

City Sustainability Partnership Meeting - 30th November 2009

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

Public Services:

Councillor Tony Janio

Councillor Paul Steedman

Councillor David Watkins

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**

Phil Belden - South Downs Joint Committee

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

Richard Butcher-Tuset

Francesca Iliffe

Mita Patel

Anthony Pope

Matthew Thomas

Guests

James Grudgeon - Low Carbon Enterprise

John Patmore WAG

Lisa Rutherford - Oxfam

Ruth England - Brighton Peace & Environment Centre

Paulo Boldrini - Climate Connections Coordinator, Brighton Peace & Environment Centre

David Allen

Richard Scott

Partnership manager

Thurstan Crockett - Head of Sustainability & Environmental Policy

Meeting notes

Sarah Costelloe - Administrator, Sustainability

1. Apologies

Councillor Gill Mitchell
Vic Else - Brighton & Hove Food Partnership
Sharon Philips - University of Sussex
Jacqui Cuff - Transition Brighton & Hove
P.C.T.

2. Minutes and Matters Arising from the previous meeting

- 2.1 Minutes agreed.
- 2.2 re: item 2.3 - recruitment process is underway, officers expected in post Jan.
- 2.3 re: item 2.4 - Cityclean will be responding in full to each point highlighted by the CSP working group. The need for more emphasis on community engagement has been acknowledged and the Advisory Board proposal is being seriously considered, as is a Business Stakeholders Group to address concerns regarding commercial waste streams. The final strategy is due to go to Environment Cabinet Member Meeting for approval in March.
- 2.4 re: item 6 - Chris Todd said the City Transport Partnership has met twice. The existing chapter of the Sustainable Community Strategy has been discarded, with the CSP response to the draft now being used as a starting point for the new chapter. Next meeting: 14th December.
- 2.5 re: item 7 - CSP OPL Chairs meeting scheduled for 6th Jan.
- 2.6 re: item 8 - Anthony Pope said delays to Sustainable Community Strategy have been caused by the need to include long term targets throughout. Final draft will be published on Dec 16th, following next LSP meeting, and will be circulated for comments.
- 2.7 re: item 10.2 (sic) - item on Food Waste next meeting, presented by Marie Harder.

3. Climate Connections

- 3.1 The project co-ordinator gave a verbal progress report.

- 3.2 The potential to link with 10:10 campaign was noted (Climate Connections will focus on stories from 10 local residents) as was the need to 'synergise' different campaigns to avoid confusion. It was suggested that work done by Energy Savings Trust with council tenants could result in a group or individual that could be featured.
- 3.3 Institute for Development Studies, University of Sussex, Department for International Development funded, may be keen to be involved. Eco Schools should also be involved - developing links with international schools.

4. City 10:10 Campaign

- 4.1 A paper updating the partnership on the progress of an emerging steering group was presented, along with a proposal for seed funding.
- 4.2 Once 10 champions for each of the 7 strands have been identified, an action group will be formed from steering group members, sponsors and strand champions. The action group should aim for wide engagement, with representation from all parts of the city community.
- 4.3 James Grugeon described plans for a light touch, high profile, high engagement campaign aiming to develop a sense of city pride around the campaign. Southern Water & Southern Trains will be approached as potential sponsors, for example.
- 4.4 Business reps updated the partnership on progress towards a Business 10:10 Campaign, and presented a proposal for CSP funding. 10:10 presents an ideal opportunity to engage business community and get them on board, even if they do not actually achieve 10% savings. Key to success is the involvement of the business support networks. Chamber of Commerce very enthusiastic about 10:10 which seems to be tapping into creative energy of members.
- 4.5 It was felt by some that the awareness raising function of the campaign is already being delivered by the media and that we should focus more on *how* carbon reduction is achieved. An absence of holistic approach was noted - the plumber will only look at your pipes and there is no one-stop shop for low carbon advice. Others felt that info is available and that a strong brand was needed, a simple idea making complex issues easily accessible.
- 4.6 It was observed that the impact of the campaign outside Brighton & Hove should also be noted, as the boundaries of the city are

permeable, many people commute and there are communities outside the city that need to be engaged.

- 4.7 The campaign should also connect with council Warm Front work as c. 90% of households are private and home is the biggest element of the city's carbon footprint.
- 4.8 It was broadly agreed to accept both proposals (see item 7), with strong support voiced all round.

5. Waste & Minerals Strategy

- 5.1 The consultation deadline has been extended to Jan 15th. CSP working group has drafted a response which has been circulated. Partnership members are invited to comment on the response, which will be redrafted and circulated again for final approval in early Jan.
- 5.2 There was some concern about the language used in the draft CSP response around the National Park in section 1d) which makes the National Park sound a constraint and not an opportunity. Yes we need sites close by but that doesn't necessarily mean that the National Park is the best place for them. Sites might be available closer in or even within the city or if large-scale proposals come forward then sites beyond the city and National Park might be more suitable. Equally there might be opportunities with farmers within the National Park. It was felt that the comment about poly-tunnels should be removed as it highlights a complete lack of understanding about landscape issues.
- 5.3 In relation to section 3a) there was concern about the factual accuracy of saying that parking at Falmer was constrained as the Secretary of State's decision letter talks of the parking being at higher levels than recommended by PPG13 standards. It might be that the parking is not right next to the stadium but it is certainly close by unless plans have been substantially changed since the decision letter which would then require a new application.
- 5.4 The thinking behind this point was supported but the practicality of using a rail link on the Hollingdean depot site was questioned. It was felt that it would be better to remove mention of Hollingdean Depot as it could undermine the strength of our comments if we are seen to still be trying to fight a battle that was lost a long time ago.

Action - SC to circulate latest draft electronically and collate responses.

6. Urban Biosphere

6.1 The Council's ecologist presented report and proposal re: funding of officer post to deliver UBR bid, to the partnership.

6.2 Phil Belden declared an interest in that he participated in the 2008 conference that the bid proposal has come out of and features in the report. He supports the idea but has reservations re: the practicality of the project. Biodiversity conference was over a year ago and very little has happened since which leads to questions about the council's commitment to the project.

6.3 Other concerns were also expressed, regarding the proposal to fund an UBR officer. If the bid just requires evidence gathering this should be a relatively easy job and not good grounds for funding if this is all that's required to achieve status. It may be that an officer is needed to work up the concept and ascertain how compatible the buffer zones and sustainable tourism outcomes are with other city-wide strategic goals.

6.4 It was felt that more detail is needed and that we need to be absolutely clear about what is required to achieve status and what the risks and opportunities around the bid, particularly as the money requested for this post would be the biggest single spend so far of CSP funds.

6.5 The council's commitment to local groups contributing to the management of the city's green areas was questioned and it was noted that these groups are rarely consulted about biodiversity strategy. A team effort would be requiring, involving Rangers, local groups, nature websites, the Wildlife Action Group etc

6.6 It was additionally noted that if the bid is progressed and required evidence gathering, it would present an opportunity to work with the digital community and universities to create a website linking a biodiversity 'wish list', made up of UBR objectives, to GIS & LSP data. This 'citywatch' concept might take longer to evolve but would build engagement with more residents.

6.7 Regarding timescale, the process is envisaged to take place between April 2010 and April 2011. 2010 is the International Year of Biodiversity. Wider buy-in may be achieved quickly if CSP drives process, not just the council in isolation.

6.8 The council leadership fully supports the bid, and the 10:10 campaign as totemic things that can make a difference. What would the CSP do with the money that is more important?

6.9 The Chair concluded that there is not enough support for the proposal now but that the CSP recognises its value and will make a definitive decision next meeting. In the meantime it may be necessary to set up a

working group to answer some of the concerns expressed in this meeting. A few weeks will be lost but more work needed on framing the proposal and relating it to the progress of the Wildlife Action Group.

**Actions - Discuss again at next meeting, final decision Jan 18th
Working group to revise proposition for next meeting**

7. Spending priorities

7.1 Thurstan briefed the partnership on the context for proposals set out in the Spending Priorities for CSP funds paper.

7.2 Support for recommendations 1), 3) & 4) was agreed with an amendment to 4) stating 'that up to £4k be allocated to Business 10:10 work strand.'

7.3 Regarding energy mapping as a possible use of funds, it was noted that more work would be needed to establish how this might be funded.

7.4 As per earlier discussions re: Urban Biosphere bid, recommendation 2) will be discussed again at the next meeting.

7.5 Other priorities were discussed and it was noted that One Planet Living will be back on the agenda next meeting.

8. W.A.G.

8.1 Chair has drafted letter to the leader of the council with recommendations and concerns about the Wildlife Action Group. This has been held over in order to combine with Urban Biosphere Reserve bid but discussion will take place in the near future with all the relevant parties in order to advise CSP how to move forward.

8.2 The WAG has run for 10 years and is still meeting regularly but there is a need to re-establish connectivity between council, groups and WAG

8.3 The Urban Biosphere Reserve bid could help develop a refocused group. The issue of advice to council on wildlife matters needs addressing - does the council want a group of experts and should this be distinct from community groups? The group may need to divide into a strategic group (initially focusing on the Urban Biosphere Reserve bid) and a site-based group.

8.4 If the feeling of hostility building around lack of consultation continues and local groups do not support the Urban Biosphere Reserve bid it will be difficult to deliver.

9. Any other business

9.1 Next meeting - Jan 18th

9.2 Proposed list of meeting dates for 2010 will be circulated to be agree at next meeting

9.3 The meeting cycle will change from 6 weeks to 8 weeks. As sub-group mechanism is working well there is less concern about losing momentum in between meetings

9.4 National Park will become official on 31st March.

9.5 All meeting papers to be emailed directly to members as web link unreliable.

