

## Template Terms of Reference for SEC Stakeholder Steering Boards (SSBs)

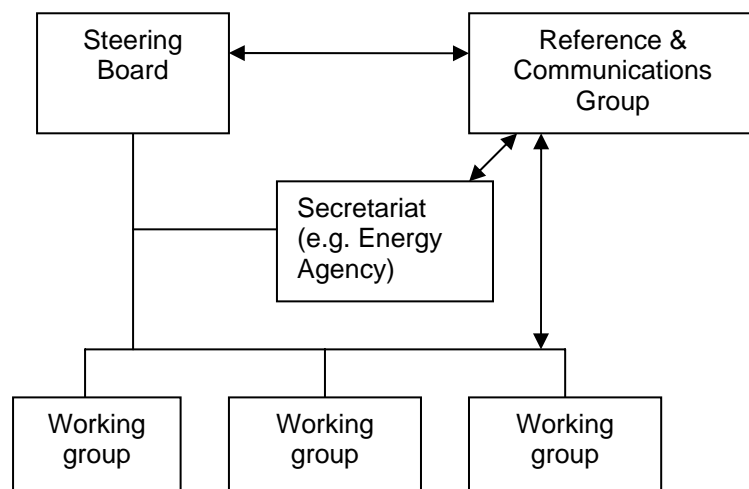
### Introduction

*The ASPIRE project has identified the crucial role played by key local stakeholders in the journey towards establishing a Sustainable Energy Community. The creation of a Stakeholder Steering Board (SSB) is the principal means of drawing together these important stakeholders. This document therefore seeks to provide some guidance for other aspiring Sustainable Energy Communities on the role, format and constitution of Stakeholder Steering Boards, as well as additional support groups that may be required.*

### Organisation

Sustainable Energy Planning requires a structured process through which all key stakeholders in a community are involved. This means for example that not only technical and environmental representatives are involved but also community groups, environmental groups, educational organisations, utilities and more. This can be achieved through the organisation of one, two or three interrelated groups at community level, led ultimately by a Stakeholder Steering Board.

**The following diagram demonstrates a potential structure that may be applied in a community:**



*Fig. 1 steering board, working group(s) and reference group*

It is important to note that the different groups must be adapted to the local and regional situations; for example it may be more appropriate in some small communities to have simply a steering board and Reference Group.

## **Definitions**

The Stakeholder Steering Board is the most important group within the ASPIRE model. It consists of decision makers within the sustainable energy planning process, including for example politicians and representatives of the local administration.

### *Function:*

The steering board is responsible for strategic direction and ensuring political commitment to the project. To strengthen the role of the Sustainable Energy Community Stakeholder Steering Board it is wise to formulate a mission statement, which answers the following questions:

- What are the opportunities or needs that we exist to address? (the purpose of the steering board);
- What are we doing to address these needs? (i.e. the business of the steering board);
- What principles guide our work? (The values of the steering board).

### *Meetings:*

The steering board meets regularly and at least three times a year.

The Working Group consists of those who are responsible for day to day delivery of the project and those whose activities relate directly to the sustainable energy planning process. This may include for example representatives of planning departments and important other departments within the municipal organisations (environmental department, municipal housing corporations) and representatives of the local or regional utility.

### *Function:*

The working group is responsible for overall delivery of the project and to report results to both the steering group and the reference group. It is advisable to keep membership of a working group to a maximum of 5 people.

### *Meetings:*

The working groups meet as often as needed, both to discuss progress or problems.

A Reference & Communications Group consists of representatives of any local organisations, groups and individuals that have a direct interest in the project but do not wish to participate in the formal SSB or working groups. This may include for example community groups, small and medium sized enterprises, industrial companies, social housing providers and educational institutions.

### *Function:*

The reference & communications group acts as a 'knowledge bank', feeding important information to both the working group and steering board, and also forms an important resource for community consultation purposes.

*Meetings:*

The reference & communication group exists essentially on a 'virtual' basis, receiving updates via electronic means or newsletters. Representatives of this group may meet or attend meetings of the SSB or working group when there is a need identified by either of these groups. The reference & communications group will be involved in community and stakeholder consultation events that may take place within the community.

The Secretariat provides administrative support and maintains communication between the SSB and other groups. The secretariat will be based within the organisation that is leading the project, for example an energy agency or a department of the local municipal administration.

**Participants in each group**

In general all three groups may have participants from the following organisations (please note this list is not exhaustive!):

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Steering Board</b>	<b>Working Group</b>	<b>Reference Group</b>
Regional authority	X		X
Municipal departments	(X)	(X)	X
- technical	X	X	
- environmental	X	X	
- economic	(X)	(X)	
- spatial planning	X	X	
- housing	(X)	(X)	X
Politicians	X		
Local or regional utility	(x)	(X)	
Energy Agency	X	(X)	
Community groups		(x)	X
Environmental groups		(X)	X
Educational organisations	(X)	(X)	X
Agricultural organisations	(X)		X
SME's			X
Development organisations	(X)		X
Consulting organisations		(X)	(X)
Industrial companies	(X)	(X)	(X)
Social housing organisations	(X)	(X)	
Investors/Fin. Institutions	(X)	(X)	X
Local citizens			X

X = Essential participant

(X) = Participation dependent upon local situation and structure adopted