



## Your Moray - Your Environment

### MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE MORAY COUNCIL COMMUNITY PLANNING GREENER STRATEGIC GROUP

THURSDAY 26 MARCH 2009

COUNCIL OFFICE ELGIN

#### PRESENT

Councillor F Murdoch	The Moray Council (Chair)
Councillor S Cree	The Moray Council
Councillor G Coull (Substitute for Councillor Leadbitter)	The Moray Council
Councillor I Ogilvie	The Moray Council
Councillor J Russell	The Moray Council
Alex Tait	NHS Grampian
Matt Young	Forestry Commission Scotland

#### APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of David Bale, Scottish Natural Heritage, Tom Inglis, SEPA and Martin Johnson, HIE Moray.

#### IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Executive, the Head of Development Services, the Corporate Policy Unit Manager, Emma Gordon, Planning Officer (Planning & Development), the Community Planning Officer, Environmental Protection Manager, Director of Environmental Services (in respect of Items 1-5) and Committee Services Officer, Clerk to the meeting.

#### ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Also in attendance was the Convener ( in respect of Items 1 & 2)

#### 1. ACTION SHEET FROM MEETING OF 11 DECEMBER 2008

The Action Sheet of the meeting of the Group dated 11 December 2008 was submitted and approved.

The group discussed an issue raised at the last meeting regarding seagull's nesting and the Head of Development Services advised that there had been a press release issued giving advice to the public, information on where to seek advice within the Council, and preventative measures to take. He also advised that a letter had been

received from the Elgin South area forum regarding seagulls nesting on the flat roofs on Edgar Road. The Director of Environmental Services advised that Walkers Ltd had received agreement to shoot some seagulls but was unsure how they had been able to obtain a licence. The Environmental Protection Manager advised that in some areas they had removed areas of nesting and involved pest control but confirmed that it was an ongoing problem. The Council is to investigate whether planning policies can introduce preventative measures in building design.

## **2. SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT 2008/09 - QUARTER 3 UPDATES**

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Policy Unit Manager providing the Group with an update of performance against the Single Outcome Agreement Performance Indicators relating to the Greener theme, and on progress being made against required actions relating to the Greener theme.

The Corporate Policy Unit Manager advised that in the future the aim was to build up more information on the indicators and develop more detail. The Head of Development Services advised that some of the performance indicators listed in the report do not correspond with the next Single Outcome Agreement and would be redundant after Quarter 4.

Councillor Murdoch advised that some of the indicators stated in the document could not be influenced by the Greener Strategic Group as such the theme group could not be held responsible for them.

Following consideration the Group scrutinised and noted the update on Performance Indicators relating to the Greener theme as laid down in the Single Outcome Agreement 2008/09.

## **3. SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT 2009-10**

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Policy Unit Manager which asked the Group to note the current status of the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) 2009-10 and to become involved in the development of the local delivery action plans.

The Corporate Policy Unit Manager advised that when the Single Outcome Agreement had gone to the Community Planning Board they had wished the content be kept as concise as possible and therefore some projects had been put into the Single Outcome Agreement's Appendix 3. The Single Outcome Agreement and Appendix were now given to the theme group to consider. She advised that it was for the theme group to agree which priorities they wished to go ahead with, and how they wished to do this.

The Head of Development Services advised that in item 5 of the agenda "Environmental Activities List", the recommendations to the group were given under several headings, and that these could be cross referenced to items in Appendix 3. The Environmental Activities List suggestions could be either stand alone activities groups or possibly combined.

The Corporate Policy Unit Manager advised that any work done by the group would go towards delivering Single Outcome Agreements. The Head of Development Services advised that tasks could be given to activities or operational groups and

part of their job could be to make contact with other groups on cross-cutting issues and then report back to the Strategic group.

Councillor Cree advised that the reduction in the number of fatal road accidents could also be influenced by greater safety measures within cars and the indicator may be worth amending to reflect this. The Corporate Policy Unit Manager advised that the fatal accident indicator may be more pertinent to change along with measures to improve the road network but that an additional indicator could be added in as well as one relating to all road accidents.

The Chief Executive advised that National Outcome 7 on Page 32 of the report referred to fuel poverty and was under development, but would be reported back to the Greener group. Councillor Murdoch said she understood that fuel poverty was the responsibility of the Safer & Stronger Strategic Group and she asked that tags be included next all projects so that it was known where the Greener Group were to contribute, and the Corporate Policy Unit Manager advised that this could be done and would also show which theme group would be taking the lead.

Councillor Murdoch asked that each partner should look at their proposals in Appendix 3 and refine them to ensure that they are measurable.

The Corporate Policy Unit Manager advised that when the group set their priorities these would be taken to the Community Planning Board, who would not change them unless they felt that they could not be met or funded.

The Head of Development Services advised that the group would look at how to accommodate the submissions made by partner organisations and included in Appendix 3 to ensure that they were not lost. They could be removed from the appendix with agreement from the relevant partners and possibly included within the group's overall priorities.

Following consideration the Group agreed:-

- (i) to note the current status of Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) 2009-10;
- (ii) to become involved in the development of the local delivery action plans;
- (iii) that tags be noted beside the local delivery action plan to highlight where the Greener Group is to contribute;
- (iv) that Forestry Commission Scotland would like involvement in the Healthier theme activities group, the Wealthier & Fairer Group in relation to timber transportation and any fuel poverty action group;
- (v) that local delivery action plans developed are circulated to group for information; and
- (vi) to add total road accidents in Outcome 1.

#### **4. FLOOD ALLEVIATION**

The Director of Environmental Services advised that the Elgin Flood Alleviation Scheme was approaching a public inquiry as there was a number of objections from

landowners downstream. He asked that this group look at how they could relate to the project, and advised that one of the main objectors was SEPA who are a partner within the Greener group .

The Director of Environmental Services further advised that one of the requirements for planning applications was that they had to be decided timeously and consultations took place with SEPA by looking at properties which have a 1 in 200 years risk of flooding and it may be suggested to SEPA to reduce this to properties with a 1 in 5/10/20 years risk of flooding, and to review the need for additional information sometimes requested by SEPA.

Councillor Murdoch advised that it was often difficult for the planning committee to make decisions regarding developments in flood risk areas because of conflicting advice received from SEPA and the Moray Flood Alleviation Team.

Councillor Russell advised that there would be major expenditure with regard to flood alleviation over the next few years and there should be some form of watchdog. He further advised that with the Elgin Flood Scheme which would include miles of embankments and walkways, and that this was an area in which the Greener group could have a role in relation to Flood Alleviation.

The Director of Environmental Services advised that flooding goes beyond the five major schemes already in the pipeline as the River Spey in total had not been looked at as yet. The Council would need to have discussions with Highland Council to investigate their priorities for rivers which affect Moray and River Management Schemes.

In response to a question from Councillor Murdoch as to whether the theme groups could be held in the council chambers and webcast, the Chief Executive advised that he could not see anything to stop this from taking place.

Following consideration, the group agreed to work with the flood alleviation team to have an influence on the design and bio-diversity of landscaping surrounding the schemes in conjunction with appropriate community groups and in dealing with Highland Council to investigate their priorities for rivers that affect Moray.

## **5. ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES LIST**

There was submitted a report by the Head of Development Services which provided the Group with an overview of the work ongoing within the partner organisations of the Greener Strategic Group and Community Planning Board to address the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) Outcomes 12 and 14.

The Head of Development Services distributed a table with proposals for action groups which could be set up under the Greener theme. This gave a summarised approach to the various topics, how they referred to the single outcome agreement, and who would take lead in responsibility, which in most instances was the Moray Council.

Councillor Murdoch noted that if these groups were to be formed extra staffing would be required. The Head of Development Services advised that this required to be flagged up to the Community Planning Board, as there was a requirement for the equivalent of a full-time person to be employed to help progress projects and it would

for the Board to decide where the funding would come from. The Board should be made aware that there would be restrictions on the group's ability to carry out the projects without additional support staff.

The Environmental Protection Manager advised that in terms of outcome 14 the Council required to look beyond recycling and consider combined heat and power facilities, and to liaise with other Authorities and Community Planning partners.

The Head of Development Services advised that there was a requirement to firm up responsibilities, and HIE could have a role in joint leadership of a renewables strategy. He would refine the environmental activities list following discussion on combining some of the proposed groups and email this document to all partners before it was submitted to the Community Planning Board.

Mr Young and Mr Tait advised that they would wish to be involved in any Renewables Strategy Group. Forestry Commission Scotland is currently looking into biomass and NHS Grampian is working on alternative energies with the Carbon Trust.

Councillor Coull suggested that REAP should also be involved with any fuel poverty strategy.

Ms Gordon, Planning Officer, advised that there had been a conference considering whether the Moray Council could become the first transitional council in Scotland. The conference which was attended by delegates from many different council departments had focussed on what a "transitional" version of the Council could look like in 10 years time. She advised that Mr Lunan, Planning & Development Manager, would be issuing a report to the appropriate Committee and that a paper would also come to the Greener Group regarding the Council's proposals.

Mr Young advised that he was also interested in looking at green space around towns. The Corporate Policy Unit Manager advised that this would come under Outcome 6 "Live longer and healthier lives" and that she would raise this with the Healthier Group.

Mr Young also advised that wood transportation was also a huge issue for Forestry Commission Scotland and the Moray Council could work with their project officer. The Corporate Policy Unit Manager advised that this could be referred to the Wealthier Group.

The Corporate Policy Unit Manager advised that she would look at cross-referencing projects to ensure better involvement by all partners and it would be for them to decide how much time they wished to contribute. She further advised that this would be continually reviewed.

In response to a question from Councillor Murdoch as to whether minutes of any operational groups set up were to be taken by committee services officer, the Corporate Policy Unit Manager advised that committee services officers would not be responsible for minuting co-ordinating groups and would require to be minuted by a person within the group. She further advised that the co-ordinating groups would require to send reports back to the Greener Strategic Group to enable it to be made aware of progress.

Following consideration the Group agreed:-

- (i) to the setting up of operational groups to address the Greener group's priorities in relation to Single Outcome Agreement outcomes 12 and 14, including energy efficiency, the development of a Moray wide renewables strategy, fuel poverty (if appropriate to the Greener group), awareness raising events and possibly green travel planning, with some groups dealing with energy matters possibly being amalgamated;
- (ii) to note Forestry Commission should read Forestry Commission Scotland;
- (iii) to recommend that the Community Planning Board consider resources to assist with Greener group's activities; and
- (iv) that a revised proposal for operational groups be drawn up by the Head of Development Services and circulated to all Greener group members before submission to the Community Planning Board.

## **6. COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL FUND AND ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS**

There was submitted a report by the Head of Development Services advising on the current situation regarding the creation of a community environmental fund and the annual Your Moray - Your Environmental Awards.

Ms Gordon, Planning Officer, advised that partners have not intimated any interest for a Community Environmental Fund and therefore she would recommend not pursuing this further. The awards ceremony had been held last year and the feedback had been good but to date no arrangements had been made for the current year. It had fallen to the Council to organise the event but she wished to encourage partner involvement. The timescale was short and she suggested to the group that the event not go ahead this year, but that an expanded awards ceremony could possibly be arranged for next year with help from community planning partners.

The group agreed not to hold an Environmental Awards Ceremony this year and that the proposed Events and Awareness Raising Operational Group consider holding in 2010.

## **7. BUSINESS SEMINAR**

There was submitted a report by the Head of Development Services presenting a proposal to the Group for arranging a Business Seminar to discuss and develop good environmental practice in Moray.

Councillor Russell advised that, in his opinion, there was not enough accredited installers for combi boilers or solar panels within Moray and not enough local tradesmen were promoting renewable energies. He further advised that the Wealthier & Fairer Group should also be involved with the business seminar.

Councillor Ogilvie advised that the focus of any seminar should be to educate people on what is available locally, to enable local businesses to take up the challenge of improving their green credentials.

Discussion took place regarding the funding of such an event and the Head of Development Services advised that the issue should also be raised with the

Community Planning Board to advise them that the Greener Strategic Group wished to take this on as a project, but that funding would be required.

Following consideration the group agreed to:-

- (i) hold a business seminar later in the year;
- (ii) hold a bigger festival next year organised by the Events & Awareness Raising Operational Group;
- (iii) look at funds from LEADER, Fairer Scotland Fund, HIE; and look at the timing of the event, i.e. whether evening or weekend; and
- (iv) note that further information on arrangements should be made available to members of the Group in due course.

### **8. FAIRER SCOTLAND FUND PROPOSALS**

There was submitted a report by the Head of Development Services inviting the Group to consider how it could contribute to the achievement of the Fairer Scotland Fund objectives and put forward proposals on how the fund could be invested.

Mrs J Taylor, Fairer Scotland Manager, advised the group that the theme groups have been asked for investment proposals. A notice has been posted on the Your Moray website and that all proposals would require to be fed through the relevant theme groups as they must tie in with key priorities in the Single Outcome Agreement. These are then considered by the Community Planning Board and the applicant may be asked to produce a fuller proposal. She further advised that the funding was in place till 2011 and that deadlines for submissions would be posted on the website.

Following consideration, the group agreed to:-

- (i) note that timescales for bids would be published on the website; and
- (ii) note that anyone can apply but that it must relate to key priorities of the Theme Groups and the Single Outcome Agreement.

### **8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The meeting noted that the next meeting of the Group will be held on Thursday 18 June 2009 at 9.30 pm within the Committee Room.

### **9. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

- (a) There was circulated and noted for the Group's information a copy of the Action Sheet from meeting of the Community Planning Board dated 5 February 2009. Councillor Murdoch advised that this gave little information as to the activities of the Board.
- (b) There was presented an oral report by Emma Gordon, Planning Officer, on the Carbon Management Plan. She advised that this had been agreed at the Policy & Resources Committee and that she was happy to discuss it further with any of the Community Planning Partners.