

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

SUSTAINABILITY CABINET COMMITTEE

3.00PM 13 OCTOBER 2009

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Mears (Chairman), Caulfield and Fallon-Khan

Also in attendance: Councillors Janio (Lead Councillor for Sustainability), Mitchell (Opposition Spokesperson, Labour) and Steedman (Opposition Spokesperson, Green)

PART ONE

1. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

1A Declarations of Interest

1a.1 There were none.

1B Exclusion of Press and Public

1b.1 In accordance with section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 ('the Act'), the Sustainability Cabinet Committee considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during an item of business on the grounds that it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press or public were present during that item, there would be disclosure to them of confidential information (as defined in section 100A(3) of the Act) or exempt information (as defined in section 100I(1) of the Act).

1b.2 **RESOLVED** - That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

2.1 The Chairman updated Members on the following matters arising from the minutes:

- Discussions were taking place between housing officers and the City Food Partnership regarding issues around Tenant Associations growing food on housing land.
- A report on the Sustainable Communities Act would be considered by the Cabinet Committee on receipt of responses from the Local Government Association and central government.

- As agreed, the Cabinet Committee would receive regular updates from the Brighton Peace & Environment Centre and Project Coordinator Paolo Boldrini was in attendance.

- 2.2 The Chairman welcomed Mr Boldrini and invited him to address the Cabinet Committee.
- 2.3 Mr Boldrini updated Members on progress made on the Climate Connections partnership project since the previous meeting (see Appendix 1).
- 2.4 **RESOLVED** – The minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2009 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

3. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

- 3.1 The Chairman reported that at the recent Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) meeting she had expressed the Council's commitment to signing up to the 10:10 campaign and that the LSP was firmly behind the initiative. She explained that, following the agreement of two Notices of Motion at Council and subject to agreement by the Cabinet in November, the Council would aim to reduce its carbon emissions by 10% in the 2010/11 financial year. The Council was committed to leading by example and was confident that achievement of the challenging target would not only help the environment, but also save taxpayers money.
- 3.2 The Chairman reported that Brighton & Hove City Council had been shortlisted for the "Most Sustainable Business" award in the 2009/10 Sussex Business Awards", with the winner due to be announced on Friday 6 November 2009 at the Grand Hotel. Linked to the nomination was feedback from the Audit Commission from the Use of Resources Assessment in relation to Natural Resources; the council received a three score out of a possible four. The Chairman paid tribute to officers in the Sustainability Team for their work towards the achievement.

4. ITEMS RESERVED FOR DISCUSSION

- 4.1 **RESOLVED** - That all the items be reserved for discussion.

5. PETITIONS

- 5.1 There were none.

6. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- 6.1 There were none.

7. DEPUTATIONS

- 7.1 There were none.

8. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

- 8.1 There were none.

9. LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS

9.1 There were none.

10. NOTICES OF MOTIONS REFERRED FROM COUNCIL**10A Support the 'Great British Refurb' and the creation of more eco-jobs and training in the city**

10a.1 The Cabinet Committee considered the following Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Turton:

"The Council welcomes the Great British Refurb that is planned across the country and the subsequent creation of jobs and training opportunities across the City.

The Council recognises that the refurbishment of Britain's schools, public buildings and council housing to improve energy efficiency has had received wide ranging support. The Renewable Energy Association has called the Government's plans 'very positive, visionary and ambitious and the Local Government Association has called the plans a 'a major step forward' and the LGA have asked that energy suppliers pay a £500m annual charge to help fund a home insulation programme that would save 10 million households £280 a year on their energy bills, and create up to 20,000 new eco jobs.

Key proposals of the Great British Refurb include;

- Finance packages to install energy efficiency measures and low-carbon heat and power sources would be offered to householders. Repayment from part of the savings on energy bills would be linked to the property, rather than residents.
- Combined with guaranteed cash payments by way of a Renewable Heat Incentive and a Feed-in Tariff for small scale electricity generation, the payback for homeowners who switch to low-carbon technologies and save energy would start from day one.
- Options for improving the delivery of energy efficiency advice and measures, including establishing a central coordinating body funded by energy companies and working to Government-set targets.
- Rolling out low-cost home energy audits, developing a qualification for energy advisers, and establishing an accreditation scheme for installers.

The Council accepts that it will also have a large role to play in developing renewable and low carbon heat and electricity, such as district heating schemes and asks:

(a) The Cabinet Sustainability Committee to consider its responsibility to ensure;

- Local schools, colleges and universities take full advantage of any future qualifications and apprenticeships linked to the instalment of environmentally friendly technology in the City's homes,

- Local people are kept informed of the benefits of the Great British Refurb, such as any paybacks for homeowners who switch to low carbon alternatives and training opportunities in green industries, through council publications such as the website and City News,
- Work with local energy companies based in the City, as well as government departments to guarantee the best options, in terms of energy packages, training opportunities and jobs for residents and young people in the City,

(b) The Council asks the Cabinet to consider whether there is a wish for any involvement in the roll out of the Great British Refurb, particularly with regards to any future skills and training initiatives, and

(c) That the Acting Chief Executive write to the Department of Energy and Climate Change to outline the Council's support for the scheme."

10a.2 Councillor Mitchell welcomed the opportunity to discuss the issues contained in the Notice of Motion on behalf of Councillor Turton who was unable to attend the meeting.

10a.3 The Democratic Services Officer confirmed that the Acting Chief Executive had written to the Department of Energy and Climate Change as requested in the Notice of Motion.

10a.4 In response to a question from Councillor Caulfield, the Head of Sustainability & Environmental Policy explained that the Council had secured funding for eco-apprenticeships and discussions were ongoing with City College and the Friends Centre about taking the proposals forward. He added that a forthcoming scrutiny review would provide further detail.

10a.5 The Chairman commented that the Council would need to carry out further work in response to the announcement from central government.

10a.6 Councillor Caulfield added that there would be an opportunity for the proposals to feed into the housing repairs contract to ensure good practice.

10a.7 In response to a query from Councillor Steedman, the Head of Sustainability & Environmental Policy explained that there would be intense competition for challenge funding from the Low Carbon Communities Fund and that the Council was considering making an application.

10a.8 Councillor Mitchell thanked colleagues for comments and stated that she hoped the Notice of Motion would remain a point of reference in taking the proposals forward.

10a.9 **RESOLVED** – That the Notice of Motion be noted.

11. CARBON REDUCTION COMMITMENT

11.1 The Cabinet Committee considered a revised report of the Director of Strategy & Governance concerning the Council's approach to the Carbon Reduction Commitment (for copy see minute book).

- 11.2 The Head of Sustainability & Environmental Policy explained that a revised version of the report had been circulated due to publication of the government's response to the consultation on the Carbon Reduction Commitment, which contained some key policy changes resulting in a smaller financial commitment in 2010/11 and effectively delaying the scheme by one year. He added that the Council would seek to revise its carbon reduction targets for future years.
- 11.3 Councillor Mitchell welcomed the report and commented that the proposals would help to raise awareness of the problems of climate change and would provide a good platform for the work of the City Sustainability Partnership. She requested that Member's be invited to a seminar on the issue.
- 11.4 In response to questions from Councillor Steedman, the Energy & Water Manager explained that it was difficult to predict how we would rate against other local authorities because the dummy carbon trading scheme did not require participants to put a specified amount of their portfolio in; however, on the basis of historical data it was hoped that the Council would rate reasonably well.
- 11.5 Councillor Steedman stated that he hoped the Council would aspire to be fiscally neutral or even bring in income from the scheme.
- 11.6 Councillor Caulfield commented that the new Falmer Academy buildings should help to improve targets for the city's schools.
- 11.7 In response to a query from Councillor Caulfield, the Head of Sustainability & Environmental Policy explained that officers within the housing directorate had sufficient knowledge and expertise to feed into the Energy Efficiency Working Group.
- 11.8 Councillor Fallon-Khan added that once the Council had completed its Display Energy Certificates it would be possible to begin prioritising buildings that needed most work.
- 11.9 Councillor Janio stated that he was pleased that the proposals in the report had received cross-party support and looked forward to ongoing collaborative work.
- 11.10 **RESOLVED** - That, having considered the information and the reasons set out in the revised report, the Cabinet Committee accepted the following recommendations:
- (1) That the City Council's Carbon Management Programme Strategy & Implementation Plan be revised to take account of the CRC, as well as Display Energy Certificates.
 - (2) That further work be done to establish how schools will participate fully in the CRC.
 - (3) That the budget planning process identifies the required funding to purchase the CO2 emissions allowances for 2011/12.
 - (4) That the officer Carbon Trading Group explores the potential to introduce internal carbon trading for directorates for 2010/11 onwards.

12. ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY STATEMENT FOR BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

- 12.1 The Cabinet Committee considered a report of the Director of Strategy & Governance concerning proposals for a corporate Environmental Policy Statement (for copy see minute book).
- 12.2 Councillor Steedman welcomed the introduction of an Environmental Management Scheme and looked forward to seeing more detailed work; he queried how the Council would monitor its performance against the policy.
- 12.3 The Sustainability Coordinator explained that the aim was to embed a structured monitoring scheme across the organisation following the outcome of the pilot schemes.
- 12.4 The Head of Sustainability & Environmental Policy added that the Council is monitored by the Audit Commission and officers were working with colleagues in internal audit on improving processes.
- 12.5 **RESOLVED** - That, having considered the information and the reasons set out in the report, the Cabinet Committee accepted the following recommendation:
- (1) That the Environmental Policy for the Council be approved.

13. CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

- 13.1 The Cabinet Committee considered the minutes of Climate Change Adaptation Scrutiny Panel Scoping Meeting held on 27 July 2009 (for copy see minute book).
- 13.2 Councillor Janio reported that the meeting had been very positive and Members had elected to focus on adaptation rather than mitigation.
- 13.3 Councillor Mitchell, who was a member of the panel, reported that the witnesses had made Members aware of the breadth of the issue and the panel would now to narrow its focus to look at areas that would make a difference to the Council.
- 13.4 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes be noted.

14. REPORT OF THE CITY SUSTAINABILITY PARTNERSHIP

- 14.1 The Cabinet Committee considered the minutes of the City Sustainability Partnership (CSP) held on 18 May 2009 and 29 June 2009 and the draft minutes of the CSP held on 7 September 2009 (for copy see minute book).
- 14.2 The Head of Sustainability & Environmental Policy confirmed that funding had been secured to resource administration of the CSP.
- 14.3 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes be noted.

The meeting concluded at 3.45pm

Signed

Chairman

Dated this

day of

