

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

24 MAY 2006 AT 5.00 PM

BRIGHTON TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Edmond Smith (Convenor), Councillors Barnett, Davidson, Hazelgrove, Mallender, Mitchell, K Norman, Peltzer Dunn and Mrs Theobald

Also present: Mark Strong, Chris Todd, and Beth Simmons of the Environment Agency

PART ONE

1. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

1a Declarations of Substitutes

1.1 There were no declarations of substitutes.

1b Declarations of Interest

1.2 There were no declarations of interest.

1c Exclusion of Press and Public

1.3 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.

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

2. MINUTES

2.1 **RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2006 be approved and signed by the Convenor.

2a. UPDATE

2.2 The Head of Sustainability stated that he would tell the 45 eco-schools about the Department for Education and Skills' "Sustainable Schools for Pupils, Communities and the Environment" consultation between 15 May and 1 September 2006. He would send Commission members details by email.

2.3 The Convenor had advised The Argus that the report on the city's ecological footprint had been misleading.

2.4 Members noted with concern that the Policy & Resources Committee no longer received the full minutes of the Sustainability Commission, but a short report of its decisions and recommendations. The Commission recommends that members of Policy & Resources Committee read the full minutes which are available on the council's website.

3. CONVENOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

3.1 The Convenor advised members that the new Sustainability Co-ordinator, Mita Patel, would start work with the council on 8 June.

3.2 The Convenor stated that the Food Strategy was likely to be launched in the week commencing 24 July.

3.3 Details of a Local Produce Festival on 10 June at Hertford Infant School were circulated.

3.4 The city council is a partner in the Carbon Trust's Local Authority Carbon Management Programme and the Commission will receive a progress report at each meeting during the 10 months it is due to run.

3.5 The Convenor had collected a National Gold Award in the Green Apple Awards for the Jubilee Library and the council at the same time received four Green Heroes citations in connection with similar awards won last year.

4. COMMISSION PROTOCOL WITH THE 2020 COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

4.1 The Commission considered a report of the Director of Environment concerning changes to the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for Brighton & Hove – the 2020 Community Partnership – and the opportunity for engaging more closely with it (see minute book). Members noted that the AGM of the LSP was due to take place on 25 May 2006.

4.2 Members considered the draft Protocol appended to the report. It was noted that the Head of Sustainability is still consulting on local indicators and will report to a future meeting. It was agreed to amend the final bullet point to read "Both Parties agree to review Community Strategy targets at least every three years".

4.3 It was agreed that recommendation 2 in the report be amended to read "Opposition Spokesperson" as the Commission does not have a Deputy Convenor.

4.4 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the Sustainability Commission adopt the Protocol with the 2020 Community Partnership set out at Appendix One to the report.

(2) That in the likely event of the 2020 Community Partnership inviting membership from the Commission, the Convenor, or Opposition Spokesperson as substitute, be its representatives, in accordance with the approach being adopted for other city partnerships.

5. CLIMATE CHANGE PARTNERSHIPS

5.1 The Commission considered a report of the Director of Environment regarding two partnerships working on Climate Change that are relevant to the City Council (see minute book). Councillor Peltzer Dunn enquired about costs. The Head of Sustainability regretted that the financial implications paragraph had not been completed and confirmed that this would be done before the paper came to Policy & Resources Committee.

5.2 The Head of Sustainability responded to members' questions. The council would put forward projects in consultation with its partners and it would be up to Defra to decide on the projects it wished to run from the many applications received. He explained how JBPR had been chosen and how their fee would be met if any money was awarded.

5.3 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the Head of Sustainability explore with the Directors of Finance & Property and Strategy & Governance how the City Council might act as "enabling partner", administering funds and managing a climate change Communications campaign on behalf of the Future Coasts Partnership, as set out in paragraph 4.2 of the report.

(2) That the Head of Sustainability seek approval from Policy & Resources Committee for the City Council to act as "enabling partner".

(3) That the City Council become a member of the South East Climate Change Partnership.

6. "WATER SHORTAGE: THE 'HERE AND NOW' CLIMATE CHANGE ISSUE" – ANNUAL SUSTAINABILITY CONFERENCE FEEDBACK

6.1 The Commission received a report giving feedback on the Sustainability Conference held on 20 April 2006 in Hove Town Hall (see minute book).

6.2 The Convenor requested that the Commission's appreciation of the work Ula Ostaniewicz had put into the conference and the report be recorded. The next step would be to consider what to put in the action plan and release it for public consultation. The conference report would appear on the council's website.

6.3 The Commission hopes that more elected members will attend next year's conference.

6.4 **RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

7. SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL: CLARIFICATION AND TIMETABLE

7.1 The Commission considered a report of the Director of Environment concerning the Sustainability Appraisal Process in relation to Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) (see minute book). Members were advised of the timetable for consultation.

7.2 **RESOLVED** – That the new format referred to in paragraph 4.1 of the report be adopted.

8. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT: BIODIVERSITY AND DEVELOPMENT

8.1 The Commission considered a report of the Director of Environment advising members of the progress to date on the production of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on Biodiversity and Development, and seeking members' views on the draft attached at Appendix B. The Sustainability Team's comments had also been circulated (see minute book). Members were advised that draft SPD would be submitted to the Environment Committee in September with a recommendation for approval for a period of formal public consultation.

8.2 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the draft Supplementary Planning Document on Biodiversity and Development be approved for the purposes of formal public consultation.

(2) That the comments of the Sustainability Team be noted and approved.

9. DRAFT SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL REPORT: BIODIVERSITY AND DEVELOPMENT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

9.1 The Commission considered a report of the Director of Environment concerning the Sustainability Appraisal Report of the draft Biodiversity and Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to the Commission (see minute book).

9.2 The Commission expressed concern that developers might miss species and requested officers to make spot checks. Chris Todd requested that some of the points be expanded; for example, BREEAM did not just refer to housing but schools too. Also there are different types of green roof and some reduce the amount of rain water recycled.

9.3 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the comments made by the Sustainability team be approved.

(2) That Option 4 be agreed as the preferred option (paragraph 5.3).

10. WILDLIFE ADVISORY GROUP: MINUTES OF 11 APRIL 2006

10.1 The Commission received the minutes of the Wildlife Advisory Group meeting of 11 April (see minute book) and considered the three recommendations.

10.2 Members considered a Liaison Protocol with Network Rail for the Management of Line-side Trees, which had been drafted by the arboriculturists. It was agreed that Network Rail should be asked to provide a definition of “operational land” and a map showing which of their land was “operational” so that the council would know in future whether trees, which were the subject of a preservation order, were on operational land. The Commission was concerned that no trees should be felled where trimming and lopping would suffice to safeguard the amenity of residents and wildlife.

10.3 The Commission noted the Wildlife Advisory Group’s concern that the council should address the issue of improving liaison with local ‘friends’ groups and the establishment of good practice as a part of the emerging Open Spaces Strategy. It was agreed to refer this matter to the Environment Committee.

10.4 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the Protocol “Management of Line-side Trees” be endorsed for agreement with Network Rail.

(2) That the leaflet “Cats and Wildlife” be deferred pending comments from the RSPB.

(3) To recommend to Environment Committee that the Sustainability Commission would like the question of communication channels with the ‘friends’ groups to be looked into and improved, and that the Environment Committee request the Director of Environment to investigate the matter and incorporate good practice into the emerging Open Spaces Strategy.

11. GREEN ARCHITECTURE DAY

11.1 The Commission considered a report of the Director of Environment concerning the success of Green Architecture Day 2006 which the city council supported (see minute book). Bryn Thomas from Brighton Permaculture Trust attended.

11.2 Members stated that they would like to accompany the coach tour and the Head of Sustainability was requested to consider the most economical way of achieving this. It was noted that the maximum sum proposed to support the coach trip and 2007 event was £1,000.

11.3 **RESOLVED** – That the city council's proposals to make a contribution to Green Architecture Day 2007 and to a coach trip touring sustainable buildings in the city in September 2006 be noted with approval.

12. LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

12.1 Simon Newell reported that the AGM on 25 May would consider Protocols with its partners and a Restructuring paper. Another item to be discussed would be the Night-time Economy.

12.2 The next Neighbourhood Renewal Meeting would take place on 8 June 2006. All Commission members were invited to attend the launch of the Community Strategy on 23 June.

12.3 National Energy Action had written to all LSPs about setting up strategic partnerships to take part in a pilot scheme "Affordable Warmth in Communities". Only five LSPs would be selected to take part. The Head of Sustainability confirmed that this would fit well with the Climate Change Action Plan and that Brighton & Hove would submit a proposal.

The meeting concluded at 7.05 pm.

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

2006