The PDG felt that the issues with which the Council must contend and relationships it must cultivate with the network of local, regional and national organisations are complex and inter-related and that PPG's should be focused on an holistic approach to their work bearing in mind that they have been established following through on the key themes in the Corporate Strategy –

    -   vibrant communities;
    -   outstanding environment;
    -   forward looking.

    In addition they are designed to underscore the key focus for elected Councillors – policy development, and performance monitoring/improvement.

5. A number of issues arise for consideration which are key to establishing the modus operandi, work programme and (administratively) programme of meetings for PPG's –

A. WORK PROGRAMME

It is envisaged that each of the PPG's will have an rolling annual work programme. Clearly this needs to be flexible rather than rigid. A possible generic work programme framework is attached at Appendix 2 to help kick start the PPG process.

Question 3	Does the process set out in the Appendix provide an adequate basis for a work programme to be assembled	Yes	
		No	
	Comment (if any)		
Question 4	It is envisaged as a rolling annual programme over a 4 year period – is that understood?	Yes	
		No	
	Comment (if any)		
Question 5	In addition to being assembled from remits given by the Council or the Executive, in self-selecting issues for inclusion in a work programme to be signed off by the Executive it is presumed that business will be included in the work programme arising from issues brought before a PPG by an Officer – is this agreed?	Yes	
		No	
	Comment (if any)		
Question 6	In addition, to what extent (if any) are members of PPG's to be enabled to have issues added to the work programme of a PPG; this can happen at stage 1 of the generic framework with the agreement of the PPG (and ultimately signed off by the Executive) but beyond this should Members of a PPG have this ability after a work programme is approved? Should this require the approval of the Executive?		
	(A) After a work programme has been signed off by the Executive a PPG should be able to add an issue to the programme only with the approval of the Executive?	Yes	
		No	

	Comment (if any)		
	(B) A Member who is not a Member of a PPG should be able to have an issue added to the work programme of a PPG only with the approval of the PPG and the Executive	**Yes**	
		No	
	Comment (if any)		
	(C) An Area Committees should be able to refer a matter to a PPG only via the Council or the Executive?	**Yes**	
		No	
	Comment (if any)		

B. COLLABORATION

The PDG envisaged that when it comes to effective collaboration with, particularly, the Community Planning Partnership and its constituent bodies, there should be room for a small number of non-voting "associate members" who, on a medium/longer term basis, would participate in meetings of PPG's

Question 7	**Should this provision be taken forward?**	**Yes**	
		No	
	Comment (if any)		
Question 8	**Is it appropriate that the PPG can invite those associate members or should their appointment be authorised by the Council/Executive?**	**PPG**	
		Exec	
		Council	
	Comment (if any)		

Question 9	It is not intended that the provision to invite associate members be extended beyond the Community Planning Partnership and its constituent bodies.	Agree	
		Disagree	
	Comment (if any)		
Question 10	It is proposed that the PPG's be able to invite others (outside the Council's Officer structure) to attend on a one-off/short term basis to contribute information and advice on particular issues but not as members of the PPG – is this to be left at the hand of PPG's themselves or should it require the approval of the Executive?	PPG	
		Exec	
	Comment (if any)		

C. SPOKESPERSONS

The PDG thought there would be an expectation on the relevant spokesperson or depute to attend meetings of PPG's

Question 11	The relevant Spokesperson/Deputy can attend all of the meetings of a PPG whether explicitly invited by the PPG.	Agree	
		Disagree	
	Comment (if any)		

D. REPORTING

Clearly there is an expectation that PPG's will report to the Executive or the Council with the ability thereby to refer issues or make recommendations to those two bodies, particularly on matters recommending policy on particular issues.

Question 12	The reporting mechanism for matters of policy development from PPG's will be by way of policy reports from the PPG signed on behalf of the PPG by the Chair	**Agree**	
		Disagree	
	Comment (if any)		
Question 13	Similarly substantive outcomes of any performance monitoring undertaken by PPG's would be reported to the Executive	**Agree**	
		Disagree	
	Comment (if any)		
Question 14	As was the case previously with Policy Development Groups it is proposed that the decisions of PPGs on policy development or monitoring reports should be reached by consensus (and not voting) so that in the absence of unanimity a report may contain a note of dissent.	**Agree**	
		Disagree	
	Comment (if any)		
Question 15	In their monitoring role, it is envisaged that apart from their own outcomes, PPGs will be supporting the role of the Audit Committee and that the Audit Committee will be able to make use of work undertaken by a PPG in order that duplication of effort is minimised as far as possible	**Agree**	
		Disagree	
	Comment (if any)		

Please complete and return to Stella Gorringe by 9 August 2007

Appendix 1

POLICY AND PERFORMANCE GROUPS – Terms of Reference

Common to all

To monitor, review and challenge the Council's services and activities, at both corporate and service level, to ensure:

- appropriate performance measures are in place
- the requirement for the Council to demonstrate Best Value in the use of its resources is met
- a performance culture within the Council which will drive continuous improvement.

To encourage effective collaboration and co-ordination between and within organisations operating in Argyll and Bute; with particular reference to the Community Planning Partnership to provide the link with the relevant CPP theme group to enable a co-ordinated monitoring of the progress and performance of the public body partners.

(A) Social Affairs

To consider and report on matters relating to health, housing and local area regeneration, poverty, voluntary sector issues, school and pre-school education, young people and lifelong learning, social work services, and matters relating to culture and sport.

(B) Economy

To consider and report on matters relating to the economy, business and industry, vocational training, tourism and matters relating to transport and transportation, and matters relating to the strategic regeneration of the Council area.

(C) Environment

To consider an report on matters relating to the environment and sustainable development generally, natural heritage, the land use planning system and building standards, environmental and protective services, energy agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

(D) Organisational Development

To consider and report on matters relating to the development and operation of the Council, local government and the public sector generally, including corporate and strategic planning, best value, efficient government and shared

services, community planning, democratic processes and civic leadership, equal opportunities, public service reform, information and communication technology and procurement.

Appendix 2

GENERIC WORK PROGRAMME FRAMEWORK

<u>STRAND 1</u>

1. Review and scope major Issues for Inclusion in Work Programme against the key themes in the relevant strand of the Corporate Strategy – based on combined report from Head of Strategy and Policy and relevant Director(s). Agree work programme content and report to Executive for sign off.

2. Receive baseline papers from relevant officers in respect of each major issue identified under 1 above.

3. From the baseline papers identify issues for policy scrutiny and issues for performance monitoring (or both).

4. Receive on a programmed basis further reports to take forward the activities in 3 above.

5. Report 6 monthly progress to Executive on work programme and as necessary on recommendations for policy development on particular issues/themes arising from the activities at 4 above.

<u>STRAND 2</u>

1. Meet with CPP partner representatives to review and scope issues for mutual collaboration and review in terms of cohesive development of the Council's corporate plan and the community plan.

2. Receive baseline papers from relevant officers/partners in respect of each major issue identified under 1 above.

3. From baseline papers identify issues for policy scrutiny and issues for performance monitoring.

4. Receive on a programmed basis further reports to take forward the activities in 3 above.

5. Report 6 monthly progress to Executive and CPP and as necessary on recommendations for policy development on particular issues/themes.

STRAND 3

1. Receive remits from Council or Executive or CPP.

2. Determine work plan/programme/approach to address remit. Allocate actions.

3. Work through remit, produce report, report to Executive.