

South Ayrshire Sustainability Forum

Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Sustainability Forum will work to develop opportunities to protect and enhance the human and natural environment of South Ayrshire for the benefit of residents and communities.

2. Key Responsibilities

- 2.1 The principal responsibilities of the Sustainability Forum will be:

- To raise awareness of environmental and sustainable development issues in the partnership and community.
- To influence the development of the Single Outcome Agreement in relation to sustainable development and the environment
- To develop an action plan to progress the delivery of high level outcomes in relation to sustainable development and the environment.
- To monitor and report on the progress of the action plan.
- To coordinate, disseminate and debate key research and Best Practice relating to Sustainable Development.

3. Membership

- 3.1 The Standing Membership of the Sustainability Forum (SF) shall be:

- SAC Portfolio carrier for Sustainability & Environment
- SAC Chair of Development & Environment Scrutiny Panel
- SAC Director of Development and Environment
- One representative from Ayrshire Joint Planning Team
- One representative from Ayrshire Rivers Trust
- One representative from Ailsa Horizons
- One representative from the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers
- One representative from the Business Environment Partnership
- One representative from the Energy Agency
- One representative from Energy Saving Advice Centre
- One representative from Kyle & Carrick Civic Society
- One representative from National Health Service Ayrshire and Arran
- One representative from Scottish Environment Protection Agency
- One representative from Scottish Natural Heritage
- One representative from South Ayrshire Waste and Environment Trust
- One representative from Strathclyde Partnership for Transport
- One representative from South Ayrshire Council Sustainable Development
- One representative from South Ayrshire Council Waste Management

- One representative from South Ayrshire Council Energy Management
- One representative from South Ayrshire Council Environmental Health
- One representative from South Ayrshire Council Housing
- One representative from South Ayrshire Council Roads
- One representative from SAC Auchincruive

3.2 Also in attendance at SF meetings will be:

- Community Planning Co-ordinator

3.3 Other organisations may be invited to join the SF, as and when a need is identified to extend the membership, and with agreement of partnership members.

3.4 The SF will seek to develop and maintain appropriate links with other theme groups, and other key sectors of interest, such as Young People, and the Third Sector to maximise engagement with the widest community base.

3.5 Each partner organisation entitled to nominate one or more representatives shall do so in writing to the Community Planning Co-ordinator and that representative will normally represent the organisation at meetings of the SF. If the named representative is not available to attend an SF meeting, a substitute representative may be identified and may attend the meeting.

3.6 All partner bodies and representatives will be expected to participate fully in the development and delivery of the responsibilities of the SF

3.7 Partner bodies and representatives will be responsible for taking issues between the SF and their organisations for information, comment or action as appropriate

3.8 Members of the SF may, from time to time, arrange for other individuals to attend meetings of the partnership in a supporting or advisory capacity with the approval of the Chair. Other officers or individuals may be invited to attend SF meetings to provide information or advice about specific matters, at the discretion of the Chair.

3.9 Sub-groups for specific themes or projects may be set up and disbanded by the SF.

4. Chair

4.1 The SF will be chaired by a representative elected from the Standing Membership of the Forum at an Annual Planning Meeting, or as otherwise set out below.

4.2 A Chair and Depute chair shall be appointed from the Standing Membership of the SF and will hold office for a period of up to two years. He/she will be eligible for re-appointment for further intervals of one/two years. The Chair shall preside at SF meetings and in his/her absence the Depute Chair shall preside. In the absence of both, the SF shall appoint a Chair from the members present, for that meeting only.

4.3 The responsibilities of the Chair are:

- To decide on the agenda of meetings
- To decide on matters of order, competency, relevance and conduct and keep meetings focussed on the agenda

- To ensure that a fair opportunity is given to all members of the Partnership to express their views on any matter of business.
- To preserve order during the meeting
- To represent the SF at appropriate meetings and communicate with external organisations
- To determine any matters of procedure or protocol for which no provision is made in these standing orders.

4.4 SAC shall provide administrative support for the SF, and the SF shall nominate a lead officer to coordinate the work of the SF

5. Meetings

5.1 The SF will normally meet at least four times per year. An extraordinary meeting may be called, if necessary, by the Chair. There shall be an annual planning meeting at which the governance, performance, and future direction of the SF will be reviewed according to the provisions of these Terms of Reference. The Chair may cancel a scheduled meeting because of lack of business, inconvenience to members or unavailability of members. The dates of the SF meetings will be set, on an annual basis, for the ensuing year.

6. Notice of Meeting

6.1 The agenda and papers of the SF meetings will normally be sent electronically to members not less than five clear working days before the date of the meeting. From time to time this deadline may be relaxed in which case members shall be informed electronically of the reasons and the expected date for circulation of papers

7. Agenda

7.1 The agenda of the SF will normally be prepared by the lead officer in consultation with the Chair. Members of the SF will be invited to propose agenda items which are relevant to the priorities of the SF and the Community Planning Partnership. Partner organisations proposing agenda items will be responsible for the timeous production of all relevant reports and papers relating to that item.

8. Quorum

8.1 The quorum for the SF is one third of the membership. No decisions will be taken unless, or until, there is a quorum. If, after fifteen minutes from the time scheduled for the start of the meeting, a quorum of members is not present, the Chair may disband the meeting and no business will be transacted.

9. Declaration of Interests

9.1 Any member of the SF who has a personal financial interest, a business interest or any other direct or indirect private or personal interest in a matter under discussion should, as soon as it is practicable, declare that interest and take no part in the discussion of the matter. The member should absent himself/herself from the meeting while the discussion takes place.

- 9.2 In exercising the authority and carrying out the responsibilities delegated to them, officers must comply with the terms of the Code of Conduct for their partner organisation regarding conflicts of interest.

10. Attendance of press and public

- 10.1 Meetings of the SF may be attended by the press and public, subject to adequate space being available and within health and safety guidelines. Members of the press or public may observe but not participate in meetings of the SF, unless by prior arrangement with the Chair in relation to an item on the agenda.
- 10.2 Members of the press or public may be excluded from any part of a meeting of the SF if a discussion relates to exempt or confidential information as defined in Section 50 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

11. Decision-making procedures

- 11.1 The SF will operate on the basis of consensus. Consensus, in respect of any particular item under consideration will be taken to constitute the majority view and the Chair will be the final arbiter in respect of any item of business.
- 11.2 If there is dissent from agreement on a significant issue, the dissenting partner(s) may ask for that dissent to be recorded in the minute of the meeting.
- 11.3 The SF may not take a final decision on any matter which is the statutory responsibility of any member organisation, and may not take any final decision on the allocation of funds which are the responsibility of any member organisation, unless given the authority by that member organisation to do so. The SF may however make recommendations on such matters.

12. Minutes

- 12.1 The draft minute of the SF meeting will be prepared for the approval of the Chair, before being submitted for final approval to the subsequent meeting of the SF. Following ratification minutes will be posted on the SF website

13. Dissolution of the Sustainability Forum

- 13.1 The SF may be dissolved with the consent of 75% of all Partnership members. In such an event, all assets and liabilities of the Partnership will be transferred to South Ayrshire Council as grant recipient for nationally devolved funds.