

FIRTH OF CLYDE FORUM - CORE GROUP MEETING

6 June 2002, Helensburgh Library, Argyll and Bute Offices

Minutes of Meeting

Present

Arthur Keller (**AK**), SNH (Chair)
Angus Clark (**AC**), Argyll and Bute Council
Rupert Ormond (**RO**), University Marine Biological Station Millport
Stuart Bankier (**SB**), Deputy Queens Harbour Master
Claire McGinley (**CM**), Scottish Enterprise, Dunbartonshire
Fiona Simpson (**FS**), Crown Estate
David Ross (**DR**), Scottish Environmental Protection Agency
Derek West (**DW**), Glasgow and Clyde Valley Structure Plan
Janice Mudge (**JM**), Scottish Water
Doug Flint (**DF**), BMT Cordah Environmental Consultants
Marty Cox (**MC**), Project Officer Scottish Coastal Forum
Stuart MacQuarrie (**SM**), Project Officer Firth of Clyde Forum

1. Apologies

Mike Balmforth, British Marine Federation Scotland
Ian Johnson, Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan & Transport Committee
Ethel-May Abel, Glasgow City Council, Planning Department
Simon Zisman, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

2. Minutes of last meeting

AK read through the actions identified from the last meeting and invited SM to update the core group on implementation. This was done and the minutes were closed. RO acknowledged the continuing improvement and popularity of the website as a means of communicating the activities of the Forum. AK noted that this was down to the work of SM.

3. Summary of Phase I Action Plan

AK summarised the activities of the Forum over the past two years and made reference to the report that SM had provided the core group for approval. AK asked whether the report was a fair summary of the activities of the Forum to date. AK stated that a rather ambitious approach to action identification was evident within the initial Phase I Action Plan draft. AC also noted that the addition of an Action Plan within the Management Strategy was at first thought to be too ambitious by Argyll and Bute Council but in hindsight the benefits were considerable as reflected by the distance that some of the actions had been forwarded.

AK noted that considering the resources of the Forum the progress that had been made was significant. AC followed by suggesting that it was difficult to measure how far any of the actions had been implemented but the sum total was very successful.

RO agreed with AC and AK suggesting that the amount of implementation considering the level of resourcing, was significant. MC was also very impressed with the amount that had been achieved suggesting that the report should be made available to a wider audience. MC was unaware of the activities of the Forum and the actions it was seeking to forward. AC noted that it was difficult convincing superiors of the importance of the Forum particularly those in Lochgilphead as it was seen as a centrally run operation. The report would assist in convincing others as to the importance of the partnership. AK reiterated the resource levels in comparison to other Firth partnerships.

RO suggested that the report should be available to the wider membership and rather than just being posted on the website it should be made available in hard copy with a front cover on it. It was agreed by the group that this would add to the profile of the Forum and would assist in information dissemination.

ACTION

This agenda point was closed by AK inviting the steering group to provide amendments to SM by the week ending 14th June.

4. Phase II Priorities

SM circulated a document called 'Phase II Action Plan: Selection of Priority Actions' to the steering group. AK explained that the document contained a summary of Phase I actions and also a list of new actions derived from recent topic group meetings. He asked the members to consider which actions should be carried forward from Phase I and which new actions should be included. These were to be selected within the resource context already discussed under item 3.

Action 1.3 Establishing regular liaison between fisheries and other interest, using the Royal Navy Model.

AK suggested that the link with the fisheries was important but that the reference to the Royal Navy model should be dropped. SB sought clarification as to what the Model was. AK indicated that it was a formal consultation process to address specific issues of concern to other parties. RO suggested handing out the newsletter through the relevant Fisheries Associations.

Action 2.1 Encourage greater integration of public transport timetables

AC stated that transport was a key issue. It was proposed that the action should be restated to support the local government role in transport issues. Continued monitoring through WESTRANS.

Action 2.2 Advocate increased freight traffic to water

AC is still reporting back to the Forum on the progress of the Timber Transportation Group. It was proposed that this action be subsumed within Action 2.1 in to a wider transport action

Action 3.2/3.3 Establish a Clyde corridor regeneration group to co-ordinate work in promoting the economic and commercial potential of the Clyde area.

CM reviewed the details of the current consultation being undertaken by 'Yellow Book' on behalf of Scottish Enterprise and the then Minister for Enterprise, Transport and Life Long Learning, Wendy Alexander. CM stated that she would provide us with up to date consultation drafts in order that we may be informed of current developments. The Forum would continue to input into this group and promote the whole of the Clyde area rather than just the defined limits within the 'Yellow Book' study. Action should be renamed to reflect the current consultation role of the Forum.

Action 4.1 Set up a meeting of Area Tourist Boards

RO agreed with including it within Phase II. MC suggested that we contact Neil Black of Visit Scotland. RO suggested that we may want to put down on paper what we think are the important aspects of the Clyde and what we may want to see on an Estuary guide.

Action 5.3 Assist in promoting campaigns to prevent pollution/beach litter.

RO stated that this should be approached from a wider perspective, including fisheries protection and the coastguards. It was agreed that it was an issue that should be included as a stand alone action within Phase II.

Action 6.1 Collate bird distribution data from around the Clyde

SB proposed a rewording from collate to 'maintain' due to the current work being progressed. Also suggested that it be included within the general website information action (12.1).

Action 6.2 Undertake pilot project of fore-shore flora/fauna monitoring

RO agreed with retaining this action although the group were as yet unable to define how it would be progressed. There is potential scope for further development working with Historic Scotland.

Action 6.7 Set up Clyde wide network of LBAP groups and use the Forum website to improve access to bio-recording data.

AK suggested that this action be incorporated within the website data handling along with the maintenance of bird distribution data. MC suggested that the Forum contact the Scottish Biodiversity Forum to investigate what plans they may have for representing coastal habitats.

Action 9.1/9.2 Review progress on Shoreline Management Plans

MC suggested that the Forum contact George Lees and find out more about SMPs and whether they may offer anything to the Clyde coast. AC stated that he was interested in shore framework plans and thought that the Forum may be able to input into this area. RO suggested that the project officer may use his own background in fluvial and coastal research in order that the Forum may take ownership of this particular issue. It was suggested that more be found out about this area within local plans as structure plans were too broad based for such specific management tools.

Action 11.6 Encourage the production of port waste management plans for outer Firth areas, and co-ordinate the production of Clyde-wide information on disposal sites

AK reviewed the background to this action and relayed the difficulties that the Forum had in engaging central government in the issue. It was suggested that further research was required. SB provided some insight into his own experience of drafting a waste management plan. This action was put on hold pending further discussion and review.

Action 12.1 Develop the Forum website

Covered previously as an ongoing stated action which will be included within Phase II as an integral part of the Forums information resource.

Action 13.1 Encourage Riparian landowners to include water front access

AK reviewed the background to this action and informed the steering group that it was not carried forward after the 8 month period due to difficulties in implementation. AC suggested that it might be beneficial gathering information from the local plans from the relevant Local Authorities. RO agreed that this may be a way forward in that we can respond to the content citing the national planning guidelines. Need to get into the loop of local plan consultation though in order to consult.

Action 14.4 Develop a schools poster

This action had not been progressed for a number of reasons. The time involved in pulling together a resource, the cost in designing and printing and also in distributing is considerably out with present resources. If funding can be found for design and printing then the project officer can give of his time in order to contact teaching staff, co-ordinate content and liase with designers, printers and distributors in order to make the resource available. This action will take more time and money than at first may be evident and this needs to be taken into account when deciding upon Phase II Actions.

Action 15.2 Develop a Clyde code of practice for users of the Firth

DR asked whether other Firths had something similar. SM suggested that the Moray Firth Forum had a relevant document about dolphin conservation tied to the mSAC

status of part of the Moray Firth. FS suggested that the UK Harbour Authorities had a Forum looking at a similar area and it might be worth finding out what that was about.

5. Date of the next core group and Forum meetings

AK proposed that a core group meeting be scheduled for 3 July in order to continue the identification of Phase II Actions. DR offered the SEPA offices for the meeting. A time of 09:30 was agreed on. SM will distribute location maps.

6. ITAD/BMT Cordah Review

MC and DF facilitated two different groups each with a mix of Forum experience. The two groups were given a number of tasks to identify the effectiveness of local coastal Fora. This review is also being undertaken with the Forth, Solway and Moray Firths.

END