

**INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICE & CHIEF EXECUTIVE****SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT BETWEEN ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL  
AND MARR AREA PARTNERSHIP 2011/2012****1 Scope**

This agreement establishes the scope of work of the Marr Area Partnership and the relationship with Economic Development and the Area Manager (Marr) of Aberdeenshire Council.

**2 Background**

Rural partnerships have played a key role in developing and engaging communities in their areas. To ensure that development opportunities and engagement continues and to facilitate the development of the Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership, it has been agreed that for 2011/12 £31,000 will be allocated from the Economic Development budget to support the development and activities of area wide Rural Partnerships or equivalent organisations in Marr. This is in addition to £4,000 each area has to support Area Partnerships. In Marr this funding and a further £11,000 funding provided by Marr Area Committee from the Area Top Up Budget supports the work of the Marr Area Partnership, the Royal Deeside Partnership, Birse Community Trust and Banchory District Initiative.

**3 Definition of Service**

Working closely with Economic Development and the Area Manager (Marr), The Rural Partnership will:

- (i) Promote Community Economic Development by helping additional groups throughout their area with information, implementation, community engagement, to build inclusive/sustainable projects.
- (ii) Provide a local advice service to groups seeking to develop community assets and facilities. This should include options for organisational structures, governance, funding along with other areas required to help realise opportunities in their communities.
- (iii) Provide business and administrative advice to social/community enterprises seeking to develop economic opportunities.

- (iv) Continue to support groups from past programmes – Objective 2, Leader, Scottish Rural Partnership Fund, Lottery, along with other programmes to ensure projects are developed and realised.
- (v) Develop a Planning for Real or other appropriate process for engagement with agreed communities and help ensure completion through prioritisation and community action plans based on these exercises to ensure that the achievement is recognised, progression measured and clear actions agreed. The level of activity is to be agreed with Marr Community Planning Group.
- (vi) Support and develop cohesion and co-ordination between the Rural Partnerships and be an active participant in the Aberdeenshire Rural Partnership Federation.
- (vii) Identify and implement ways to help communities understand issues around community planning and budget allocation. Together with partner staff they will seek innovative funding and management solutions to overcome challenges facing the community.
- (viii) Ensure and facilitate a two-way flow of information relating to needs and priorities of voluntary sector partners and the wider community contacts with Aberdeenshire Council, Community Planning Partners the Marr Community Planning Group.
- (ix) Support and be an active participant in the Marr Community Ward Forums.
- (x) Work towards identifying; along with the Council, outcomes that fit with the concordat within the Single Outcome Agreement over the course of the year.
- (xi) Work with Cairngorms National Park to inform, develop and support initiatives that bring benefit to Aberdeenshire communities.
- (xii) Along with officers work towards a national recognised quality assurance framework system.

#### **4 Finances**

- (i) At the Marr Area Committee on 3 May 2011, £25,000 award was approved subject to the conditions of this Service Level Agreement.
- (ii) Four equal stage payments will be made as follows:-

The first payment will be made following the signing of the Agreement at some time during the first quarter. Thereafter payments will be made on 1 July 2011, 1 October 2011 and 1 January 2012.

- (iii) The Council reserve the right to deduct any debts which may be due prior to making any further payments.


## **5 Monitoring and Reporting**

- (i) Economic development will undertake an annual monitoring visit, which will incorporate a review of activity, evidence of expenditure and future plans. The Council will agree a lead officer for each activity within section 3 above to provide guidance to Marr Area Partnership should it seek it or require it.
- (ii) An annual report will be provided by the Rural Partnership to Economic Development by 24 February 2012. This report will be used as an update to the Local Community Planning Group, Infrastructure Services Committee and the Area Committee annually.
- (iii) To attend at least one Area Committee to provide an update of developments in the area.
- (iv) Aberdeenshire Council's procedures on "Following the public pound" will underpin any reporting requirements.
- (v) The rural partnership undertakes to allow any Authorised Officer of the Council, or its designated agents, access to the books of account and other records for the purpose of confirming the accuracy, validity and completeness of information provided in relation to this agreement.

## **6 Terms of Agreement**

This agreement will commence on 1 April 2011 and will expire on the 31 March 2012.

Signed on Behalf of Aberdeenshire Council

.....  ..... Date 16/5/2011 .....

Signed on Behalf of Marr Area Partnership

.....  ..... Date 16/05/2011 .....

