

**REPORT TO SOUTH AYRSHIRE SUSTAINABILITY FORUM
OF 1 OCTOBER 2008**

SUBJECT: Report on the Sustainability Forum to Community Planning Board

1. Purpose

This paper sets out the current remit, objectives and key priorities that have been identified by Partners in the Sustainability Forum, and summarises the progress being made in respect of the Clean, Attractive and Sustainable Objective.

2. Background

The Sustainability Forum was established by the Council in February 2003. It is led by the Council, chaired by the Councils Sustainability and Environment Portfolio Carrier, and supported by a range of key local partners with interests in local environmental issues. The remit and objectives are set out below.

3. Partners

Partner organisations associated with the Forum are:

South Ayrshire Council (various services)	Ayrshire & Arran Tourist Board
Scottish Water	Energy Agency
South Ayrshire Waste & Environment Trust	Ayrshire Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group
Scottish Enterprise Ayrshire	South Ayrshire Community Councils
Girvan Connections Partnership	Council for Voluntary Organisations
Scottish Power	Ayrshire Housing
Ayrshire's Rivers Trust	Scottish Environmental Protection Agency
SAC Auchincruive	National Trust for Scotland Culzean
North Ayr Regeneration Partnership	Ayrshire & Arran Health Board
Kyle & Carrick Civic Society	Stagecoach
Scottish Natural Heritage	
Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan	

A number of partners are dormant in that their engagement with the Forum is limited to information and participation only when relevant issues arise. It is suggested that a review of partners interests and involvement be undertaken to ensure that the relationship on both sides remains relevant.

4. Remit

The Council is under a duty to ensure that sustainable development is built into its work through the 'best value' regime. The Local Government Act 2003 makes this explicit. S1(5) states that:

*"The local authority shall discharge its duties under this section in a way which contributes to the achievement of **sustainable development***

and a similar duty is applied to community planning.

The Sustainability Forum therefore has an important role in helping the Partnership and the Council discharge this objective. Sustainable development is a cross cutting issue, so that other theme groups have an interest in the subject. For example, sustainable development is closely linked to social justice, so the social and economic theme group, now effectively the Regeneration Partnership, liaises formally with the Sustainability Forum through the Safe, Strong and Attractive Communities Working Group. It is hoped that other similar arrangements may be developed with other theme groups, and the wider community, under the revised Community Plan Structure

The original remit for the Forum was agreed as:

To encourage as wide a range of interested parties to participate in maintaining and where possible enhancing a high quality environment in South Ayrshire based on the principles of sustainable development. The focus of the Forum's activities will concentrate on the physical environment and the impact of energy and other resource consumption, waste, transport, and environmental education. The Forum delivers the Environmental theme of the Community Plan and will liaise with the other Theme groups of the Community Planning partnership to ensure environmental protection and social justice are linked to sustainable development.

The seven original objectives for the Forum were agreed to be:

- a) To provide a strong environmental element to the Community Planning process
- b) To oversee and report on local environmental performance indicators to the wider community
- c) To co-ordinate local information and Best Practice, and provide information to all sectors of the community on environment related issues
- d) To share information on relevant consultation papers
- e) To encourage the involvement of young people and voluntary organisations in the work of the Sustainability Forum
- f) To promote partnership working with local groups, including local businesses where appropriate, to safeguard and improve the local environment
- g) To support and promote the development of practical and innovative projects

These are all still relevant, although some objectives have proved more difficult to progress than others particularly around involving young people and local businesses. This is largely a matter of resources, both human, and financial.

5. Priorities

The Sustainability Forum partners recognised the current specific resourcing and commitment to Energy Efficiency and Waste Management, and agreed that the Forum should take as priority development of environmental projects around the following issues, encompassing Energy and Waste issues within that framework:

- Climate Change
- Transport and Travel
- Sustainable Construction and Design
- Biodiversity

Work has been undertaken to develop appropriate action plans for each of the key priorities to ensure consistency with, and provide linkage to, existing Thematic Group programmes. This has been of particular concern regarding the work of the Sustainability Forum, for while Sustainability is an overarching theme of the plan, much of our programme of addressing Climate Change, Green travel, Biodiversity and Sustainable Design and Construction did not

fit easily with the draft action plan as initially prepared. However, the new Community Plan Structure, and the forthcoming Single Outcome Agreement will make this task much easier.

A summary of the actions underway through the Sustainable Development Service of the Council and the Sustainability Forum is appended at Annex A.

6. Recommendations

That the Forum:

- a) Consider the attached Annex of actions and suggest any additions or amendments
- b) approve the Report for submission to the Community Planning Board of 29th October 2008

Background Papers.

Minutes and reports of South Ayrshire Sustainability Forum may be found at:

<http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/sustainabilityforum>

Person to Contact. Ken Gibb, Sustainable Development Manager
South Ayrshire Council (Lead Officer, Sustainability Forum)
Telephone 01292 616288

Date. 29 September 2008