

City Sustainability Partnership Meeting - Monday 19th October 2009

Hanover Room, Brighthelm Centre, North Road, Brighton, BN1 1YD

Public Services:

Councillor Ayas Fallon-Khan

Councillor Paul Steedman

Councillor Gill Mitchell

Stuart Laing - Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) University of Brighton – **Chair**

Alison Hadfield - Eco Schools

Business

Lorraine Bell – Brighton & Hove Chamber of Commerce

Thea Allison – Brighton & Hove Business Community Partnership

Jan Jackson – Sussex Enterprise/Business Link

Community and Voluntary Sector

Chris Todd - Friends of the Earth – **Vice Chair**

Vic Else - Brighton & Hove Food Partnership

Jacqui Cuff - Transition Brighton & Hove

Mike Creedy - Brighton Peace & Environment Centre

Agencies

Chris Wick – Environment Agency

Phil Belden – South Downs Joint Committee

Council Officers

Alex Bailey - Director of Strategy & Governance

Richard Butcher Tuset - Head of Cabinet Support

Anthony Pope - Policy Development Officer

Mustapha Semanda - Consultation Officer

Mita Patel - Sustainability Co-ordinator

Partnership manager

Thurstan Crockett - Head of Sustainability & Environmental Policy

Meeting notes

Sarah Costelloe - Administrator, Sustainability

1. Apologies

Councillor David Watkins

Councillor Tony Janio

2. Minutes and Actions from the previous meeting

2.1 Notes agreed, with Mike Creedy added to the list of attendees.

2.2 Transport partnership has been established (see item 6).

2.3 Recruitment process for additional posts will be underway soon.

- 2.4 Thurstan is meeting city services to establish next steps for Municipal Waste Strategy, which is due to go before Council Cabinet in February.
- 2.5 Urban Biosphere bid to be raised again in future CSP meeting. Conference Report is now publically available via the sustainability pages of the council website: <http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1196955>

Actions -

- **TC to complete recruitment of new officers.**
- **TC to establish Cityclean response to Waste Strategy Working group comments.**
- **SC to circulate link to Urban Biosphere Conference report with minutes.**

3. 10:10 Campaign

- 3.1 Report contains initial recommendations for CSP to consider, as suggested by partnership manager. The council fully supports 10:10, and is encouraging LSP members to sign up too. 10:10 info has also been circulated to Business Link members. Environment Agency has also signed up, as well as the local Primary Care Trust.
- 3.2 There is now a need to promote the scheme. The council have been promoting 10:10 on social networking sites and will be talking about it on radio. The communications team is also involved. Schools would be an ideal place to promote 10:10, as it fits in with the Eco Schools programme. Promoting through networks is appropriate and useful but to engage a wider audience a launch event should be planned for the end of January. An event in six months to see how we are doing at the halfway mark might also be an effective way to keep momentum going, although it was acknowledged that these ideas are heavily contingent on resource availability. Similar momentum with businesses is also desirable. Business Lifebelt had great success promoting 'Be Local, Buy Local' with business breakfasts, and stickers proved very popular. Similar tactics could be used to great effect in promoting 10:10.
- 3.3 Longer term commitment to carbon reduction is also needed. 10% needs to be seen in long term context. Sustainability Cabinet Committee will be setting council goals early next year, but doesn't want to raise expectations too high and intends to monitor progress carefully before setting targets that may be too aspirational.
- 3.4 As the baseline year for carbon trading is 2010, this may be a way of countering the possibility of some organisations turning everything on full blast in order to start from a high baseline.
- 3.5 There is a need to counter accusations of 'greenwash'; how will reductions be proven? We should be facilitating measurement of carbon reductions as well as getting people to sign up to 10:10. Council has a well-established carbon management programme. Business Link can help facilitate baseline work elsewhere.

Actions -

- **Chairs to investigate feasibility of launch event for late Jan to promote 10:10. (Universities may be able to help resource this). CSP to revisit launch idea at next mtg.**
- **Each member to sign up to 10:10 and get 10 more organisations to do the same. Info re: organisations they have signed up to be sent to SC by Nov 23rd.**
- **Jan & Lorraine, with other business reps, to develop a business 10:10 campaign & sign up a major business, e.g. Amex.**

4. Sustainable Communities Act: Round One

- 4.1 Progress report on Round One of Sustainable Communities applications given by Mustapha Semanda. LGA is keen to make this a rolling yearly programme so officers have reviewed process and are keen to implement improvements. Act has cross-party support so likely to survive potential change of government at forthcoming election. *Local Works* has commended the work of Brighton & Hove in this round as excellent, in comparison to other authorities.
- 4.2 Ways to improve engagement were discussed. Food Partnership submitted ideas with no sense of when they would hear back. This may have put off some applicants. Rolling scheme and longer lead time both welcome to reinforce willingness to engage and may help to counter jaded attitudes of some community members. The Act presents an opportunity to engage at ward level, and local councillors could be instrumental in achieving this.
- 4.3 Difficulty exists around definitions of 'sustainable' and choice of four strands [(i) *improvement of the local economy*, (ii) *protection of the environment*; (iii) *promotion of social inclusion*, and (iv) *participation in civic and political activity*] in application process. Sustainability is about how these four elements interact and there is a lack of connection between them when asked to choose one. For example, rate relief submitted under the first strand could be linked, via the second, to reductions in CO2 achieved. In terms of the Act, sustainability is broadly defined. It may be that the CSP wants to focus on more narrow definition. Second round could be deluged with applicants, a possibility which adds to the case for tighter guidelines.
- 4.4 Is there a role for partnership to give advice about applications? Would this make them more likely to succeed? The review suggests that a two-stage process would be better and that CSP could indeed have an expert role.
- 4.5 The process itself has been useful in that it highlights gaps in city services and areas of concern for communities. All ideas submitted to LGA from 111 councils that took part have been published. There are some good ideas to learn from here. Further feedback to the CSP would be welcome when the LGA and Government have made decisions.

5. Waste & Minerals Core Strategy consultation

5.1 The Waste & Minerals Framework, which focuses specifically on facilities and land-planning, only received approval on Thursday. Because of tight deadlines, it hasn't been possible to produce a presentation for this meeting. Strategic Planning will consult with the Waste Working Group. The CSP was also invited to send a member to a consultation event planned for 19th November.

5.2 Chair requested delay to start of public consultation process (due to take place over 6 weeks from 21st October) to allow presentation to be delivered to CSP. As this is a quasi-judicial process it was not possible to do this. Chairs agree that, because no presentation was available at public CSP meeting, the working group meeting will be open to wider stakeholders.

Actions -

- **SC to reconvene Waste working group as an open meeting in November in order to meet strategic planners to look at Waste & Minerals Framework. Rob Fraser & Lyndsey Beveridge to be invited.**
- **Members to contact SC if they wish to join the group, or if they have any issues they wish to flag for discussion. Marie Harder, Mike Creedy, Alison Walters proposed for the group during meeting.**
- **SC to publicise presentation to CSP members, and via website to wider stakeholders.**
- **CSP member to attend consultation event on 19th November: Mike Creedy.**

6. Proposed City Transport Partnership

6.1 LSP had agreed contents of paper, with structure as suggested, after CSP recommendations. The chair said the CSP had played a constructive role in this.

6.2 Chris Todd elected unopposed as CSP representative on Transport Partnership.

6.3 When transport issues relate to wider sustainability, the CSP will discuss separately but interaction between the two partnerships is anticipated. A wider debate around transport issues is also expected as the partnership will draw from a wider membership.

6.4 Partnership will be focussing initially on shaping the transport chapter of the Sustainable Community Strategy. It was noted that the transport partnership should look beyond the 'start & finish' pieces of strategic work which are imminent priorities and develop an outward looking, long-term vision.

7. Draft One Planet Living Plan for Brighton & Hove

7.1 Background and recommendations set out in report.

7.2 OPL plan is in terms of reference for CSP and, even in draft form, has already informed targets and actions on Waste Strategy and Sustainable Community Strategy. It is also referenced in the Core Strategy.

7.3 As discussed in previous meeting, there remain problems around the digestibility of the plan, its lack of clear priorities, the reasonableness and practicality of its application. These issues have prevented the council from adopting the OPL plan wholly, although it is recognised that it contains much that is of use, which will be appropriated accordingly.

7.4 The plan had received Local Authority match funding over two financial years. Bioregional have been unable to attract future sponsorship, partly because of recession but also because of their criteria. Budget allows CSP resources to support further work.

7.4 A slimmed-down version, with 10-20 points of action, owned by the CSP would be a useful tool with which to assess council/city performance. Although it may prove difficult, particularly for voluntary sector organisations, to adopt these targets if they have not been prioritised by the council, it may have a significant strategic effect if they are adopted into the planning of an organisation that represents the mindset of the city. Taking clear, simple headline priorities from OPL plan and using them to challenge the council's performance could enable the CSP to act as a critical friend to the administration.

7.5 The chapter on food is very useful and contains targets which may be useful for Food Partnership and other organisation working in this area, not just internal council work, it was pointed out.

Action - Chairs to meet with Bioregional.

8. Sustainable Community Strategy consultation - update

8.1 Chapters have been edited to be clearer and more succinct without losing content.

8.2 Complete 2nd draft of strategy will be available 9th November but 'Living within Environmental Limits' chapter can be circulated earlier. Strategy was due to be agreed by council on 10th December and launched in early 2010.

8.3 'Living within Environmental Limits' will align with OPL plan but it was felt that the strategy as a whole doesn't. Future working group sessions should focus on strategy as a whole, looking at other chapters and considering how connected they are.

Actions -

- **Anthony Pope to circulate chapter on *Living within Environmental Limits* as soon as possible, rest of strategy draft 2 after 9th Nov.**
- **Sustainable Community Strategy sub group to meet to consider remainder of strategy when revised draft available.**

9. Wildlife Advisory Group update

9.1 The Wildlife Advisory Group met on 8th September to review the development of the Group over the past 10 years and to look at options for the future. The discussion focused on ways of making the WAG more effective in its wildlife advocacy role. Some suggestions were put forward and it was recommended that a second meeting should be held. Council Ecologist, Matthew Thomas, is keen to progress things as quickly as possible and would like to report to a Partnership meeting in the near future on the outcome of these discussions.

9.2 CSP need to consider what action it might take to move biodiversity & wildlife issues forward in the light of difficulties experienced by the WAG. Input from council wildlife experts needed.

9.3 The WAG regularly reported to the Sustainability Commission, with many specialists feeding into the group. As 2010 is the International Year of Biodiversity there is a need for the WAG as a mechanism by which to report on what is happening here.

9.3 Members expressed strong support for pressing forward and finding out what the admin issues are surrounding the group and how the CSP could help. It was noted that the WAG should be supported to include as many local wildlife groups as possible to minimise chances of a disconnection which may be part of the current problems.

Actions - Chairs to investigate issues around WAG with the city council.

10. Any other business

10.1 Talk on Food Security at Brighthelm, 7.30pm next Wednesday

10.2 Next meeting will take place at 5.30pm on Monday 30th November, at the Brighthelm Centre.

10.3 Next agenda likely to include items on Urban Biosphere, Waste & Minerals Strategy, 10:10 launch, Sustainable Community Strategy and possibly Food Waste.