

ANGUS RURAL AND ENVIRONMENT PARTNERSHIP

MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 13 JUNE 2008
AT 9.30AM IN ANGUS HOUSE

Present:

Bill Strachan	BD	Senior Service Manager, Corporate Planning, Angus Council
George Chree	GC	Head of Planning and Transport, Angus Council
Eric Lowson	EL	Director of Infrastructure Services, Angus Council
Stuart McGowan	SM	Senior Environment Protection Officer, SEPA
Lee Haxton	LH	Rural Partnership Development Officer, ACPP
Phil Gaskell	PG	Area Manager, Scottish Natural Heritage
Mai Hearne	MH	Chief Officer, AAVO
Catherine Lloyd	CL	Tayside Biodiversity Partnership Co-ordinator
Carol Littlewood	CLi	Farm Conservation Advisor, FWAG Scotland
Euan Hart	EH	Senior Consultant, Scottish Agricultural College
Andrew Harper	AH	Head of Social and Economic Development, Cairngorms NPA
Tim Barratt	TB	Woodland Officer, Forestry Commission Scotland

Apologies:

Cllr Mackintosh – National Farmers Union (Scotland)
Eric Guthrie – Director, TACTRAN

1 Welcome

BS welcomed everyone to the inaugural meeting of the group and provided a short presentation summarising the formation of this new group.

2 Role and Remit of Angus Rural and Environment Partnership

Partners discussed the remit of the group and agreed that the following points were important:

- Added value is important, AREP needs to identify what can be done in partnership, which could not be done at all, or as effectively individually.
- The SOA plays a key role in what is to be delivered. LH to send out the SOA electronically to all partners for their consideration and comment.
- It is important for AREP to be able to influence and 'rural proof' the work of other organisations and ACPP
- Partners agreed that the health agenda is particularly important as it brings in a number of issues. BS to discuss involvement of Angus CHP with Susan Wilson.
- Partners agreed that economic development issues would be crucial, particularly when trying to involve the private sector. Partners agreed that a presentation from Angus Council's Economic Development team regarding the Economic Development Strategy would be useful. EL to arrange.

ACTION

LH

BS

EL

2.1 Actions for Delivery

The group discussed the highlighted actions for delivery for AREP. Partners agreed to email information outlining current activities in Angus to LH. Partners also agreed to suggest new or alternative actions for the SOA by the end of July.

ALL

Partners further agreed to amend the Actions for Delivery document to highlight how each individual agency could contribute to the actions.

ALL

3 Local Community Planning in rural Angus

The group discussed this paper and partners agreed that it was necessary to be realistic about what communities can expect to be delivered, with MH arguing that capacity building to allow for community-led development would be key.

Partners agreed to send details of their current community engagement activities to LH in order to produce a summary for discussion at the next meeting. It was agreed that it would be useful to get this information from members of Angus Community Planning Partnership as a whole, BS is to request.

LH

BS

For the next meeting of AREP, LH is to produce a draft structure for the local community planning event proposed in this paper. This will consider what partners expect to get from this exercise and what input will be expected from partners and the community.

LH

4 Sustainability and Climate Change

Partners discussed this paper and CLi pointed out that Macaulay Institute are looking at the impact of climate change on agriculture, which has obvious implications for rural Angus. EH stated that the Scottish Agricultural College are also looking at models of the potential impact on livestock, crops, soft fruits, rainfall patterns and soil quality. Partners acknowledged that each agency has various statutory and non-statutory obligations to meet regarding these issues.

Partners agreed to email information on individual climate change policies to LH, as well as information regarding the expected impact on individual partners and their clients from climate change. This is to be done by the end of July.

ALL

5 Schedule of Meetings

The group agreed to meet again on Thursday 11 September at 9.30am at Angus House. This will allow the group to provide a report to the meeting of Angus Community Planning Partnership on September 24. LH to arrange booking and lunch.

LH

6 Any Other Competent Business

6.1 Post Office Network Change Programme

A paper, providing a summary of the proposals for Angus and what Angus Council was doing in response was considered. LH is to send out a copy of the full report once it has been discussed at the meeting of Angus Council on June 26.

LH

6.2 Migrant Workers

Partners discussed a summary paper and TB pointed out that there were real health and safety concerns in some areas and SM stated that the environmental impact of migrant workers in terms of sanitation etc as well as building standards also required further investigation.

6.3 Rural Housing

Partners discussed a summary paper and noted that a full report is currently sitting with the Housing Department. Partners agreed to await a response on this before taking it any further.

6.4 SEARS

PG updated the group on the development of SEARS – Scotland's Environmental And Rural Services. This involves a process of bringing together agencies across Scotland with a rural and environmental remit in order to allow for greater collaboration and sharing of services. Co-location of the various agencies was also being discussed in order to develop the concept of a one-stop-shop for clients who currently deal with these groups individually. The groups involved are:

- Scottish Natural Heritage
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency
- Forestry Commission Scotland
- Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority
- Cairngorms National Park Authority
- Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspections Directorate
- The Deer Commission
- The Crofters Commission

6.5 South Esk Catchment Plan

CLi distributed questionnaires regarding the South Esk Catchment area and asked if these could be distributed among colleagues who live or work in this area. The main contact for this is Karen Phillip at Angus Council.

ALL

7 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 11 September, from 9.30-12pm followed by lunch in Training Rooms A&B at Angus House.