

## **LGA COASTAL ISSUES**

### **SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP**

#### **TERMS OF REFERENCE (agreed 11 DECEMBER 2007)**

#### **OBJECTIVES**

The Objectives of the Coastal Issues Special Interest Group ("the Group") are:

- 1.1 To increase awareness and debate at a national and European Level of environmental, economic and social issues and concerns that directly affect or which may so affect coastal, estuarine and maritime communities;
- 1.2 To act as a focus for liaison between local authorities and other bodies representing coastal, estuarine and maritime interests;
- 1.3 To secure improved cross-departmental co-ordination with Government on coastal, estuarine and maritime issues with a view to ensuring consistency in policy and the provision of resources.
- 1.4 To work in partnership with other organisations with complimentary aims.

#### **KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES**

The key accountabilities of the Group are:

- 2.1 Preparing discussion papers on issues of specific interest to coastal, estuarine and maritime communities;
- 2.2 Acting as a forum for debate on the issues raised by the discussion papers with a view to reaching a consensus of opinion;
- 2.3 Liaising with other Special Interest Groups, LGA Boards (principally Environment and Regeneration) and LGA Executive of the LGA.
- 2.4 Making representations to Government and the European Commission, in so far as they are consistent with and will not conflict with or undermine LGA policy as a whole or damage the interests of other member authorities so as to ensure that issues affecting coastal, estuarine and maritime communities are reflected in Government policy and the result is an adequate distribution of funding/resources.

## MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1 Membership of the Group shall be open to all those authorities with an interest in coastal, estuarine and maritime issues.
- 3.2 Each member authority may nominate one Councillor to represent the authority at any meetings of the Group.

## MEETINGS

- 4.1 The Group shall meet quarterly each year normally in London, but a **'Field Meeting'** of the Group will be held in an agreed coastal location. The **'Field Meeting'** will be serviced by the host authority and a financial contribution, not exceeding £500, will be provided to the host authority from the Group's budget.
- 4.2 The Senior Officer's Group shall normally meet within one month of the date of the next Group meeting.
- 4.3 **The Chairman and Vice Chairman will be elected in separate ballots by the Group, each of which will serve for a maximum period of 3 years, before elections will be undertaken. In the event of extraordinary circumstances such as resignation, death, loss of seat etc of the incumbent the election process will be triggered and undertaken as soon as is practicable.**
- 4.4 **The elections will normally take place at the September meeting to allow for a possible change over of post for commencement in the January of the year following the election.**
- 4.5 **The Chairman and Vice Chairman should ideally be drawn from different geographical regions of England.**
- 4.6 **The Chairman will be responsible for chairing the Group's meetings and to represent the interests of the Group at other fora and to lead any deputations, as requested by the Group. In the absence/non availability of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman will assume these responsibilities. In addition, the Chairman/Vice Chairman may from time to time be invited to attend the Senior Officers Group meeting to provide a Members input upon the work stream.**
- 4.7 The Chairman/Vice Chairman must have a dedicated Officer support. The Officer supporting the Chairman will be from the Chairman's Council and act as Lead Officer to the Group and will also chair the Senior Officers Group. The officer supporting the Vice Chairman will be from the Vice Chairman's Council & will participate in the Senior Officers Group and will chair the Senior Officers Group and act as Lead Officer to the Group if the Vice Chairman becomes the Chairman of the Group or in the absence of the Lead Officer.

- 4.8 **The Group will agree a suitably qualified and experienced officer from one of the local authorities participating in the Special Interest Group to act as its financial officer. They will provide the necessary advice on the Group's finances, costs of work plans, setting of subscription fees etc and will provide the Group with regular reports thereon.**
- 4.9 The LGA will provide secretarial support to the Group including the co-ordination and despatch of agendas, reports on areas of LGA policy and minutes. **The LGA will not undertake to support the 'Field Meeting' in the taking of minutes, but will coordinate and dispatch the agenda papers. The responsibility for the production of the minutes for the 'Field Meeting' will be that of the Lead Officer.**
- 4.10 Each member authority shall have one vote on any matter upon which a decision is required. In the event that there is an equality of votes the person presiding at the meeting, as the Chairman, shall have a final and casting vote.

### **SUB-GROUP**

- 5.1 From time to time the Group shall consider whether it would be expedient for detailed consideration of an issue to be undertaken by a Sub-Group.
- 5.2 The Group shall decide the membership and responsibilities of any Sub-Group at the time that the decision is taken to set up the Sub-Group.
- 5.3 The Group shall also engage with other external Bodies to assist in consultation and development of the Group's work programme."

### **WORK PROGRAMME**

- 6.1 The Group shall determine its Annual Work Plan & Programme by reference to its current strategy.
- 6.2 The Group shall keep the work plan and programme for the year under review and may amend, alter, add to or make deletions from the work plan and programme as circumstances dictate.

### **REPORTING**

The Group will at all times communicate with, advise, and influence the work of the LGA. In particular the Group will: -

- 7.1 Report to the LGA Executive through the presentation of an Annual Report. The report will set out the Group's Work Programme; report on progress since the preparation of the previous Annual Report and identify the issues that need to be pursued further by the LGA.
- 7.2 Provide copies of reports of the Group's meetings for information to the LGA Executive and others as necessary.

- 7.3 Authorise the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Group to approve draft reports, prior to consideration by the Group, in order to meet specific time constraints set.
- 7.4 Utilise its website to post relevant reports and other information approved by the Group.

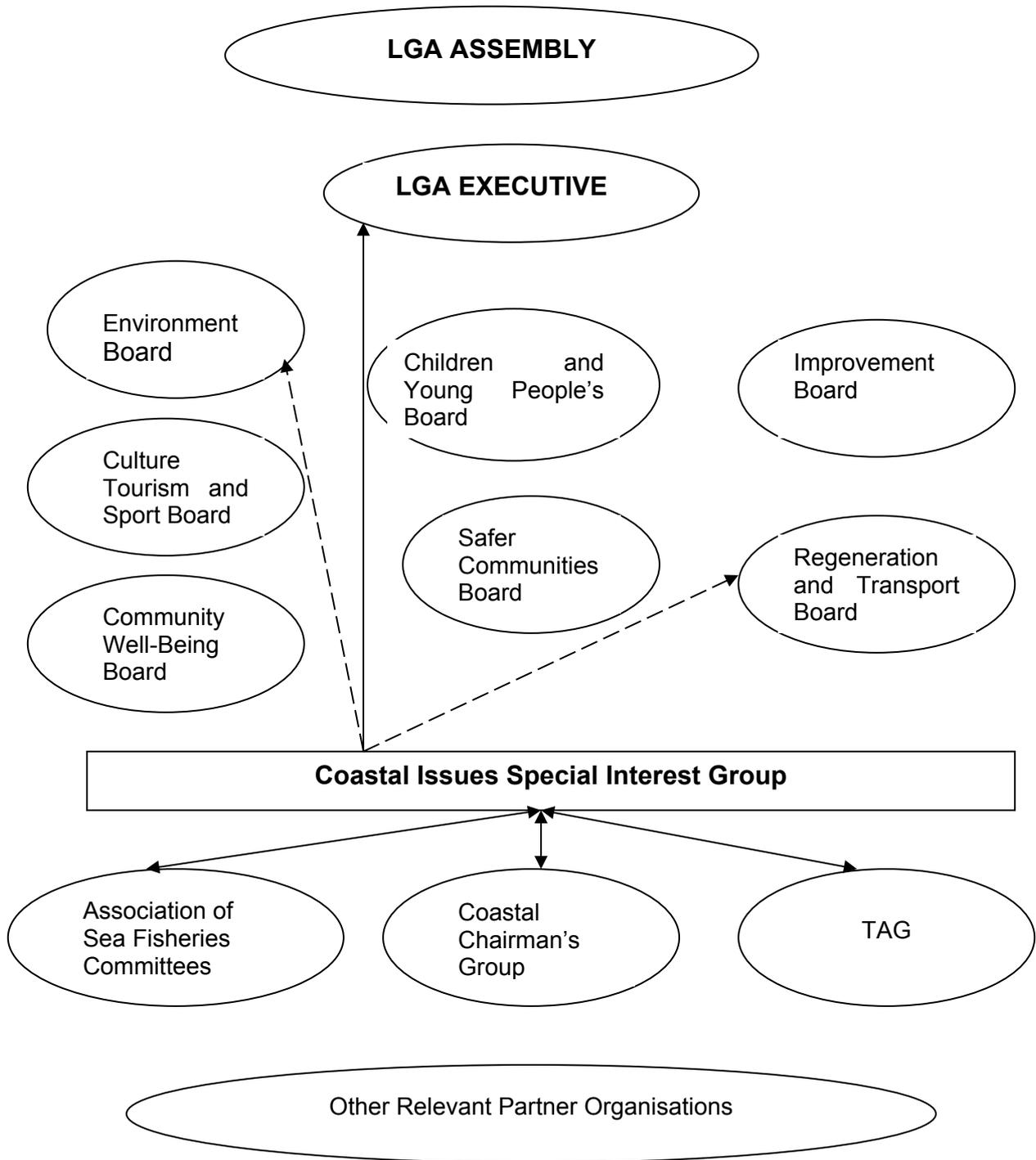
## **FINANCE**

- 8.1 All travelling and subsistence allowances incurred by councillors/officers representing member authorities at the quarterly meetings of the Group shall be the responsibility of the Member Authority concerned.
- 8.2 Any Councillor/Officer specifically requested by the Group to represent the Group at other fora and meetings will be entitled to claim and recover reasonable expenses from the Group's budget. Any person attending such fora and meetings will be required to report to the Group meeting at the earliest practicable opportunity.
- 8.3 An agreed honorarium will be paid annually to the Chairman and Lead Officer of the Group in recognition of their roles and demand on their time.

## **REVIEW**

- 9.1 These terms of reference and their operation shall be subject to periodic review by the Group.

## Where the Coastal SIG Sits in the LGA



The Coastal SIG is a virtually self contained Group that can establish its own ways of working and links with other groups as it sees fit. However it does need to submit a written report to the Executive every April and should maintain a close relationship with the relevant Boards to ensure that they compliment each other.