

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

18 JANUARY 2006 AT 5.00 PM

COMMITTEE ROOM 3, BRIGHTON TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Edmond Smith (Convenor), Councillors Cobb, Forester, Hazelgrove, Kemble, Mallender, Pidgeon and Mrs Theobald (OS)

Also present: Mark Strong, Chris Todd

Apologies received from Councillor Davidson, Councillor Battle

PART ONE

49. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

49a Declarations of Substitutes

49.1 Councillor Pidgeon for Councillor Oxley.

49b Declarations of Interest

49.2 Mark Strong declared a potential professional interest in Item 54, Cycling and Sustainability.

49.3 Councillor Forester declared a personal interest in item 55, Neighbourhood Engagement in Climate Change Project, stating that she worked at the University of Brighton and also her ward was involved in the pilot project.

49c Exclusion of Press and Public

49.4 The Committee considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any items contained in the agenda, having regard to the nature of the business to be transacted and the nature of the proceedings and the likelihood as to whether, if members of the press and public were present, there would be disclosure to them of confidential or exempt information as defined in Section 100A(3) or 100 1 of the Local Government Act 1972.

49.5 **RESOLVED** - That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting during consideration of any items on the agenda.

50. MINUTES

50.1 **RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2005 be approved and signed by the Convenor, subject to noting that members would like their names mentioned in future minutes and the following amendment to the first and third sentences of paragraph 48.2:

“Chris Todd stated that the AONB and National Park should form a key part of the core strategy. ... He stated that other key missing issues relating to water were permeability and replenishing the aquifer.”

50a. UPDATE FROM LAST MEETING

50.2 The Head of Sustainability & Environmental Policy updated the Commission. The council, together with the Environment Agency, Southern Water and The Argus, had decided not to concentrate the Water event into the weekend of 3/4 June 2006, but to link it to a series of events planned for April, May and June. It was hoped that this way the message would reach more residents and it would be less costly than holding the weekend event. The Water Conference would definitely take place on 20 April.

50.3 The Head of Sustainability & Environmental Policy reported on the seminar about on-site renewables on 12 December. The Commission asked to receive Merton council's presentation slides (see appendix). Members would be interested to learn the percentage of renewables, which other councils were asking in different types of development.

50.4 A dozen councillors had attended the members' seminar on the city's draft Climate Change Action Plan on 1 December and made useful contributions, which had been incorporated into the draft plan.

50.5 The Head of Sustainability had met the council's Policy Team to discuss the Commission's comments on the Community Strategy. The LSP Strategy Review Group would consider the strategy and the comments on 20 January.

51. CONVENOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

51.1 The Convenor welcomed Urszula Ostanewicz who would be working with the Sustainability Team for the next nine months.

52. DRAFT CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

52.1 The Commission considered a report of the Director of Environment presenting the draft Climate Change Action Plan and seeking approval for the document and an accessible summary to be published in March 2006 for three

months of public consultation (see minute book).

52.2 The Head of Sustainability and Environmental Policy thanked Karen Gardham, who had left the council, Ross Tan, who had come to the end of his graduate management placement in the team, Susan Wilson, who had joined the Sustainability Team as a volunteer three days a week, and Tracey Waters from Communications, for their work on the Action Plan.

52.3 The Commission considered the document page by page and commented as follows (pages refer to agenda page numbers):

Page 16 there is a need to identify which will be the hardest targets to meet; also individual actions need targets to meet.

Page 33 onwards: it is inaccurate to describe the targets as 'SMART as they are not measurable.

Page 19 should mention Cycle Demonstration Town.

Page 20 the city should recycle more products than currently. [The council should also advise the public that yellow pages can now go in home recycling bins.]

Page 21 needs to show a 1990 baseline

Page 22 should state whether figure is per capita (or other measurement).

Page 28 There was some debate on the Local Transport Plan. Councillor Mrs Theobald asked whether the phasing of traffic lights could be reconsidered to reduce carbon emissions. She also stated that the proposed new school admission arrangements could mean more cars on the road unless school travel plans were tightened. Chris Todd stated that council policies should consider the impact created outside the city by discouraging cars from entering the city.

Page 29 **T2** cycling targets should be generic, as are the pedestrian targets. Car Club should be named as a partner.

Page 29 **T3** Councillor Mallender asked for feedback after Walking Corridors are identified. A member of the public asked the council to stop licensing A boards, but to ban them instead.

Page 32 The city's Waste Local Plan is below the regional targets in its recycling rate.

Page 36 should refer to food miles.

Page 40 **R9** council representatives on the LSP to encourage this

Page 41 delete reference to Water weekend.

Page 47 **A2** should mention allotments.

Page 48 **A6** needs rewording / clarification.

Page 49 **A10** not just plants, also humans.

Page 50 add 'implementing higher building regulations'.

Page 51 **A19** links to Planning tree planting condition.

Page 52 is incomplete, the Head of Sustainability advised that this section will be expanded.

Page 55 should highlight the positive, eg money saving.

52.4 **RESOLVED** – That the climate change action plan should be published for public consultation and that this be recommended to the Policy & Resources Committee for approval.

53. IMPROVEMENTS TO THE SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION: PROPOSALS

53.1 The Commission considered a report of the Director of Environment concerning the findings and recommendations arising from the internal review of the Sustainability Commission (see minute book).

53.2 Mark Strong suggested that meetings of the panel of experts should be topic-based. The Convenor replied that it would be necessary to know the composition of the panel and their areas of expertise before deciding.

53.3 The Head of Sustainability confirmed that the Commission would be able to reappoint co-optees for a further two-year term of office.

53.4 The Head of Sustainability apologised that he had not consulted the solicitor or accountant. He would do so before Policy & Resources Committee. However, he believed that the financial implications could be met from existing budgets.

53.5 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the Commission agrees terms of reference for a Pool of Expertise in Sustainable Development issues, as set out in paragraph 3.1 of the report, and gives responsibility to the Head of Sustainability to establish it.

(2) That the Commission approves revised Terms of Reference clarifying the role and participation of co-optees, as set out in paragraph 3.5 of the report.

54. CYCLING & SUSTAINABILITY

54.1 The Transport Planning Officer made a presentation on Cycling & Sustainability. He stated that West Brighton & Hove had achieved Cycling Demonstration Town Status. For 3 years the council would receive £500,000 a year, which it would match with equal funding, to improve cycling in the west of the city, where 45% of workers currently drive less than 3 miles to work. The Transport Planning Officer stated that Personalised Travel Planning was an important aspect of the work: finding those who might be prepared to change their means of travel and helping them. His team was asking the council and other employers to provide secure cycle parking, showers and changing facilities.

54.2 The Transport Planning Officer explained that the strict criteria for applying for Cycling Demonstration Town status meant that only part of the city could be involved. He confirmed that he would continue to seek other funding to improve the east of the city in accordance with the Local Transport Plan.

54.3 The Commission considered that cycle lanes should be reviewed throughout the city to ensure that routes were direct, with clear connections between lanes, and free from obstacles. There is an urgent need for a cycle route from the city centre to the universities along Lewes Road. Routes along the seafront should be reconsidered. Councillor Pidgeon stated that this review should heed the findings of the Deaf, Blind and Deaf/Blind Action Group and keep pavements safe for disabled pedestrians. It was also agreed that there was a need for more cycle stands, particularly in shopping areas, like Churchill Square and the Open Market. Many bicycles are stolen, so cycle storage needs to be secure and visible.

54.3 Councillor Cobb regretted that bicycles are not allowed on trains at peak times and that many cycle lanes are in poor condition. Councillor Mallender stated that there are obstacles and blind bends on some cycle lanes. He recommended a loan scheme for paniers, trailers, child carriers. He also asked that cycle storage be improved, as so many cycles are stolen.

54.4 The Convenor stressed the importance of further consultation with individuals as well as cycle groups.

55. NEIGHBOURHOOD ENGAGEMENT IN CLIMATE CHANGE PROJECT

55.1 The Head of Sustainability made a presentation about engaging with communities on climate change. The pilot project, involving the council, Brighton University and other agencies, would take place in Queens Park Ward. The community would be advised on using water, energy and resources efficiently and thus saving money.

55.2 A member of the public stated that Albion Hill Estate, where he lived, was currently being renovated, and he suggested that sustainability measures should be incorporated. It was agreed that the Head of Sustainability should contact the Planned Maintenance Manager on behalf of the Commission with a view to making the Estate as sustainable as possible.

56. LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

56.1 No meeting had taken place since the last Commission meeting.

The meeting concluded at 7.10 pm.

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

2006