

# **BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**

## **SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION**

**26 OCTOBER 2005 AT 5.00 PM**

**COMMITTEE ROOMS 2/3, BRIGHTON TOWN HALL**

### **MINUTES**

Present: Councillor Edmond Smith (Convenor), Councillors Battle, Cobb, Davidson, Forester, Kemble, Mallender, Oxley, Pennington and Mrs Theobald (OS)

Also present: Mark Strong; Chris Todd

### **PART ONE**

#### **29. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS**

##### **29a Declarations of Substitutes**

29.1 Councillor Pennington substituted for Councillor Hazelgrove.

##### **29b Declarations of Interest**

29.2 There were no declarations of interest.

##### **29c Exclusion of Press and Public**

29.3 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.

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

#### **30. MINUTES**

30.1 **RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2005 be approved and signed by the Convenor.

### 31. CONVENOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

31.1 The Head of Sustainability & Environmental Policy updated members on matters arising from the minutes. A Climate Change Members Workshop had been arranged for 1 December. A report on the Internal Review of the Sustainability Commission would come to the next meeting. The Economic Development Team and the consultants had now considered the Commission's comments on the Sustainability Appraisals of the Circus Street and Market Street SPDs. They had accepted the majority of comments but not those relating to target reductions for water use and CO<sub>2</sub> reduction. There was some debate and the Commission still considered them essential. The Head of Sustainability & Environmental Policy agreed to raise them again during the consultation process. He also referred to Sustainability Indicators and stated that he would be reporting to a future meeting on Environmental Management Systems adopted by best practice authorities with a view to introducing them in Brighton & Hove. A member requested a report back on action taken in respect of the ancient hedgerow at Green Ridge.

31.2 The Convenor advised that the Community Action Conference on Climate Change would take place on 26 November.

31.3 The Convenor stated that Councillor John and the Chief Executive would attend the Nottingham Conference on 5 December.

### 32. CONFERENCES AND OPEN DAYS

32.1 The Commission considered a report of the Director of Environment concerning conferences and open days. There were two appendices: the Convenor's feedback report on the "Modernising Government Estates – developing the sustainability agenda" Sustainable Development annual conference and a feedback report on the visit by the Convenor and the Sustainability Co-ordinator to Woking Borough Council Sustainable Energy Beacon Open Day (see minute book).

32.2 It was agreed that the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel should be asked to consider the Audit Commission's finding that the NHS was poor in implementing sustainability measures.

32.3 **RESOLVED** – That the reports be noted.

### 33. MICRO WINDPOWER

33.1 The Commission received a presentation by Graham Oliver of Windsave. He showed a video of his company's micro wind turbine generator system, which aimed to help commerce and industry reduce emissions, to help homes reduce consumption from the Grid and save money, and to meet the Government targets for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Mr Oliver explained how the product worked and how it could be installed. He then responded to members' questions.

33.2 Members appreciated the presentation but were concerned about the implications of Planning legislation and the cost of installation and maintenance. It was noted that these issues were being addressed and information was contained in the report, Item 34, on the agenda.

33.3 The Convenor stressed that the Windsave model had been presented to the Commission as an example, that there were other systems on the market and were likely to be many more in the near future.

#### **34. RENEWABLE ENERGY & MICRO-GENERATION FOR DOMESTIC USE**

34.1 The Commission considered a report of the Director of Environment concerning developments in renewable energy and micro-generation in the UK and informing how this might be supported further in Brighton & Hove (see minute book).

34.2 After some debate, members unanimously agreed that the council should negotiate for 15% renewable energy generation in larger developments and not 10% as set out in paragraph 2.1 of the report. There was a general consensus that once the Planning and affordability issues had been resolved, there would be widespread acceptance of renewable energy and micro-generation across the country. Members noted that the council's Planners required housing developments over a certain size to contain affordable housing, which seemed to have resulted in more applications for smaller developments. It was agreed that the Head of Sustainability & Environmental Policy should report back on this.

34.3 A member expressed concern about north facing classrooms and the Convenor stated that the council would need to monitor whether it was successful at Varndean School before it was extended elsewhere.

34.4 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the City Council develop a planning policy through the Local Development Framework (LDF) process requiring developers to incorporate on-site renewable energy generation. The on-site renewables figure for consultation on the LDF should be at least 15% of the buildings' energy requirements in larger developments.

(2) That City Planning develop a baseline for the energy produced by renewables in the city as part of the Local Development Framework process and monitor this.

(3) That Housing and City Support explore establishing a grant fund towards the cost of domestic renewable energy and Combined Heat and Power (CHP) micro-generation installations in city homes.

**35. ECO-BRIGHTON: OVERVIEW OCTOBER 2005**

35.1 The Commission considered a report of the Director of Cultural Services concerning the arts programme, Eco-Brighton, which is part of the *making a difference* cultural programme (see minute book). The Head of Creative Industries set the background to the project and the Acting Principal Programme Officer reported on the two projects commissioned already and three further projects due to be commissioned at the end of this month.

35.2 **RESOLVED** – That the contents of the report be noted.

**36. WESTERGATE HOUSE MICRO-GENERATION**

36.1 The Project Manager, Andy Smith, made a presentation about the sustainability measures built in to Westergate House. These include growing walls, geothermal energy, solar water heating, wind turbine, sunpipes, natural ventilation and carbon balancing. Local, sustainable materials were used.

36.2 Some members expressed concern about the requirement for the developer to pay for tree planting in Africa in order to make the development carbon balanced, rather than locally. They considered that local trees that had been lost due to disease and storms should be replaced. The Sustainability Officer explained that experience had shown that it was difficult and more costly to arrange large scale tree planting for carbon balancing locally. It was agreed that some local planting should feature in future.

**37. FINAL FOOD STRATEGY TARGETS**

37.1 The Commission considered a report of the Director of Environment concerning draft targets for the Draft Food Strategy (see minute book). The Sustainability Officer presented the report and responded to members' concerns relating to the availability of allotments, the need for the Focus Group on Retail Issues to start consultation and the resources available to the Food Safety Team.

37.2 **RESOLVED** – That '*Spade to Spoon*' A Food Strategy and Action Plan for Brighton & Hove be endorsed and that it be noted that the strategy will be published before Spring 2006.

**38. SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF DRAFT TREES AND DEVELOPMENT SITES SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

38.1 The Commission considered a report of the Director of Environment concerning work undertaken on the Draft Trees and Development Sites Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and its Sustainability Appraisal (see minute book).

38.2 It was agreed that, in paragraph 4.6, under Practical Guidance Section the wording of the first bullet point should read "That reference to Best Practice on 'Greenways' be provided in the SPD". It was further agreed that the reference in paragraph 6 of the Appendix to guidance in respect of planning applications should be expanded to cover all highways work.

38.3 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the draft Trees and Development Sites SPD with its extensive guidance for developers and planning officers on methodology to retain, protect and create sustainable new planting of trees be welcomed.

(2) That the amendments to the Draft Trees SPD be agreed as set out in paragraphs 4.6 and 5.5 of the report with the further amendments set out in paragraph 38.2 above.

### **39. LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP UPDATE**

39.1 Simon Newell updated the Commission on the recent activities of the LSP. He referred to Performance Management Framework, Community Strategy Consultation, Neighbourhood Renewal. Details of the SE England Renewable Energy Conference were circulated.

The meeting concluded at 7.25 pm.

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

2005