

Venue: Prestwick Committee Room, County Buildings
Date & Time: 2pm Wednesday 1st October 2008

MINUTES

Present:

Forum members

Cllr Peter Convery	South Ayrshire Council Sustainability & Environment Portfolio
Cllr John McDowall	Chair, Sustainability & Environment Scrutiny Panel
Ken Gibb	South Ayrshire Council (Sustainable Development)
Joanne Balmer	NHS Ayrshire & Arran
Liz Marquis	Energy Agency
Ruth Sutherland	Energy Saving Scotland advice centre
Norma Duncan	Ayr Fairtrade
Valerie Stewart	South Ayrshire Council (Chief Executive's)
David Holtom	Barrhill Development Association
Brian Shaw	Ayrshire Rivers Trust
Stuart Brabbs	Ayrshire Rivers Trust
Ian Williams	Ayrshire Chamber of Commerce
David Graham	BTCV Scotland
Stuart Lindsay	Horizons
Annabel Beattie	South Ayrshire Council (Sustainable Development)

Apologies:

Yvonne Irvine	SEPA
Sarah Longair	Stagecoach
Janice Gray	Paths for All Partnership
John Collie	SNH
Eleanor Pate	Energy Agency
Gordon Lauder	South Ayrshire Council (Environmental Health)
Lynn Sproat	NHS, Ayrshire & Arran
Andrew Marnie	South Ayrshire Council (Sustainable Development)

Item	Minute	Action
1	<u>Apologies</u> Apologies as recorded above.	
	<u>Welcome and introductions</u> Cllr Convery welcomed Forum partners and guests, and invited introductions round the Table.	
2	<u>Minutes of previous meeting</u> Minutes of previous meeting approved and adopted.	
3	<u>Matters arising</u> Item 6. DH confirmed that Barrhill Community Action Trust had now been formed.	
4	<u>Ayrshire Chamber of Commerce</u> Ian Williams briefed the Forum of his role within the Business Environment Partnership (BEP), providing free advice and assistance with environmental management, helping to reduce the costs and environmental impact of operational processes, and increasing businesses competitiveness. The service is mostly provided to small & medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and provides advice on funding opportunities; renewable energy; waste management; green tourism scheme, sustainable travel plans and green fleet reviews. Student placements are also facilitated. JB queried whether there were links with the NHS Healthy Working Lives scheme. IW confirmed.	

	<p>VS asked whether the reduction in Ayrshire's carbon footprint was measured and recorded. IW confirmed that the measurement was mostly by business rather than Ayrshire as a whole, and that reports of savings typically covered cost savings, kWh savings, carbon emissions, and payback.</p> <p>SL asked whether the BEP would be interested in delivering a 1 or 2 hour seminar to local businesses. IW confirmed.</p> <p>Cllr Convery queried what level of input came from land based industry, and whether the BEP had noticed any growing SME interest in installing woodchip boilers. IW: the Scottish Agricultural College is ideal for providing students for placement, which the BEP match in. The BEP tries also to involve the ranger services, BTCV, SNH and SWT. Hotels tend to be interested in installing woodchip boilers, with the larger organisations tending towards wind power.</p> <p>RS asked the Forum to note that the ESSac offers a mirrored service, focussing on the energy side with farms and businesses interested in installing renewables. The ESSac also conducts ecodriving training and passes on referrals to the Energy Savings Trust for green fleet reviews. IW acknowledged the issue with the payback period for renewables, and noted that the peculiarities of loans versus grant schemes, where loans tended to be given for energy saving measures, whereas grants tended to be given for projects that generate energy.</p> <p>KG queried whether the BEP would be able to share feedback on reports, with the Forum? IW confirmed.</p>	
5	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Report to the Community Plan Board</u></p> <p>KG outlined the report and annex detailing how the Forum fits in with the CP objectives. A revision of Forum partners, and encouragement of new partners to join, is suggested. KG asked Forum partners to get in touch with himself, of AB with suggestions and actions to fit in with the CP objectives, by 22nd October.</p> <p>VS: the actions identified in the annex are all very current and there is no need to reinvent them for the SOA however it's important to ensure that the Forum is kept up to date, with all partners happy with the reports that are going to the CP Boards. VS invited Forum partners to attend the next CP board meeting, due to take place on the 29th October. The Improving Public Transport objective is blank at present however the new theme group under creation (Economic Development & Transport) should be able to engage with that. KG saw a benefit for the duplication of the Transport theme in the Forum, with the Economic Development and Transport, as Stagecoach would benefit from transport-related comments arising from the Forum. Also, the Rural Transport Network Group could link in. KG will add another field to the annex, which allows an indication of which partners are involved in relevant actions.</p>	KG
6	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Outcome of the CP awayday</u></p> <p>VS detailed the purpose of the awayday (to bring together all partners and encourage joined up thinking to work towards achieving the objectives of the SOA).</p>	
7	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Review of the SOA</u></p> <p>(The Forum was joined by Liz Marquis).</p> <p>KG outlined the principle of the SOA and noted that approximately 50% of Scottish Local Authorities had linked the objectives of their SOA with those of their Community Planning Partnerships. Numbers 12 and 14 of the National Outcomes are very much oriented towards the aims of the Forum (although sustainability is applicable to all outcomes).</p> <p>VS noted that the Scottish Government is about to issue guidelines on the SOA.</p> <p>KG noted that South Ayrshire Council's submission to the Scottish Government initially faced criticism over what was viewed to be modest waste and recycling targets, until it was pointed out that SAC was one of the top performing local authorities in terms of meeting the recycling targets. The next stage is to build on consultation with CP partners, at four workshops due to take place from October through to December 08. By the time the Forum next meets (3rd December), three of the workshops will have been completed. KG has reviewed some of the other local authorities' SOAs and expects that there is some valuable information to be learned from them.</p> <p>VS added that there will be one representative for each theme group at the workshops. There will also be a workshop for elected members. A draft report will be finalised by the end of March 2009.</p>	

8	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Update on Fair Trade</u></p> <p>KG reminded the Forum that SAC signed up to the Fair Trade Initiative (FTI) in 2004. A strategy will be developed towards making SAC a fair trade Council, as progress to date has not been continuous.</p> <p>ND noted that a review would be underway of Ayr as a fair trade town, with a report due to be sent to the FTI. Initially, a criticism from the FTI was that SAC should commit to fair trade. SAC can help with publicity and raising awareness in the community.</p> <p>KG informed the Forum of a meeting due to take place with the Director of Education. Cllr Convery agreed that SAC input could be improved. One issue that has been identified is one of procurement, and being locked into contracts with a specific supplier. KG confirmed that a paper will be submitted to the Forum in due course, and noted that the Troon group was approaching being launched.</p>	
9	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Sustainability Forum objectives</u></p> <p><i>Biodiversity</i></p> <p>BS and Stuart Brabbs of Ayrshire Rivers Trust (ART) talked briefly on the invasive weeds survey, but due to a technical fault preventing screening of their presentation, it was agreed that they would return, in December's Forum. ART will go into detail about the surveys that they have undertaken, and will undertake, of all Ayrshire rivers for the invasive weeds: Giant Hogweed (the sap can cause skin to blister); Japanese knotweed (a rapid spreading plant) and Himalayan Balsam (which suffocates other plants and leaves river banks exposed).</p>	
10	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>AOCB</u></p> <p>LM briefed the Forum about the ESSac's Sustainable Energy Fair, which took place on the 27th September. Approximately 1500 people attended the fair, and there were 39 stallholders, including South and East Ayrshire Council's.</p> <p>Cllr Convery noted that there was a great deal of interest in the green burials stand.</p> <p>AB drew the Forum's attention to the colourful new Sustainability Forum pop up banner, which is available for use at events and conferences.</p>	
11	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></p> <p>The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 3rd December at 2pm, in the Girvan Committee Room, County Buildings.</p>	