

DACORUM ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

OBJECTIVES AND TERMS OF REFERENCE 2002

1. Introduction

The Dacorum Environmental Forum (DEF) was established on the 25 November 1993 as a partnership initiative between Dacorum Borough Council (the Council) and the Community. The principal aims of the Forum were to:

- Promote dialogue on environmental issues.
- Promote wider community involvement in and awareness of environmental protection.
- Work towards the development and implementation of a Local Agenda 21 Strategy (Community Plan) for the Borough.

In the years since its launch the DEF has undergone a number of fundamental changes. In addition the environmental debate at local, national and international level has further developed. This new set of objectives and Terms of Reference for the DEF has been developed to reflect these changes and developments. It will also assist the DEF in its continuing work to protect and improve the state of the environment for the Borough of Dacorum and its citizens.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE DACORUM ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

Promote public interest in environmental issues and to stimulate local action.

- Provide an opportunity for all interested groups, organisations and individuals within the Borough to meet and exchange information and to work in partnership to promote the protection and improvement of the local environment and contribute to the resolution of global problems.
- Actively contribute to the development, implementation and monitoring of the Community Plan. DEF is identified as the co-ordinating forum for environmental actions in the Dacorum Community Plan
- Act as a Forum to raise environmental concerns and issues and, where appropriate, to seek consensus on and promote solutions.
- Seek consensus on environmental issues and promote solutions through dialogue with other agencies.

3. STRUCTURE OF THE DACORUM ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

Membership

Membership of the DEF is free and open to all groups, organisations and individuals within the Borough that have an interest in promoting a sustainable environment.

Chairman and Vice-Chairman

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman are elected in the manner set out below. The Chairman of the DEF convenes the meetings of the Forum and the Steering Group. The Vice-Chairman deputises in the absence of the Chairman.

Steering Group

The Steering Group is made up of up to 8 representatives from the members of the full DEF and is responsible for establishing the work agenda/programme for the Forum.

Administrative Support

Support for the DEF is provided, as far as practicable, through the Council's Environmental Resources Unit. The members of the Steering Group may provide additional administrative support.

LSP representatives

DEF is the co-ordinating forum for environmental actions in the Dacorum Community Plan. The forum will nominate two representatives for the Local Strategic Partnership – one member for the LSP board and one member for the LSP support group.

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE DACORUM ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

Dacorum Environmental Forum Meetings

- The DEF will normally meet up to four times a year.
- The Chairman of the DEF will convene each meeting. In the absence of the Chairman the Vice-Chairman will convene the meeting.
- The order of business will be indicated on the Agenda or otherwise, as the Chairman shall prescribe.
- Items for future meetings will be requested at the close of each meeting. These will be forwarded to the Steering Group.
- The Chairman shall control the conduct of the meeting and the ruling of the Chairman on any point of order shall be final.

- ❑ Meetings of the DEF will be open to the public.
- ❑ Items of any other business will be noted at the start of the meeting.
- ❑ Votes will not be taken (except in the annual appointment of a Chairman and Vice-Chairman), where appropriate a consensus will be sought in order to facilitate a way forward.
- ❑ Additional meetings may be organised at the request of the Chairman or Vice-Chairman as appropriate.
- ❑ All the activities pursued through the DEF shall be guided and prioritised by the Steering Group.
- ❑ The timetable for meetings shall be posted on the Council's Website at www.dacorum.gov.uk and the minutes emailed to the Gazette.
- ❑ A press officer will be appointed from the Forum to issue press releases with the approval of the Chairman and Vice Chairman.
- ❑ A press officer will then issue the local press as appropriate with a press release from the last meetings minute.

Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Dacorum Environmental Forum

- ❑ The positions of Chairman and Vice-Chairman will be elected on an annual basis.
- ❑ Nominations for the position of Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall be forwarded to the Council's Environmental Resources Unit when requested.
- ❑ A vote on the appointments will be taken at a full meeting of the DEF.
- ❑ The Chairman, or Vice-Chairman as appropriate, will convene and control the meetings of the DEF and the DEF Steering Group.
- ❑ The Chairman or Vice-Chairman as appropriate, will agree the Agenda for Steering Group/DEF meetings and draft minutes prior to presentation to the Steering Group/DEF.

The Dacorum Environmental Forum Steering Group

- ❑ The Steering Group will consist of up to eight members of the DEF and no less than four including the Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The Council's Environmental Resources Manager and Environmental Resources Officer will also sit on the Steering Group.
- ❑ Membership of the Steering Group will be voluntary, no nominations or votes will be taken.
- ❑ The Steering Group will meet in advance of each full DEF meeting.

- ❑ Meetings will be held at least three weeks before the meeting of the DEF in order to discuss the work programme and set the Agenda.
- ❑ The Steering Group will be responsible for monitoring progress on the Community Action Plan Initiative and undertaking revisions and updates as appropriate.
- ❑ The Steering Group will make regular reports on the progress of the Community Action Plan to the DEF.
- ❑ The Steering Group will take an active role in supporting the administrative and public relations roles of the DEF.
- ❑ Additional meetings may be organised at the request of the Chairman or Vice-Chairman as appropriate.

Administrative Support

- ❑ The Council will provide, as far as practicable administrative support through the Environmental Resources Unit.
- ❑ The Environmental Resources Unit will inform members of the DEF of meeting dates at least one month in advance.
- ❑ The Environmental Resources Unit will circulate the Agenda for DEF meetings at least two weeks in advance.
- ❑ The Environmental Resources Unit will circulate the minutes of meetings no later than three weeks after the meeting.
- ❑ The Council will provide, as far as practicable, funding support for the operation and maintenance of the Forum.
- ❑ Additional administrative support including minute taking will be provided by members of the Steering Group when appropriate

LSP representatives

- ❑ The forum will nominate two representatives for the Local Strategic Partnership – one member for the LSP board and one member for the LSP support group.
- ❑ The representatives will be recommended by the steering group and endorsed at a full DEF meeting.

Legal Status

- ❑ The DEF does not constitute a formal decision making body. The DEF is not an incorporated body and is therefore not a separate legal entity

distinct from its members. As such all activities, administrative procedures and financial affairs of the Forum are governed by common law.

- The Terms of Reference shall be reviewed by the Steering Group bi-annually and ratified by the full Forum at the next meeting.

Jonathan Foster - Environmental Resources Manager
February 2004