

BEDFORDSHIRE CLIMATE CHANGE FORUM

Terms of Reference

1 NAME AND STATUS

The name of the Group is the Bedfordshire Climate Change Forum.

The group has no legal status, is non party-political and originates from the work of Local Agenda 21.

The geographical area represented by the group is the historic county of Bedfordshire, including Luton Borough.

It is an independent organisation which works closely with all Bedfordshire local authorities and Luton Borough, with valued secretarial assistance from the Borough of Bedford

2 AIMS

To seek the minimisation of carbon emissions and pollution from both existing and new developments.

To raise awareness and take all possible actions to limit climate change and its impacts and promote the use of sustainable energy technologies and systems in Bedfordshire

To promote and support measures which maximise energy conservation and efficiency.

3 OBJECTIVES

To support, work with and seek positive co-operation from local authorities, public, private and voluntary/community (VC) sectors and the wider community to reduce energy use, maximise their energy efficiency and minimise carbon emissions.

To seek to influence policies, programmes and development plans which impact on Bedfordshire's energy use, pollution and carbon emission levels.

To secure the necessary resources, including finance, technical expertise, support in kind and sponsorship to enable the Forum to pursue its aims

To ensure that sustainable energy schemes help to improve the environment in Bedfordshire as part of national and international climate change initiatives.

To disseminate climate change information, through demonstration projects, debate, technical input and advocacy to the public, private and VC sectors and to discrete/specific groups/the wider community as a means of encouraging community and individual involvement.

To provide a forum for exchanging information, sharing good practice, linking with technical expertise and discussing issues associated with climate change and energy use/provision in Bedfordshire by such means as public meetings and seminars.

4 MEMBERSHIP

The Forum is open to all individuals and organisations who are concerned about climate change, have a vision of a sustainable energy future which minimises pollution and the production of hazardous waste and want to help to make it happen.

Those organisations listed in Appendix A will be invited to become affiliate members of the Forum

Affiliated Forum members will be able to send a representative (or in the case of the local authorities, two) to attend and participate in Steering Group and Forum meetings. The Forum Secretary will set up and maintain a database of attending representatives and all those on it will receive all paperwork associated with Forum business. Representatives and/or organisations can request to be added to or removed from the database by writing to the Secretary at any time and with immediate effect.

The Forum's membership is not exhaustive and will be kept under continual review. All membership requests to the Steering Group will be considered by the Executive and approved by the Forum Steering Group in line with our Aims and Objectives, 4.1 and 4.6.

The Forum will be able to co-opt other organisations or individuals to attend designated meetings in response to a specific item or technical need.

All members are responsible for making effective and positive contributions to the meetings and for supporting the aims and objectives of the Forum as well as other decisions democratically arrived at.

5 FORUM MEETINGS

A Steering Group meeting of the Forum shall consist of not less than 7 members/affiliate member representatives and include the Chair and Secretary.

A special or emergency non-executive meeting of the Forum for consultation can be called at any time by not less than 5 Forum members by notifying the Secretary and Chair in writing as soon as possible.

The Steering Group shall meet at a time and a place agreed at the previous meeting.

The Forum shall be non-discriminatory in its operation.

Meeting agendas will be drawn up by the Secretary, agreed by the Chair and distributed to all members, along with any supporting papers, at least one week in advance of the meeting to which they relate. All members are able to submit items to the Secretary for inclusion on the agenda, at least 3 weeks in advance of the meeting to which they relate or later if the Chair agrees that it is an "emergency".

Members will be expected to report the progress of the Forum to their respective organisations.

The written records of the Forum meetings, including any supporting paperwork, shall be made public, with the exception of those items deemed by the steering group to have an overriding commercial or personal confidentiality.

6 THE EXECUTIVE

Every member and affiliate member shall be invited to an annual Forum meeting to elect a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson to serve for a year, with the possibility of re-election for up to 5 years.

At the same meeting the Forum shall appoint a Secretary for the same period of time to provide secretarial services to the group. Written records of the steering group and Executive meetings will be kept and distributed to all steering group members within two weeks of the associated meeting. This record will include attendees, apologies, date, venue and a record of all new and ongoing actions and decisions.

The Forum shall elect a Treasurer at the same meeting and for the same period of time to act as banker, present financial reports to members as required and investigate possible sources of funding as required.

At the same meeting and for the same period of time the Forum shall elect up to 5 more members, at least three of whom should be from the wider, non-affiliate membership, to form an Executive Committee to carry out the decisions of the steering group, run the business of the Forum between meetings and report back to the steering group on its activities.

The quorum for an Executive meeting shall be 5 elected members, two of whom must be officers (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer). (see 5.1 to 5.3)

The Executive can co-opt individual Forum members or non-members to provide specialist expertise.

7 CO-ORDINATION AND WORKING PROCESSES

The Executive is able to establish sub groups involving members as well as being able to co-opt non-members to take forward areas of Forum business, for the duration of work on those areas.

The terms of reference of sub groups are to be agreed in advance by the Steering Group.

All sub groups will report to the Executive, which will be responsible for considering recommendations, reviewing progress, providing support and guidance, co-ordinating activities and reporting to the Steering Group.

8 PUBLICITY POLICY

Members will be expected to agree and follow an agreed policy for managing all media relations.

9 DECISION MAKING

Decisions will be made at meetings by simple majority voting with a minuted record of the main points for and against.

10 DISSOLUTION

The Forum may be terminated after appropriate consultation between all parties.

11 ALTERATIONS TO THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

These can only happen at an AGM or and EGM

The Chairman shall notify each member in writing of any proposed alterations to the terms of reference 14 days prior to any meeting.

11.3 All members of the Forum at the AGM or EGM meeting shall agree any alterations to these rules and guidelines

DATE ADOPTED 21/3/07

Appendix A: Affiliate Forum members

Bedford Borough Council
Bedford College
Bedfordshire County Council
BRCC
Beds and Luton Economic Development Partnership
BREF/P organisational members (not already listed above/ below)
BedSEP organisational members (not already listed above/ below)
CPRE
East of England Development Agency (EEDA)
Environment Agency
Friends of the Earth
Luton and South Beds LDV
Luton Borough Council
Mid Beds District Council
Milton Keynes Energy Agency
National Energy Foundation
Renewables East
Renaissance Bedford (LDV)
South Beds District Council
University of Bedfordshire