

Environment Plymouth



Terms of Reference

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 Environment Plymouth offers a unified, politically non-aligned and independent voice for strategic environmental and sustainability concerns in Plymouth; providing a trusted repository of expertise, knowledge and support for the development and delivery of the city's plans, policies and strategies, funding bids and projects.

1.2 If required Environment Plymouth may also be referred to informally as 'the Network or, simply, EP'.

2.0 AIMS

2.1 Environment Plymouth aims to work towards a future for Plymouth that meets the needs of today's city without compromising the ability of future generations of Plymothians to meet their needs.

2.2 It aims to uphold and promote the key principles of sustainability thereby ensuring that social, environmental and economic impacts are considered equally, fairly and with clarity at all times and conducting its affairs within the law and in a public-spirited manner at all times.

2.3 It aims to address these issues in a holistic way including, but not exclusively focusing on, future options for sustainability and a city vision that looks beyond the growth agenda, tackling the threat of plastic waste, the impact of climate change and the potential for the city's low carbon future, its open spaces, habitats and wildlife, the marine environment, the design, construction and maintenance of the city's built environment and transport networks, the implications of health and wellbeing and their connections to the environment including air quality, noise and the overall quality of life and the protection of its built and natural heritage.

2.4 Working inclusively in partnership with Plymouth's voluntary, community, business and social enterprise sectors, and with local authorities, other statutory bodies and educational institutes, Environment Plymouth aims to share its expertise with local decision makers relating, wherever necessary, to best practice for local, regional, national and global concerns, policies, consultations and events and creating a common voice for the city's environment and sustainable future.

2.5 Our key aims are therefore :

a. To promote relevant and appropriate knowledge exchange.

b. To raise awareness of threats to our environment and future sustainability and to promote appropriate solutions to limit damage and protect the quality and diversity of our surroundings.

c. To support and protect our blue/green environment; encouraging appropriate action to protect and conserve.

3.0 Environment Plymouth will :

- 3.1 Act as a strategic 'forum' for stakeholders to address Plymouth's environmental and sustainability concerns.
- 3.2 Provide a central information point for all those attending; sharing knowledge, information, support, expertise, passion, commitment and local knowledge to each other, to Plymouth City Council and other decision-making bodies or networks.
- 3.3 Enable an open, equitable and transparent approach to membership, decision making, engagement and contributions to debate and discussion.
- 3.4 Establish a representative structure that is accountable to its members and the communities of Plymouth.
- 3.5 Contribute to consultation and decision making as a body and, where necessary, as a network of individual interests; providing a mechanism for the co-design and delivery of city-wide plans, policies and strategies, funding bids and project delivery.
- 3.6 Support, provide, deliver and promote a long-term community vision for the local environment and sustainability.
- 3.7 Develop a greater understanding of the context of service provision, to increase collaboration, highlight where services might complement each other, reduce duplication, identify gaps in service provision and lobby for positive change especially where matters such as funding, resource allocation and policy changes might lead to detrimental impacts on Plymouth's environment or future sustainability.

4.0 This will be achieved by :

- 4.1 Engaging those with an interest in the environment and sustainability from the sectors listed in section 2.4 above and, where necessary, beyond.
- 4.2 Contributing to city-wide consultations and, through creative conversations, working up strategies, plans and policies, funding bids and projects with each other, Plymouth City Council and other partners.
- 4.3 Acting as a point of reference for the city's environmental interests and expertise.
- 4.4 Nurturing and developing the potential to provide long term vision and continuity on issues relating to environment and sustainability, independent of political colour.
- 4.5 Promoting and celebrating the city's environment and sustainability working with the media for a proactive image.
- 4.6 Acting as a 'host' for funding bids, events, topical debate and knowledge exchange.
- 4.7 Leading the AVOID theme of Plymouth's Plan for Plastic; working towards the achievement and maintenance of Plastic Free Plymouth status for the city.
- 4.8 Researching and publicising the local effects of climate change.

- 4.9 Promoting a sense of priority and urgency about climate change and its effects to the City Council, the VCSE community and the local population.
- 4.10 Working or collaborating with organisations beyond Plymouth who have appropriate expertise or have demonstrated good practice, innovation or opportunities that would complement the Network's aims.

5.0 Membership and Accountability :

5.1 Membership

- 5.1.1 Membership of Environment Plymouth will be open to representatives from those institutions, organisations and projects that have an interest in, or connection with, Plymouth's environment and the city's sustainability. Membership will be determined by the completion of a formal Membership Form. Individuals with a specific interest will also be welcomed.
- 5.1.2 With consent under the GDPR rules, a Directory of Network Members will be maintained to assist in communication, collaboration and partnership working.
- 5.1.3 Environment Plymouth will be accountable to the communities of Plymouth through its Steering Group (acting as a formal Board).

5.2 Additional Work and Sub groups of the Network

- 5.2.1 Environment Plymouth respects the breadth of topics embraced by the environment and sustainability sectors and may, as required, establish additional 'working groups' to address specific topics as they arise.
- 5.2.2 These working groups will report back, as required, to the Steering Group at planned Steering Group meetings or via correspondence with the Co-ordinator for inclusion in meeting agendas and newsletters.
- 5.2.3 The Network will not produce formal Minutes. The proceedings of regular meetings and other events will be reflected in a regularly produced Feedback Newsletter which will be ratified at the following regular meeting in each case.
- 5.2.4 Environment Plymouth may, from time to time, take a leading role in local campaigns; working collaboratively to gain support and encourage positive change.

5.3 Representation

- 5.3.1 Participating representatives will be encouraged to register their interest(s) with Environment Plymouth.
- 5.3.2 Environment Plymouth will apply the opportunity to register 'conflicts of interests' at all times. Such admissions will be treated with respect by all members.
- 5.3.3 Members will be encouraged to participate fully and to reflect the two-way process of knowledge exchange and decision making.
- 5.3.4 Environment Plymouth members are encouraged to keep themselves updated with developments through the stated communication channels using the same to reflect the views and opinions of their respective organisations.

5.3.5 Members are required to acknowledge the Members Code of Conduct at all times.

5.4 Environment Plymouth's Steering Group

5.4.1 Environment Plymouth will operate an Executive Steering Group to guide the development and management of the Network.

5.4.2 The Steering Group will be entrusted with executive decisions on Environment Plymouth matters. The Steering Group reserves the right to discuss appropriate matters in confidence if required.

5.4.3 Environment Plymouth will apply an open and transparent election process for the Steering Group whereby members will choose a Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer. Elections will take place every three years to ensure continuity.

5.4.4 Steering Group members have the right to withdraw from meetings or resign at any time but are required to advise the Chair of their decision.

5.4.5 As new 'Executive' roles emerge a formal selection process will be decided for each role. Subject to requirements, Environment Plymouth members may be co-opted to the Steering Group as Steering Group members or observers.

5.4.6 For the purposes of general decision making a simple majority will be required subject to attendance and/or responses to emailed requests. If required the Chair will hold the casting vote.

5.5 Agendas and Matters Arising

5.5.1 Agendas will be created to reflect the chosen theme of the meeting and related activity and work within the environment and sustainability sector.

5.5.2 Given the cross-cutting nature of sustainability, the agendas will also reflect on matters arising from other sectors as the need arises focusing on the opportunity for cross-sector collaboration. Members of Environment Plymouth are welcomed to suggest topics for discussion.

5.6 Communication

5.6.1 Environment Plymouth will benefit from the services of a dedicated Co-ordinator.

5.6.2 The Network will maintain a general information Facebook page at :

<https://www.facebook.com/environmentplymouth2017/>

A Discussion group at :

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/123427611574500/>

A dedicated Plastic Free Plymouth campaign group at :

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/140911630099135/>

And a Twitter account at : @EnvironmentPlym

5.6.3 The Network will launch and maintain an interactive webpage for use by both members and the general public.

5.7 Review

5.7.1 The Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually or as required.

6.0 Financial Management and In Case of Dissolution

6.1 Funding : Under the direction of an elected Treasurer, Environment Plymouth will :

- 6.1.1 Maintain and operate its own bank account. The current account is held with the HSBC (Business) Banking.
- 6.1.2 Pursue and secure funding, as appropriate, to support its continued administration and the delivery of related projects.
- 6.1.3 Secure the services of an administrative co-ordinator and other funded support as required.
- 6.1.4 Manage funding sources for the benefit of Environment Plymouth members including, where appropriate, the delivery of community grants and related information.
- 6.2 The income and property of Environment Plymouth shall be applied solely towards the promotion and objectives set out in the Terms of Reference above.
- 6.3 Environment Plymouth will abide with the criteria, terms and conditions of all funds secured from outside parties.
- 6.4 None of the income secured for Environment Plymouth shall be paid or transferred without the prior agreement of the Steering Group members.
- 6.5 Steering Group members are obliged to notify the Group of any conflicts of interest arising in the management of Environment Plymouth's finances.

6.6 In case of dissolution

- 6.6.1 The Steering Group members may at any time before, or in expectation of, Environment Plymouth's dissolution resolve that any net assets, after all its debts and liabilities have been paid, or provision has been made for them, shall on or before the dissolution of Environment Plymouth be applied or transferred in any of the following ways:
 - (a) directly for the network's Objectives; or
 - (b) by transfer to any Charity, charities or selected groups for the delivery of purposes similar to Environment Plymouth's Objectives ; or
 - (c) to any Charity or charities for use for selected purposes.
- 6.6.2 In no circumstances shall the net assets of Environment Plymouth be paid to or distributed among the Steering Group members of Environment Plymouth (with the exception of those representing an Environment Plymouth member group).
- 6.6.3 If no resolution is forthcoming, and subject to the reimbursement of any outstanding expenses and/or unspent grant funds to the appropriate funders, the net assets of Environment Plymouth shall be applied for charitable purposes by POP+ as Plymouth's strategic community and voluntary sector charity. (POP to be retained in this capacity only).