

REPORT TO SOUTH AYRSHIRE SUSTAINABILITY PARTNERSHIP

14th SEPTEMBER 2011

SUBJECT: SOA REVIEW – ISSUES PAPER

1. Purpose.

To bring suggested recommendations to the Sustainability Partnership for amending actions and indicators in the current Single Outcome Agreement for Clean, Attractive and Sustainable South Ayrshire.

2. Recommendations.

Members of the Sustainability Partnership are invited to review and comment on the report and Appendix 1.

Consensus opinion is sought regarding suggested amendments, to ensure that the revised SOA will ultimately demonstrate a level of partner collaboration and progress towards achievements under core categories of: Biodiversity, Climate Change and Community Engagement. The desired outcome is a current and future-proofed document with robust actions and indicators, illustrating partner priorities and trends in a particular key category, and reflecting progress and change at a partner and local level. Data collected by partners will ordinarily be in line with their own organisational duty and therefore should reflect performance recording within their own organisations.

3. Background.

Changing and new legislation and duties on public bodies such as:

- The Climate Change Act (Scotland) 2009
- Strategic Environmental Assessment as outlined in the Environment Act (Scotland) 2005
- the Biodiversity Duty as outlined in the Nature Conservation (**Scotland**) 2004 Act

should be reflected in the SOA, as part of organisational reporting by public bodies. At present, the current SOA is prone to a number of issues surrounding data provision and reporting on a partnership basis. Appendix 1 collates these overall issues. Many of the existing actions and indicators fail to demonstrate how partners are working together to achieve local outcomes within the national outcome framework.

4. Considerations.

In order to modify the existing diverse and often uncoordinated actions, proposals for change have been gathered under four main headings to augment partner decision making:

Collate/conglomerate

Delete

Modify

Partner diversification

Next Steps

Appendix 1 identifies the common issues relating to actions and indicators which come under the above headings, and highlights some actions which fall under each categorisation. Partners are requested to review the comments ahead of the Sustainability Partnership meeting on the 14th September.

Person to Contact.

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Date. 14 September 2011

SOA review Appendix 1

Repetitive issues surrounding the existing SOA actions and indicators for Clean, Attractive & Sustainable South Ayrshire. The following suggestions are put forward to the Sustainability Partnership for consideration, and further discussion.

Collate/conglomerate

Common aims

- Partner Public Bodies (NHS Ayrshire & Arran, South Ayrshire Council, SEPA, SNH) are required to report their organisational progress towards key common aims of carbon reduction and biodiversity, and undertake Strategic Environment Assessment when developing any policy plan or strategy. A sensible approach would be to collate actions and indicators which these key partners are required to report within their own corporate structures, eg for the climate change duty, biodiversity duty, and report it within the SOA in a conglomerated manner. For example one unit of measurement for carbon reduction, broken down into partner quantities. This would demonstrate partner achievement across South Ayrshire and also general improvement in carbon reduction on a South Ayrshire basis. The SOA will become simplified, reducing multiple partner's similar actions and indicators which appear throughout the SOA. A similar approach could be taken with Biodiversity actions (see Units of Measurement issue outlined below).

Double counting

- Incorporate actions which seem to achieve the same ends eg Energy agency community support and Barrhill CIC; Energy Agency and Green Business Partnership deliverance of business audits

Delete

Superseding

- Delete actions which have been completed or superseded by events/ have a finite timescale/don't reflect the local and national priorities eg completion of local housing strategy, development of Girvan harbour

Obsolete projects

- Delete projects/actions that did not progress ie MBT segregation, tax free bus travel scheme

Modify

Units of measurement

- There is inconsistency with similar units of measurement. For example carbon reduction measurement varies and can be reported as % carbon reduction, tonnes of carbon reduction; number of awareness events/lessons given (which could be converted to carbon reduction) etc. Additionally, could waste tonnages be converted to a carbon dioxide figure?
- Effective measurement eg, number of people receiving energy advice – could this be reported in carbon savings, thus giving an indication of effectiveness of advice?
- Work is in progress to develop biodiversity indicators to enable robust reporting on positive changes in local biodiversity. Current indicators (priority actions in LBAP, biodiversity in Council processes) are currently not able to give an indication of positive changes.
- Some data is reported in a Pan Ayrshire mode only eg LBAP, some NHS data. Can this be broken down into a South Ayrshire level?

Timeframe

- Timeframes for indicator targets vary for example, a financial year; calendar year, scholastic year. Also, the nature of some indicators means annual reporting does not conform to an annual timescale for example the Local Transport Strategy spans a 5 year timescale.

Data vulnerability

- Consider whether specific indicators which have been difficult to determine data for in the past should be modified. For example vulnerabilities have arisen with resource issues (sick leave, restructuring, economic downturn). A specific example is the indicator for householder composting – WRAP, the organisation responsible for encouraging it ceased to function in 2010. Other specific indicators: identifying land for affordable housing – this has become vulnerable due to the economic climate. Sustainable travel data – modal shift and subsequent carbon reduction is difficult to prove. Some data is collated via non Sustainability Partnership partners, ie Keep Scotland Beautiful, Eco schools Scotland, Eco congregations.

New priorities

- Consider incorporating new priorities which have surfaced in the past 12 – 24 months: climate change duty, strategic environment assessment, openspace.

Partner diversification

Current partnership

- Scope exists for incorporating other key players in South Ayrshire, eg Forestry Commission, Strathclyde Fire & Police, and mark their progress towards the main outcomes and reflecting the partnership influence in South Ayrshire.