

ITEM NO 24 ON AGENDA

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION

6 SEPTEMBER 2006 AT 5.00 PM

BRIGHTON TOWN HALL

MINUTES

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

[Councillors Burgess, Giebeler and Hamilton attended for Item 16]

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

PART ONE

13 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

13a Declarations of Substitutes

13.1 There were no declarations of substitutes.

13b Declarations of Interest

13.2 There were no declarations of interest.

13c Exclusion of Press and Public

13.3 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.

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

14. MINUTES

14.1 **RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 May 2006 be approved and signed by the Convenor, subject to adding to paragraph 4.4 (1) "with the amendment set out at 4.4 (2)".

14a. UPDATE

14.2 The Convenor encouraged members to attend the Food Strategy launch on 27 September. This would involve a debate, which would no doubt prove interesting.

14.3 The Head of Sustainability stated that the date for the coach tour of the city's sustainable buildings was not yet known, but he would ensure members were informed.

14.4 The Head of Sustainability stated that it had not been necessary to put resolutions (1) and (2) in paragraph 5.3 of the minutes into effect, as the bid to Defra had failed. Defra had not given any grounds for refusal and the Commission requested the Head of Sustainability to ask for them.

15. CONVENOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

15.1 The Convenor thanked Ula Ostaniewicz, who was moving to another post in the council, for her excellent work in the Sustainability Team. Her report on the Water Action Plan would be discussed later on the agenda.

15.2 The Convenor welcomed Martin Pett the new School Grounds Biodiversity Project Officer. He would be based in Hove Town Hall working on the Schools Biodiversity Action Plan.

15.3 The Convenor announced another two Green Apple nominations for the Eco Fashion Show and Young Environmentalist of the Year and thanked Beverley Anderson and Kim Jackson. In addition, City Planning had been invited to attend an award ceremony on 3 November in respect of the Construction and Demolition Waste SPD.

15.4 Members were invited to take a leaflet about the Environmental Management Systems for Local Authorities Workshop due to be held in Crawley on 4 October.

16. CARBON MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

16.1 The Commission considered a report of the Director of Environment concerning the Carbon Trust's Local Authority Carbon Management Programme (see minute book). All councillors had been invited to attend the meeting for this item, as the council had committed itself to taking part in the Programme. Councillor Simon Burgess, Leader of the Council, introduced the item as sponsor to the Carbon Management Programme. He emphasised the importance he personally and the Administration gave to this programme. He stated that there was cross-party co-operation within the council in working to

implement it.

16.2 Gary Foster of the Carbon Trust made a presentation, in which he emphasised the link between saving the environment and saving money. The Carbon Trust worked with the public sector and businesses to cut carbon emissions in accordance with government policy. Councils were shown how to put their own house in order and then extend a marketing campaign to local businesses. There would be a need to raise awareness among staff and the public and also to seek their suggestions. Issues, such as transport, waste, building design and schools, were addressed in the Programme, taking local circumstances into account. The council would be able to apply to the Carbon Trust for matched funding.

16.3 The Project Manager made a presentation giving more information on the process of implementation set out in the report. As well as the need for the Policy & Resources Committee to allocate funding, there would be a need for everyone to work together to achieve a culture change within the council.

16.4 The Convenor advised that a seminar on Home Information Packs would be held for local estate agents in November.

16.5 **RESOLVED** – That the Sustainability Commission's support for the Carbon Management Programme be confirmed.

17. CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN UPDATE

17.1 The Commission considered a report of the Director of Environment informing members of the outcome of the consultation process for the city's draft Climate Change Action Plan and outlining the proposed next steps (see minute book).

17.2 Chris Todd regretted that the opportunity to publicise awareness about the Carbon Management Plan had not been taken at the same time as the consultation. However, it was noted that the Sustainability Coordinator post had been vacant and staff resources had been very stretched at the time.

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

18. CLIMATE CHANGE COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAMME

18.1 The Commission received a report seeking members' views on a proposal to secure sponsorship for a Climate Change Communications Programme (see minute book). The Head of Sustainability gave the Finance Officer's comments: that there would be no costs in the exploration of sponsorship; all financial implications would be dealt with in reports to the relevant committee.

18.2 The Head of Sustainability explained that Jo Brooks Public Relations (JBPR) wished to work with the council and University of Brighton to produce a costed programme and seek sponsors. Councillor Peltzer Dunn requested that costings be reported back to the Commission for a decision to be made. It was agreed that the Convenor, Opposition Spokesperson, Councillor Davidson and Councillor Mallender be appointed to consider potential sponsors if necessary between meetings.

18.3 Councillor Davidson stressed that the council should not incur any costs, if JBPR failed to deliver and the Head of Sustainability confirmed that there would be a legal agreement with them.

18.4 **RESOLVED** – That the Head of Sustainability's proposal to explore sponsorship opportunities for the Climate Change Communications Programme, in collaboration with Jo Brooks Public Relations (JBPR) be endorsed as set out in section 4 of the report, and that the Convenor in consultation with the Opposition Spokesperson, Councillor Davidson and Councillor Mallender be appointed to make any decisions on potential sponsors if necessary between meetings.

19. DfES SUSTAINABLE SCHOOLS CONSULTATION

19.1 The Commission considered a report of the Director of Environment concerning the council's response to the Government's Sustainable Schools Consultation (see minute book). The Environmental Education Support Officer reported the Finance Officer's comments: that there would be no direct implications from the submission of the consultation document; financial implications from any changes to policy as a result of the document would be dealt with in reports to the relevant service committee.

19.2 The Environmental Education Support Officer confirmed that the response set out in Appendix 2 to the report was the council's response. Some individual schools had sent their own responses directly to the DfES. When they had considered the responses, representatives from the DfES would come to Brighton & Hove to discuss the forward plan. Members expressed concern that the government had not promised to provide any additional funding.

19.3 It was noted that because school waste is classified as trade waste it is the responsibility of the schools. However, the council is very keen to encourage and assist schools to recycle their waste and is working with them to that effect.

19.4 The Convenor stated that Brighton & Hove Council was already working on Eco-schools and there was some overlap with Sustainable Schools. The council had informed the DfES of its work on biodiversity in school grounds.

19.5 **RESOLVED** – That the Commission endorse the consultation response submitted by the council as contained in Appendix 2 to the report.

20. WILDLIFE ADVISORY GROUP: MINUTES OF 27 JUNE 2006

20.1 The Commission received the minutes of the Wildlife Advisory Group meeting of 27 June (see minute book) and considered the three recommendations.

20.2 Councillor Mitchell had written to thank the BBC for participating in Brighton & Hove Goes Wild and to ask whether there could be a similar event next year.

20.3 Concern was expressed as to whether the benefits from the 'cats and wildlife' leaflet would balance out the costs involved. John Patmore explained that the Wildlife Advisory Group intended this to be the first in a series of leaflets to promote the protection of wildlife.

20.4 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the 'cats and wildlife' leaflet be endorsed as set out in Appendix C to the report and that officers obtain costs for producing and distributing the leaflet and seek sponsors to finance these costs.

(2) That the continuation of the Brighton & Hove Goes Wild Family Fund Day as a regular annual event be supported.

(3) That the inclusion of the Wildlife Advisory Group in the list of stakeholders to be consulted on the proposed Council Water Action Plan be supported.

21. WATER ACTION PLAN – UPDATE AND FIRST DRAFT

21.1 The Commission considered a report of the Director of Environment concerning the progress made in developing the Water Action Plan and informing members of the next steps in developing the Plan (see minute book). The first draft of the Water Action Plan, Appendix 3, was circulated.

21.2 Members debated whether green roofs were effective in storm water management. The Convenor stated that the council needed a range of solutions and judgement should be used as to which solution was most appropriate in each individual case. Chris Todd suggested that the Action Plan should mention Building Design, which should incorporate water reduction features. He requested that the council seek sponsorship to maximise the effectiveness of the Water Action Plan and to run an awareness raising campaign.

21.3 The Ecologist responded to a question about filling ponds with water during periods of drought. He explained that ponds could replenish themselves even if they dried out completely and naturally-occurring wildlife would revive. Problems arose when fish had been put into a pond.

21.4 Beth Simmons requested that the council educate its staff in saving water. Concern was expressed that the council serves bottled water at all meetings and that Hove Town Hall currently does not have drinking water on tap.

21.5 The Head of Sustainability thanked Ula Ostaniewicz for her work in his Team. He informed the Commission that Libby Young would move into the Team as a graduate management trainee to work on the Carbon Management Programme and the Water Action Plan.

21.6 **RESOLVED** – That the process and timescales for the development of the Water Action Plan be noted.

22 LSP UPDATE

22.1 Simon Newell advised that the AGM had taken place and the Restructuring paper agreed for consultation. The 2020 Protocol had also been approved.

22.2 The bid to Neighbourhood Energy Action to take part in the “Affordable Warmth in Communities” pilot scheme had been successful. Members of the Commission would all be invited to a seminar on the subject on 26 October at the Jubilee Library.

The meeting concluded at 7.20 pm.

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

2006