

ANGUS COUNCIL

PLANNING AND TRANSPORT POLICY COMMITTEE

13 JUNE 2002

SUBJECT: TAY ESTUARY FORUM

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND TRANSPORT

Abstract: This report outlines the work of the Tay Estuary Forum and suggests the Council should continue to give support to the Forum and sign the Memorandum of Agreement.

1 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee:-

1. agrees that Angus Council continue to play an active part in the Tay Estuary Forum including officer representation on the Steering Group;
2. agree to contribute £6,000 from the Planning & Transport Revenue Budget over three years towards the work of the Forum;
3. agrees that the Convener of the Planning & Transport Policy Committee sign the Memorandum of Agreement on behalf of Angus Council.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Tay Estuary Forum is a non-statutory voluntary partnership which was established in late 1997. The Forum forms part of a network of similar projects covering other estuaries and firths in Scotland initiated by Scottish Natural Heritage through the 'Focus on Firths' project.
- 2.2 The overall aim of the Tay Estuary Forum is the promotion of the wise and sustainable use of the Tay Estuary and adjacent coastline. An immediate aim is the preparation of a Coastal Zone Management Plan. The geographic extent of the Forum stretches from the tidal limit of the Firth of Tay at Scone, to Fife Ness and the River North Esk on the open coastline.
- 2.3 Angus Council is represented on the Forum Steering Group. Members of the group comprises four Local Authorities, Scottish Water, Crown Estates, Scottish Natural Heritage, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Dundee and Abertay Universities, Dundee and Tayside Chamber of Commerce, Montrose Port Authority, Port of Dundee Limited, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency and the Scottish Coastal Forum. The wider membership of the Forum numbers over 300 and includes landowners, industry, conservation bodies, community groups, recreational users and individuals.

- 2.4 Angus Council agreed to contribute £5,000 towards core funding for the Tay Estuary Forum in January 1998 (report No. 106/98, Planning & Transport Policy Committee 29 January 1998 refers). It was agreed that the Director of Planning & Transport act as primary contact with the Forum.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Forum employs a Project Officer but this is on a part-time basis due to insufficient funds to fund the post on a full-time basis. Along with other partners the Council has received a request for continued financial support for the work of the Forum to cover the next three years. Various partners have already agreed to support the Forum and an application for grant funding will be made to SNH for matched funding for the period 2002/03 to 2004/05.
- 3.2 It is also proposed that the organisations represented on the Steering Group enter into a "Memorandum of Agreement" (attached as Appendix 1) to define the purpose of the Forum and maintain commitment from the principal organisations involved in the regulation and management of the coastal area.
- 3.3 The whole 55 kms of the Angus coastline is included within the Tay Estuary Forum boundary. The Angus Local Plan categorises the coast as developed or undeveloped in accordance with National Planning Policy Guideline (NPPG) 13. This guidance note also advocates partnership working in the coastal area as it is not only a complex natural environment but also a complex policy area, where a range of agencies with differing, but often overlapping objectives, responsibilities and powers operate. It requires a range of organisations to work together if an agreed overview of how the coast is to be used, managed and protected is to be reached. As the Local Plan states, the Tay Estuary Forum provides an opportunity for an integrated approach to coastal management. The production of an Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan (ICZM) is a key aim of Forum and once produced will provide guidance to Development Plans in Angus.
- 3.4 The Council, in conjunction with SNH, Scottish Water and consultants is currently preparing a Shoreline Management Plan for the Angus coastline under the direction of the Director of Roads. This will outline the nature of the processes of coastal erosion and deposition, consider the implication of alternative means of dealing with coastal erosion and provide a strategy for coastal defence. The strategy will also highlight the implications for Structure and Local Plan policies and Development Control decisions. Once available the Shoreline Management Plan will contribute to a better understanding of the issues being faced in the Forum area and be a major factor in the consideration of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan for the Firth of Tay.
- 3.5 The ICZM Plan must consider a wide range of issues one of which is the importance of the natural environment of the Tay Estuary which is illustrated by the many nature conservation designations: Local Nature Reserve, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area, RAMSAR and the candidate Tay and Eden Estuary Marine SAC.

4 NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 In order to maintain the momentum of the Forum partners are keen to secure funding for three years. This will enable the Forum to employ a full-time officer: to progress work on an Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan; to advance and implement projects; provide a communication link, both within the Forum and, to outside organisations and the public; and to provide the day to day management of the Forum.
- 4.2 The Forum has already held a number of seminars to discuss coastal management issues within the Tay Estuary and adjacent coastline and intends to hold another towards the end of this calendar year. A newsletter is produced to keep the wider membership informed and a website (which has a link to the Council) is maintained and continually developed (<http://www.dundee.ac.uk/crsem/Tef.htm>). Both of these mechanisms will assist in information dissemination and provide opportunities for networking. Access to information relating to the Tay Estuary is assisted by the database and library resource of the Forum and these will be further expanded and developed. It is also intended to promote examples of good practice and initially this will be achieved through the production of a leaflet.
- 4.3 In the future it is envisaged the Forum may lead or assist in the production of management strategies that may be required for the Tay Estuary. These may include a management plan for the candidate Tay and Eden Estuary SAC (report No. 1339/01 to Planning & Transport Policy Committee, 22 November 2001 refers). They could also contribute toward the preparation of sub-River Basin management plans as proposed in the Scottish Executive's paper "The Future for Scotland's Waters – Proposals for Legislation" issued in February this year and reported to Committee in March (report No. 316/02 refers).

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Forum is hoping to raise in the region of £25,000 for each of the next three years from partners towards the project and to ensure the continued employment of a Project Officer for the Forum. It is proposed that the Council contribute £2,000 per annum over the next three years (2002/03 to 2004/05) towards these costs. This will be accommodated within the Planning & Transport Revenue Budget in each financial year.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Chief Executive and Directors of Law & Administration, Finance, Education, Environment and Consumer Protection, Leisure Services and Roads have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

7 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

8 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 An integrated approach to the management of the coastal area requires the co-operation of a range of agencies and individuals and cannot be taken forward by one body alone. The Tay Estuary Forum provides a mechanism for achieving this and has made considerable progress in furthering understanding between partners of the issues faced. It is recommended that Angus Council join others in supporting the Forum in both staff time and financial terms by agreeing to continue to be an active partner in the Forum and contribute £2,000 per annum for the next three years and by signing the Memorandum of Agreement.

NOTE

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

AA/PC/KW
31 May 2002

Alex Anderson
Director of Planning and Transport

APPENDIX 1

Tay Estuary Forum

Memorandum of Agreement

The Tay Estuary Forum

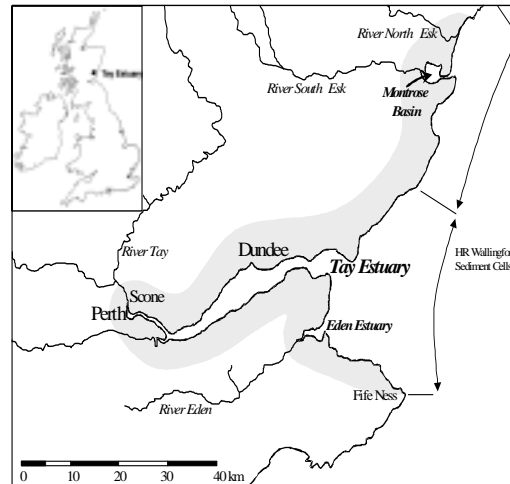
The Tay Estuary Forum is a non-statutory voluntary partnership established in late 1997, dedicated to safeguarding the future wellbeing of the Tay Estuary and adjacent coastline. It is one of a series of partnerships around the Scottish coastline which are linked through the work of Scottish Natural Heritage and the Scottish Coastal Forum.

Geographical Extent of the Forum Region

The Tay Estuary Forum focuses on the coastal region that extends from the tidal limit of the Firth of Tay at Scone, to Fife Ness and the River North Esk on the open coastline, and extends seawards.

This is based on the geographical extent of coastal cells 2a (Fife Ness to Deil's Head) and 2b (Deil's Head to Milton Ness) as defined by Hydraulics Research (HR) Wallingford.

The Tay Estuary Forum coastline, which is governed by four local riparian authorities (Angus, Dundee, Fife and Perth & Kinross), encompasses a diverse range of environments, including three estuaries: the Tay, the Eden and the South Esk, including the Montrose Basin.



Aim

The overall aim of the Tay Estuary Forum was considered and agreed at the 2nd 'Towards A Tay Estuary Forum' meeting, 11th March 1998 and is defined as...

'promoting the wise and sustainable use of the Tay Estuary and adjacent coastline'

An immediate objective is to pursue the principles of Coastal Zone Management with the preparation of a CZM plan, if this is appropriate, within 3 years of the signing of this memorandum.

Partners

The Tay Estuary Forum steering group comprises representatives of the following organisations, all of which support the terms of this memorandum of agreement.

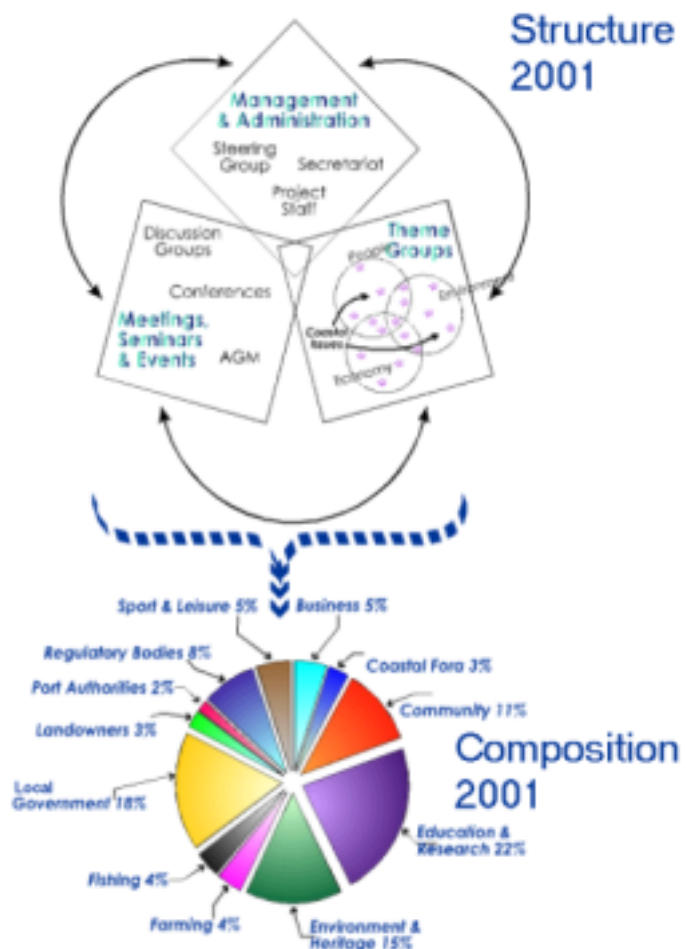
Angus Council	Perth & Kinross Council
Crown Estate	Port of Dundee Limited
Dundee City Council	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Dundee & Tayside Chamber of Commerce	Scottish Natural Heritage
East of Scotland Water Authority	Scottish Wildlife Trust
Fife Council	University of Abertay Dundee
Montrose Port Authority	University of Dundee
North of Scotland Water Authority	

Structure

The Tay Estuary Forum currently represents over 300 members covering the full spectrum of use, management and interest within the Tay coastal area. Those who have shown an interest in the Forum so far, include regulatory bodies, landowners, industry, conservation bodies, community groups, recreational users, individuals and many more.

The Forum exists as a voluntary body, providing a focus for key agencies with a management role in the context of the Tay coastal zone. Partner commitment is essential to the success of the Forum, collaborative and co-ordinated working and the future welfare of the Tay Estuary region.

The Forum aims to operate on an equal partner basis and is open to all. For directive purposes, the work of the Forum is guided by a Steering Group, which represents the main regulatory bodies, and is managed and administered by a Secretariat based at the University of Dundee.



9 TERMS OF RESPONSIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS OF FORUM BODIES

Steering Group

Key Tasks: management, guidance

Role: To maintain committed representation from those with an interest in, or responsibility for, the regulation and management of the Tay Estuary and adjacent coastal zone. To co-ordinate, manage and guide the ongoing work programme of the Forum. The Steering Group should meet at least quarterly.

Representation: The Steering Group is drawn from principal regulatory and management bodies and authorities within the Tay coastal region (see list of Partner organisations above). The Scottish Coastal Forum is also represented on the Steering Group to ensure national recognition and co-ordination.

Secretariat

Key Tasks: administration, management

Role: To manage the day to day work of the Forum and oversee the work of the Project Officer.

Representation: The Secretariat is drawn from the bodies employing the Project Officer

Personnel : Subject to the availability of appropriate finances, the Forum will fund a Project Officer, whose principal responsibilities will be to provide the necessary administrative support to the Forum which will enable the Forum to co-ordinate the continued progress of its voluntary coastal management partnership for the Tay estuary and adjacent coastline.

The Steering Group will meet as required to oversee the work of the Project Officer, while day-to-day management will be provided by the Secretariat as outlined above.

Finance : All finance raised in the name of the Forum will be held in a dedicated account, and managed on behalf of the Forum by one of the partner organisations. The Secretariat will provide financial reports on this account to each of the full meetings of the Partnership and a statement will be provided and audited at the end of each financial year, detailing the costs and expenses of the initiative.

Research : The Forum may commission research, as agreed by the Steering Group, in order to achieve the objectives of the initiative. Each partner may continue to commission their own research, survey and monitoring work aimed at addressing issues within the aims and objectives which are of particular relevance to them.

Information gathered by the initiative will be in the joint ownership of the partners, and may be shared informally with other organisations, at the discretion of the Partnership. No information arising from the work of the Forum may be reproduced or quoted without the express permission of the Forum, or the partner organisation which commissioned the work.

The Forum Body

Key Tasks: participation, communication, networking

Role: To maintain a diverse and inclusive representation from those who work, live and play within the Tay Estuary and adjacent coastal zone and from those who regulate and manage it and to ensure committed participation throughout the work of the Forum. Those within the Forum body are encouraged and invited to attend all Forum meetings (other than those for the Steering Group), particularly the Annual General Meeting. Work progressed is communicated to the entire Forum body through the mailing list.

Representation: The Forum body is open to all, and members are represented by a mailing list. Awareness of the mailing list has been raised through the TEF leaflet, newsletters and website.




Theme Groups

Key Tasks: issue identification, discussion, dissemination

Role: To identify priority issues for the Forum and to participate in meetings and events and progress work related to these specific issues.

Representation: Representation is drawn from the entire Forum body, with a Forum Steering Group member involved and reporting to the Forum Steering Group. Three themes were defined in the TEF Theme Framework document (May 2000) to progress the identification and discussion of specific coastal issues toward the preparation of documents addressing the key issues of the Forum and opportunities for action. The three theme groups currently represent People, the Economy and the Environment and are kept under review.

This Memorandum of Agreement has been adopted by the following signatories on behalf of their partners:

Logo's and signatures of all SG partners required here

(Include SCF logo - 'Associated with' rather than signature)