



Agency Board Meeting 29 April 2014

Board Report Number: SEPA 14/14

Strategic Partnerships and Stakeholder Engagement Framework

Summary:	This paper presents a proposal to develop and implement a Stakeholder Engagement Framework that will strengthen, augment and align the Agency's approach on Strategic Partnerships and Stakeholder Engagement. The paper will describe the supporting mechanisms that will be implemented in accordance with the proposed framework approach.
Risks:	The main risks could arise from loss of reputation as a result of ineffective management of stakeholder relations and engagement. The Agency could also miss opportunities to influence the wider environmental agenda by not effectively working with stakeholders. It is important therefore that the proposed mechanism must be suitably robust, quality controlled and appropriately managed and resourced.
Financial Implications:	There may be some small additional costs in terms of supporting activities but in general it is estimated that the financial implications will be negligible and can be accommodated within the existing budget.
Staffing Implications:	There are no staffing implications in this instance.
Environmental and Carbon Impact:	Negligible impact identified in relation to the carbon footprint of the Agency.
Purpose of the report:	For approval
Report Author:	Martin Valenti, Climate Change and Business Engagement Manager Allan Reid, Chief Officer Governance
Appendices:	Options for Board Site Visits/Seminars

Strategic Partnerships and Stakeholder Engagement Framework
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1. Introduction and purpose

- 1.1 SEPA's Corporate Plan and draft Annual Operating Plan (AOP) have identified partnership working as an essential element to supporting the delivery of our objectives. In association with the Board Engagement paper that was approved in February 2014, this paper sets out a proposal to develop a strategic approach that would embed and align partnership working and stakeholder engagement. The framework would set out how we would aim to deliver better more purposeful partnership working with our key stakeholders and to identify new opportunities for collaborative working and engagement. By developing a strategic framework approach to managing partnerships we will help the Agency to deliver on our corporate objectives and generally help to improve engagement activities internally and externally.
- 1.2 The Agency is required to work in partnership with a range of public and private sector organisations to deliver as wide a range of environmental, social and economic benefits as possible. Our key stakeholders include the public, the Scottish Government, local authorities (including Community Planning Partnerships), and other public sector organisations, the business community and the academic sector.
- 1.3 We aim to be as efficient, effective and influential as we can be in respect of engagement nationally and internationally, deploying our technical and scientific expertise, as well as our environmental information, where and when it is needed. But we recognise that regulation alone will not solve all Scotland's environmental problems. By further developing our work with key partners we will increasingly make more flexible use of our resources, directing effort at important environmental issues, fixing them, and letting everyone know about it

2. Background

- 2.1 In order for the Agency to direct effort where it will benefit the environment and people most, we increasingly need to reduce effort associated with lower environmental risks. We can only do this by developing better partnerships and seeking collaborative approaches for tackling common environmental objectives. We have already begun this process in relation to regulatory inspections and environmental monitoring. We believe this is the right approach in order to achieve the best possible results for the environment and for everyone in Scotland. We can deliver far more effectively by extending our influence on environmental behaviour through proactive partnerships than in isolation solely by direct regulatory control.
- 2.2 One of SEPA's core values is "*Engagement*" and it is highly important to recognise that strong and purposeful engagement with our stakeholders is essential for the Agency to deliver on its core purpose. The majority of people in SEPA engage with a broad range of stakeholders and key partners so it is essential that our approach to partnership working is professional and consistent and importantly adds value to the work of the Agency.
- 2.3 Sustainable Development provides a good example of where developing effective partnerships can bring about positive outcomes for the Agency. The Scottish Government's key objectives and national outcomes including their Low Carbon Economic Strategy and the Low Carbon Scotland Publication "Meeting the Emissions Reductions Targets 2013-2027" often referred to as (RPP2) have established Scotland's ambitions to tackle climate change whilst at the same time creating a strong and vibrant green economy.

This approach aims to satisfy the tripartite needs of society, economy and the environment. The delivery of all three is the essence of “sustainable development” and requires strong and effective partnership working with a wide range of stakeholders across Scotland’s private, public and third sectors as well as communities and civic society more generally. No one body or organisation has overall control or responsibility to deliver a sustainable Scotland so it is vital that mechanisms are developed and implemented to enable effective collaborations.

- 2.4 2014 is going to be a big year for Scotland; including the second Year of Homecoming, the battle of Bannockburn anniversary, the Commonwealth Games, The Ryder Cup and, of course, the Independence Referendum. It will be a big year for SEPA too. Among other things, we will develop Scotland’s 14 flood risk management strategies, publish draft river basin management plans, begin delivering our new climate change plan, prepare for our new landfill tax collection role, further develop the ‘Scotland’s Environment’ website, and help deliver Scotland’s zero waste and resource efficiency ambitions. Much of this work will be delivered through partnerships, from integrated planning at a strategic level, to on-the-ground delivery.
- 2.5 The process of developing and identifying “mutual challenges” facilitates a bonding between partners that can help to built trust. Developing business support for Government Climate Change policy is a perfect example of such a mutual challenge. The formation of the 2020 Climate Group which developed a bridge between policy and the private sector is an example of how mutual SEPA/Scottish Government and private sector challenges can be met and successfully overcome. We can deliver far more effectively by extending our influence on environmental behaviour through proactive partnerships than in isolation solely by direct regulatory control.
- 2.6 We presently work closely with the Scottish Government and with our customers, particularly regulated operators and representative stakeholder bodies, on the environmental components of the Regulatory Reform (Scotland) Bill and to shape the next steps in delivering a new framework of environment regulation in Scotland but we should seek to continue the momentum and to further develop opportunities and partnership working that will deliver positive outcomes such as the examples below:
- i. Working with key Public Sector Partners on the ENFOR review to review of options for achieving further efficiencies and strategic alignment across the main Divisions and Public Bodies which come within the scope of the Environment and Forestry Directorate
 - ii. Working with Flood Risk Management partners to develop our 14 Flood Risk Management Strategies
 - iii. Working with partners to improve urban air quality and supporting the Government’s review of Local Air Quality Management
 - iv. Developing, with Scotland’s Environment Web partners, citizen science tools and projects
 - v. Working with the Coordinated Agenda for Marine, Environment and Rural Affairs Science (CAMERAS), the European Environment Agency, the Scottish Government and other partners in developing a framework for improving and maintaining the health of Scotland’s natural capital in an ecosystem services approach
 - vi. Supporting Scotland’s 2020 Climate Group to help ensure Scotland’s targets on climate change are achieved and to demonstrate strong leadership in tackling emissions
 - vii. Working proactively with public sector partners, business and trade associations to support sustainable business development practices

- viii. Engaging with the Scottish Government, planning authorities, key agencies and other stakeholders to support delivery of an efficient and effective planning system
- ix. Influencing the future development and use of land and the development of sustainable places
- x. Collaborating with the Scottish Cities Alliance to support delivery of the Agenda for Cities for all who live and work within and around Scotland's cities
- xi. The Scotland's Environment and Rural Services (SEARS) partnership between eight public bodies aiming to improve the experience among land managers
- xii. Supporting the uptake of new and emerging low carbon technologies, both through our regulatory role and by providing advice and support
- xiii. Providing the Scottish Government with scientifically sound independent advice on the environment and climate change, and using our knowledge and expertise to ensure that environmental decision-making becomes more integrated and includes climate change considerations
- xiv. Working in partnership with Zero Waste Scotland and with industry to ensure that waste production is minimised, and that the maximum value is recovered from waste through reuse, recycling and recovery schemes
- xv. Providing leadership in, and demonstrating compliance with, public bodies' climate change duties as an exemplar for the public sector

2.7 Our Annual Operating Plan (AOP) sets out our aims to continue to refashion and energise our relationships with three principal sets of partners:

- Business: with a collective aim to contribute to a resilient, environmentally sustainable economy that maximises opportunities
- Public services: with a collective aim to contribute to delivering environmentally sustainable public services and to seek opportunities for sharing good practice
- Civil society: with a collective aim to contribute to citizen stewardship

Together, these partnerships will maximise our contribution to a 'valued environment', supporting sustainable wealth creation and wellbeing for Team Scotland whilst sharing the responsibilities of maintaining natural assets and fair access to their benefits over the long term.

3. Proposal

3.1 This paper proposes to develop and implement a framework for strategic partnerships and engagement. The aims of the framework will be to develop protocols and mechanisms to broaden the opportunities for wider partnership working and to enhance external engagement generally. The Framework will seek to:

- i. ensure a customised and coherent approach to stakeholder engagement across the Agency
- ii. develop and implement robust and transparent mechanisms to evaluate partnerships and support this by developing a range of decision making tools
- iii. enable better planned and more informed policies, projects, programs and services with stakeholders as appropriate
- iv. position stakeholder engagement as core business for the Agency
- v. facilitate effective collaboration and knowledge sharing
- vi. communicate the Agency's commitment to and principles of stakeholder engagement to its stakeholders

- 3.2 At the Agency Board meeting on 11 February a paper was presented and approved on Board Engagement which together with improving our approach to strategic partnerships will help to build the influence and reputation of the Agency especially with external stakeholders including Government officials and the public. The paper proposed that where appropriate, the Agency Board would hold meetings and/or seminars on the premises of our stakeholders to gain a better understanding and appreciation of the wider environment agenda and to broaden Board Members' individual experience of the role of the Agency and the environment in which we operate.
- 3.3 Scotland's and SEPA's working environment is dynamic and subject to change, so keeping abreast of new technologies and strategic initiatives is important to ensure our regulatory approach is appropriate and supportive of our corporate objectives. We recognise the value in Board Members gaining insight into specific topics where our regulatory work can impact such as the Circular Economy. The Agency Board meeting on 27 May has been identified as a Board seminar and Appendix 1 presents 3 options that have been identified as possible site visits.
- 3.4 The following is a list of activities that will be carried out in pursuance of developing the framework:
- i. Map out and manage key stakeholder relations relevant to the Agency
 - ii. Identify and implement Governance protocols for strategic partnerships and manage all interface and relations with the Agency's key identified stakeholders to ensure Governance protocols are being adhered to ensure that the Board and AMT is sighted and informed on major issues/opportunities with stakeholders.
 - iii. Identify and develop key opportunities with stakeholders in support of the Agency's evolving role in Scotland and promote the role of the Agency with stakeholders
 - iv. Ensure the Agency's partnerships and engagement processes are being delivered consistently and professionally and identify opportunities to improve external engagement generally
 - v. Organise quarterly stakeholder sessions with identified key partners to share messages about SEPA's corporate objectives and to demonstrate transparency of approach

4. Summary and conclusion

- 4.1 This paper presents and proposes to develop and implement a framework which supports a range of initiatives to underpin and support an overall enhancement of the Agency's approach for managing strategic partnerships and to develop more opportunities for engaging with stakeholders. A detailed implementation plan is being prepared that will describe how the framework will be implemented throughout the Agency and this will come to the Board in due course.
- 4.2 This proposal also sets out an approach for identifying, evaluating, establishing and managing external partnerships with stakeholders.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 The Agency Board is asked to **approve** the framework proposal.

Martin Valenti, Climate Change and Business Engagement Manager
Allan Reid Chief Officer for Governance

15 April 2014

Appendix 1

Options for Board visits

At the Agency Board meeting on 11 February a paper was presented and approved on Board Engagement. The paper proposed that on occasion and where appropriate, the Agency Board would hold meetings and/or seminars on the premises of our stakeholders to gain a better understanding and appreciation of the wider environment agenda and to broaden the Board Members' individual experience of the role of the Agency and the environment in which we operate.

Scotland's and SEPA's working environment is dynamic and subject to change, so keeping abreast of new technologies and strategic initiatives is important to ensure our regulatory approach is appropriate and supportive of our corporate objectives. We recognise the value in Board Members gaining insight into specific topics where our regulatory work can impact such as the Circular Economy and Retrofitting the Built Environment. It is proposed therefore that the Agency Board holds meetings and/or seminars in the premises of stakeholder organisations to experience first hand the changes being experienced by our stakeholders and to gain a clearer understanding of SEPA's role in facilitating the transition to a low carbon economy. The following 5 options have been identified as possible site visits:

Option 1: Sustainable Cities/Viridor – Identified for May 27th Board Meeting.

This is another developing theme for Scotland is the role that sustainable cities can have in driving green growth, creating sustainable jobs, reducing carbon emissions and tackling fuel poverty. A visit and /or joint Board meeting could be held at Sustainable Glasgow initiative. In 2013, Glasgow were runners-up to the European Green Capital awards and there are numerous locations that would provide for an interesting site visit including the Waste Heat plant at [Polmadie](#)¹ and/or to meet with the senior personal at Strathclyde University's new innovation hub.

Glasgow City Council handles 350,000 tonnes of waste every year. Of that, Glasgow sends the vast majority, 74%, to landfill in 2010/11. With annual hikes in landfill tax and ambitious Scottish Government zero waste targets focusing on waste reduction, re-use, enhanced recycling and recovering renewable energy from what remains, the council has been planning for change. Planning permission was granted in 2012 for a £154m recycling and renewable energy centre in Glasgow's south side. The plant will be run by waste specialist Viridor who will begin building at Polmadie in the summer, with completion expected in early 2016.

The plant will be able to treat 200,000 tonnes of green bin waste a year and is expected to create 254 jobs. In addition to recycling, Viridor says the plant will be able recover enough energy to power the equivalent of 22,000 homes and heat 8,000 homes. The facility will be built at the council's existing waste facility at Polmadie. SEPA's role is developing in facilitating sustainability across Scotland's cities and this would provide an excellent opportunity to embed knowledge and learning for Board Members on this important theme.

Option 2: The Circular Economy (CE) in practice

Hold a Board seminar at the Headquarters of Hewlett Packard (HP) which will involve a tour of the unique "Asset take-back facility" in Erskine.

¹<http://www.viridor.co.uk/our-developments/glasgow-rrec/#>

The visit would also include holding a Board meeting after the tour and light lunch in the HP offices. The [Circular Economy](#)² is a developing and important theme for Scotland and the role of the Agency will develop accordingly so having an update on the practical considerations for industry will provide a useful awareness raising opportunity and also to learn from the industry on some of the issues they face when trying to manage resources sustainably.

Option 3: Sustainable buildings and national retrofit strategy for Scotland

Arrange a site visit to the BRE innovation park and the zero carbon houses at the Ravenscraig site. This could be complimented by inviting senior officials and elected Members from North Lanarkshire Council for an informal discussion. The Scottish Government is pushing energy efficiency and the national retrofit strategy and SEPA has an important role in facilitating innovation in building design and construction.

The Deputy First Minister leads on the themes for [Scotland's Sustainable Housing Strategy](#)³ and the national retrofit programme which is aimed to bring together policies on climate change, energy efficiency, fuel poverty, planning and the built environment. It sets out our vision for warm, high quality, affordable, low carbon homes and a housing sector that helps to establish a successful low-carbon economy across Scotland. BRE have delivered a task on behalf of the 2020 Climate Group to develop a partnership approach to support the retrofit programme called [Retrofit Scotland](#)⁴.

Option 4: A Day in the Life – White Cart Catchment Ministerial Visit/Tour commencing 2015

It is proposed that every second year starting next year, we organise a summer tour with a range of key partners, including senior officials from the Scottish Government, Representatives from the Rural Affairs and Climate Change and Environment Committee (RACCE) and appropriate Ministers. The themed tours would include expert tutorials from SEPA staff as a means to sharing detailed information about an initiative or site of particular interest and would provide an opportunity for SEPA to get stakeholder feedback on our current ways of working which we can build into our future plans.

- White Cart Catchment Area
- Ecosystems services
- Invasive Species and Biodiversity Management
- Flood prevention in Practice – A multi-agency approach
- Sustainable Urban Drainage
- Landfill and Opencast sites: risks from abandonment

Option 5: Joint Board Meetings

SEPA has many partner organisations and in the current landscape of “Team Scotland”, we feel it is important to understand the workings of other bodies and to seek opportunities to work together. Joint Board Meetings have been held previously with Scottish Water and SNH and these were very successful. It is proposed to investigate and identify opportunities for further joint Board meetings with other agencies/organisations where relevant. For example, Scottish Enterprise. Enfor partners, NFUS etc

²<http://www.worldresourcesforum.org/files/file/Member%20story.%20HP.pdf>

³<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/sustainable/Strategygroup/remitmembership>

⁴<http://www.retrofitscotland.org/>