

ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 37

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Environmental Management System		
Date of Meeting:	28 November 2012		
Report of:	Strategic Director, Place		
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This report is an update on the council's ISO 14001 Environmental Management System (EMS) that includes the Events and Venues sustainable events programme. It was launched in August 2010 and it is being jointly delivered by the Brighton & Hove Centres, Outdoor Events, Premises and Sustainability Teams.
- 1.2 An EMS is an established and effective framework used by thousands of organisations across the world to help them manage the environmental impacts of their operations, reduce the risks of pollution incidents and prosecution for non-compliance with legislation and to achieve efficiency savings. It can be tailored to meet the strategic objectives of the organisation and so the council's EMS also covers the social and economic impacts that together make up the wider definition of sustainability.
- 1.3 The council's EMS is certified to the International Standard for Environmental Management Systems (ISO 14001). Brighton & Hove City Council was the first in the country to implement a system that also met the requirements of the new British Standard for Sustainable Events (BS 8901) that was developed for LOCOG (London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games) to help them meet challenging sustainability goals at the London 2012 Games. The new standard proved so popular amongst event organisers that the International Standards Organisation (ISO) has developed it into an ISO standard. The new standard (ISO 20121) was launched earlier this year and the BS 8901 is being withdrawn at the end of 2012.
- 1.4 The CRC Energy Efficiency Scheme means that the council now pays for every tonne of carbon dioxide emitted from its operations and the bill this year is more than £250,000. Along with large rises in the cost of energy this provides strong financial justification to identify and implement energy saving opportunities in council-run buildings. Given the large utility costs associated the two buildings covered by the EMS (the Brighton Centre

and Hove Town Hall), using this approach has helped to systematically identify potential savings through energy saving initiatives.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Environment & Sustainability Committee agrees to amend the Environmental Management System to achieve compliance with the ISO 20121 sustainable events standard by end of 2012, to coincide with the withdrawal BS 8901.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 Organisations tendering for council contracts are often asked in the Pre Qualification Questionnaire whether they have an Environmental Management System that is certified to ISO 14001 or similar. Brighton & Hove City Council is one of the only councils that not only asks its suppliers if they have such a system, but also leads by example by having a certified system itself.
- 3.2 The scope of the current system covers outdoor events on council land and indoor events at the Brighton Centre and Hove Town Hall. Event organisers are asked to complete an Event Sustainability Statement when they apply to hold an event and the project is co-ordinated by the Sustainability Consultant specialising in EMS. The statement covers: Risk Management, Community Engagement and Raising Awareness, Location / Venue and Transport, Energy & Water Use, Waste Management, Air Quality & Noise, Catering and Procurement, Emergency & Abnormal Situations. The statement gives guidance on the actions that event organisers can take to reduce the impact of the event and asks for their plans across these areas. The scope of the system is not limited to reducing environmental impacts, it takes the wider view of sustainability that includes local economic and social impacts.
- 3.3 The Outdoor Events Team have worked with event organisers to complete over one hundred Sustainable Events Statements. These have provided strong evidence that the organisers of events from the very small to the very large are voluntarily choosing more sustainable options for their events. Actions that have been taken include publicising events electronically rather than with printed flyers, seeking out local suppliers, using solar powered generators, ordering signage without specific dates so that they can be re-used and a number of other initiatives that have helped reduce the impact of the event and in many cases also save themselves money. Most event organisers arrange effective clear up of the area where the event was held ensuring full public access as soon as possible and the co-operation and hard work of CityClean employees has been an important factor in making sure that surrounding areas are also quickly cleared for example during the Brighton Marathon and Pride events.
- 3.4 Whilst the Sustainable Events Statements show that event organisers are doing a lot to improve sustainability, only a few are celebrating their achievements in their publicity to visitors, people living nearby and to sponsors. A good example of an event that successfully publicised its achievements was the Brighton Marathon which chose to use only electronic registration for the 28 page registration pack that went out to 18,000 runners, reducing costs to the organisers and the overall carbon footprint of the event.

3.5 In the first stages of implementation of the sustainable events programme, the focus at Brighton Centre has been improving the sustainability of the building itself. The reason for this was to ensure that event organisers were not being asked to improve the sustainability of their events when the arrangements in the building were not supporting them to do that. There is now a comprehensive recycling system in place for paper, card, cans and plastics in the centre with high visibility recycling containers throughout the building. New energy efficient lighting has been installed in the main hall that will cut carbon dioxide emissions by 23.5 tonnes a year and save at least £41,000 a year on electricity bills. Installing timers for the urinals has stopped them flushing continuously and this should save 13,000 litres of water a day - a reduction of 96% that should cut water bills by £9,200 a year. The most recent initiative has been the installation of a baler for cardboard, meaning that the council will no longer have to pay to have cardboard taken away as it has a value for recycling in baled form. The scope of the EMS also covers The Hove Centre and Hove Town Hall.

3.6 A number of significant national venues including the Barbican, Earls Court Olympia and the Excel Centre already have a sustainable events standard and customers are increasingly choosing venues on the basis of their sustainability credentials. Now that the building itself is more sustainable, the next stage is to start marketing the Brighton Centre on the basis of its sustainability credentials using the ISO 20121 standard. One of the zones at the Ultimate Site Visit event that re-launched the refurbished Brighton Centre was dedicated to sustainability. Shortly afterwards a significant booking was taken from the Eco Technology Show 2013. The organisers specifically cited the centre's sustainable events programme as a major factor in securing the booking;

“As organisers of the premier eco-technology exhibition in the UK aimed at both trade and the general public, we wanted to use our own purchasing power to support suppliers who take sustainability seriously, particularly because the events industry has a huge environmental footprint. We chose The Brighton Centre as the venue for next year's show because we knew about the steps they have taken to improve the performance of the building through their sustainable events programme that has included installing innovative LED lighting, water control devices and other new technologies that exhibitors will be showcasing on the day”

- Nicola Gunstone, Director, The Eco-Technology Show, 15-16 June 2013, The Brighton Centre.

3.7 Having a robust EMS is one of the requirements of the Culture and Community principle of the Sustainability Action Plan. Because the council began developing its EMS in 2009, it can already demonstrate compliance with this requirement. In order to show continuous improvement, the Sustainability Action Plan will be managed using the EMS approach that will provide a robust framework for monitoring and management implementation of the actions within the plan.

3.8 The outdoor events that take place in the city's green spaces increase the number of people getting outdoors and contribute to the vibrant local economy. 20,000 people attended the Sussex Festival of Nature in Stanmer Park this year – some of whom had probably never visited the park before the event. When considering the impacts of large outdoor events like this, it is important to take a balanced view of the social, economic and environmental impacts of events. Sometimes outdoor events have negative impacts

on biodiversity particularly in the event of rain resulting in grass getting churned up. The Shakedown event brought trade and visitors to the city but suffered from bad weather and a recently implemented initiative to help manage and minimise the impact has been to hold a deposit from event organisers for reinstatement. The appropriateness of events in a green space is always under review.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Implementation of the EMS relies of the co-operation and engagement of a number of key stakeholders including event organisers and suppliers. The work is carried out by a number of teams across the council including the Outdoor Events, Sustainability, Venues, Legal and Premises Teams.

Engagement with all of the interested parties involved with an event (visitors, suppliers, those living nearby and anyone else affected) is one of the most significant requirements of the ISO 20121 standard. It includes two specific clauses that cover this - Clause 4.2: Identify and engage interested parties and Clause 7.4: Maintain internal and external communications (7.4). There is also the requirement for how complaints are collated and dealt with, with any recurring and unresolved complaints being escalated to the management.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 There are no additional costs anticipated from complying with ISO20121. The annual certification will be covered within existing resources.

Finance Officer consulted: Anne Silley Date 1/11/12

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 The adoption of the proposed EMS standard (ISO 20121) will provide a framework through which the council is able to manage and track changes to environmental legislation and will therefore assist the council in meeting its legal obligations.

Lawyer consulted: Elizabeth Culbert Date: 12/11/12

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 The Sustainable Events Statement contains questions and guidance to help organisers ensure they consider the equalities implications of their event. They are asked to identify all of the interested parties involved (organisers, residents, suppliers, visitors, spectators, exhibitors or emergency services). They are also asked how they will ensure that their event is inclusive and accessible to all under and it gives details of their responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010). Without the sustainable events programme in place, event organisers would not be receiving this information and there could be negative implications where event organisers have not considered them.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 Developing and implementing a sustainable events programme for events on council land and in council run venues has brought into focus the large environmental footprint of the events industry. Dealing with waste and litter at outdoor events is particularly challenging and this programme ensures that event organisers have considered the impact their event will have across a range of areas; many of which they might not have thought of before.

Improving the sustainability and reducing the environmental impact of events at council venues and on council land also contributes to the Corporate Plan priority of creating a more sustainable city. Under the Culture and Community principle of the One Planet Sustainability Action Plan, the council is required to have a robust EMS or action plan for all of the venues it owns.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 None

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 Using an Environmental Management System approach helps reduce risk from pollution incidents and non-compliance with environmental legislation. There is a continued risk from the EMS not being integrated into existing systems and part of the conversion will be to integrate some existing process within document control.

Public Health Implications:

- 5.7 None

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.8 The sustainable events programme and compliance with the new ISO 20121 standard help Brighton & Hove to demonstrate its sustainability credentials to visitors and the conference and exhibition market that is an important source of income for the city.

6 EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 One alternative option would be not to convert the sustainable events programme from compliance with the BS 8901 standard to the ISO 20121 standard. Given that BS 8901 is being withdrawn, event organisers interested in choosing venues with excellent sustainability credentials will be looking for venues with ISO 20121 and there is a risk of missing bookings by not making the conversion.

Also, standards are updated on a regular basis and BS 8901 will no longer be updated. The other option would be not to continue with a Sustainable Events Standard. Given that venue bookers and event organisers are increasingly choosing venues on the basis of their sustainability credentials, council venue could miss out on bookings to the other venues that do have sustainable event standards in place.

7 REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The BS 8901 standard is being withdrawn at the end of 2012 and is being replaced with the new ISO 20121 international standard for sustainable events.
- 7.2 A number of large national venues use sustainable events standards in order to demonstrate their sustainability credentials to potential customers and help manage and reduce their large utility costs. The recommendation will enable council run venues to continue to compete in this market of the lucrative conferences and exhibitions market.
- 7.3 A strong EMS saves the organisation money by helping it to effectively manage its energy, waste and water.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. None

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. None

Background Documents

1. None