

City Sustainability Partnership Meeting – Monday 29th June 2009

Suite 1, Jury's Inn, 101 Stroudley Road, Brighton

Public Services:

Councillor Paul Steedman
Councillor Gill Mitchell
Prof. Stuart Laing, University of Brighton – **Chair**
Alison Hadfield, Eco Schools

Business:

Thea Allison, Brighton & Hove Business Community Partnership

Community and Voluntary Sector:

Chris Todd, Friends of the Earth – **Vice Chair**
Angela Marlow, Brighton & Hove Wildlife Advisory Group
Jacqui Cuff, Transition Brighton & Hove
Vic Else, Brighton & Hove Food Partnership

Government Agencies:

Chris Wick, Environment Agency
Phil Belden, South Downs Joint Committee

Council Officers:

Francesca Iliffe, Sustainability Officer, BHCC
Helen Pennington, Sustainability Appraisal Officer, BHCC
Jan Jonker, Head of Strategy, City Clean
Liz Hobden, Local Development Team Manager, BHCC
Mita Patel – Sustainability Co-ordinator, BHCC
Richard Butcher Tuset – Acting Head of Policy, BHCC
Simon Newell, Head of Partnerships & External Relations

Meeting notes

Mel North – Senior Support Officer, Policy Unit, BHCC

1. Apologies

1.1 Cllr David Watkins, Jan Jackson, Lorraine Bell, Thurstan Crockett, Michael Creedy.

2. Notes/Actions from previous meeting

2.1 There were no amendments to the minutes.
2.2 Election of co-chair was deferred to the next meeting due to Thurstan Crockett's absence.
2.3 The WAG Update is also deferred, as the WAG is not now meeting until September.

3. Climate Change Self Assessment

- 3.1 Simon Newell introduced this item in Thurstan Crockett's absence. He noted that this self assessment process isn't a statutory requirement but is considered to be good practice for areas to undertake (normally at instigation of LSP) to understand progress and outstanding challenges related to how areas will be affected by climate change.
- 3.2 The LSP had planned to hold a half-day workshop on this subject before the summer holidays but this didn't seem likely now. Following discussion with the Chair and Chris Todd it was decided to take it instead to the next LSP meeting on 1st October. Work would then take place to ensure that a half-day workshop involving key players was held before Christmas.
- 3.3 Gill Mitchell reported that the Overview & Scrutiny Commission (OSC) has set up a scrutiny panel to look at adaptation and mitigation with a view to fulfilling the Council's statutory responsibilities within 3-yrs, to prove that we have reviewed Council policies in relation to climate change. She noted specific challenges around this being a tourism-focused City. The first meeting of this panel will take place later this month.
- 3.4 Paul Steedman was concerned about the timeline around this and highlighted the discussion around the One Planet Living Plan at last meeting. He was concerned about work being lost and the relationship between the One Planet Living Plan and this evaluation; whether there was clarity in the relationship. He asked if the self assessment would delay the One Planet Living Plan. Phil Belden concurred and said that the mood of the last meeting had been around wanting to progress the One Planet Living Plan. He felt it was important to keep the delivery side on track in light of various strategies/self assessments, etc. He thought it was important to understand the relationship with OSC, climate change strategy, see how it all fits together.
- 3.5 The Chair felt there were three ways forward:
 - 1) For the CSP to act as a prompt for Council bodies in statutory frame.
 - 2) The CSP brings together various bodies; can we bring other organisations into play?
 - 3) As a group we have limited means to deliver these ourselves. Organisations may be wondering about their responsibilities and how that fit in to an area.
- 3.6 The Chair asked councillors what they would expect to happen. Gill Mitchell noted that regarding the OSC ad-hoc panel on adaptations to climate change, there was a requirement on all local authorities to undertake this piece of work with BHCC being a couple of years behind on this. A review of all policies had to take place to ensure changes in the earth's climate were being taken into account. This has to review that policies aren't making it worse locally and that planning takes into account things like increased rainfall and rising sea levels. It is focused on Council delivery and policy. This is a 'start and finish' piece of work, which will be sent to Government and then sent back for refining. In terms of a role for the CSP in this process, she said hope to bring scoping and criteria for ad-hoc panel to the CSP. There is a need to pull

together all the bits of work including the carbon reduction programme to see where each one has got to.

- 3.7 Paul Steedman noted that the CSP does have ownership of the One Planet Living Plan and if some of the hold-up on this is mired in Council hold-ups the role of the CSP is to help push this forward. In providing a useful evidence base and as another way of checking how sane the policies are that the Council draws up, the One Planet Living Plan provides useful pointers of where we should be. He felt it would be a failure of the partnership if this gets lost. The Chair agreed that it would be useful to bring back the One Planet Living Plan to the CSP in co-ordination with the OSC ad-hoc panel work.
- 3.8 Chris Todd hoped the self assessment would draw together what the Council was doing, and then we can then draw in the One Planet Living Plan and put a focus on it. The next CSP meeting on 7th Sept is around a month before the next full LSP meeting; it would be better to take this to a full LSP board meeting rather than a Development morning, as there would be a much higher turnout. He thought it would be useful for the CSP chairs to confer with Thurstan Crockett and try and draw a picture together of what all the elements are. **ACTION: Chairs/Thurstan Crockett**
- 3.9 Simon Newell noted that approx 2-years ago some work was done around mitigation and adaptation, which included involvement with the Police, PCT, etc, so there is a solid basis of evidence which might be useful for the OSC ad-hoc panel. It was agreed that this would be useful information and perhaps organisations should be asked what they have delivered.

4. Waste Strategy – Jan Jonker, *Head of Strategy, City Clean*

- 4.1 Jan Jonker gave a presentation on the Municipal Waste Management Strategy Consultation (MWMSC).
- 4.2 With regard to the powers that Trading Standards have regarding over-packaged goods, Jan said it has to be proved that something is overpackaged and that it is not a necessity, so a test case would have to be brought, as this is difficult to prove. Paul Steedman commended the overpackaging aspect of the draft and felt that making a test case on European laws would put us ahead as a leader in this field.
- 4.3 Phil Belden questioned whether the Council as a major employer pays for waste to be removed. He suggested incentivising departments to recycle more. Jan said that recycling within Council buildings is done by contractors, with the contract set up to encourage recycling; this cost is met centrally. Schools have their own budget so they pay for it individually.
- 4.4 Gill Mitchell asked if divided communal bins, one side for refuse, one side for recycling, had been considered. She noted this would also take up less road space. Jan said different types of bins had been looked at but that split bins were quite difficult; if you don't get the partition right it can be problematic. This will continue to be looked into though.
- 4.5 Phil Belden asked whether communal bins reduced people's willingness to recycle. Jan said there was not reliable data on what effect the communal bins have had on recycling, but noted that the black bag

- system also didn't necessarily encourage recycling. He noted though that City centre recycling rates were still quite poor.
- 4.6 Jan noted that food waste accounts for 35% of what is thrown away; there is a specific campaign in the action plan to reduce food wastage. The consultation deadline might be extended past 7th August.
- 4.7 Paul Steedman had concerns around targets, in that by focusing on achievability and deliverability the strategy is less ambitious than it might be. On the issue of food waste we haven't looked through detail about the lifecycle analysis and would be interested to know about assumptions in there. Does it assume anaerobic digestion? Jan said it did, as well as home composting and energy recovery? Paul Steedman said that if it tentatively suggests that food waste with energy recovery is the best option, are we not thinking of doing food waste collections? Jan said it is a model but that more work and more testing needed to be done on it.
- 4.8 Vic Else noted that if 35% of waste was food waste then that was a real problem and where the effort should be. She felt that now would be a good time to address this as people were watching their spending. The Chair agreed but said that this is not something that waste strategists could solve; there were bigger issues around overall consumption.
- 4.9 Chris Wick was concerned around the effort on waste minimisation; that there were only 3 bullet points dedicated to this issue. Jan said they wanted to do a lot more work around food waste and noted that general waste minimisation it is the hardest thing to tackle, with a statutory requirement to collect what householders produce.
- 4.10 Paul Steedman asked if there was any intention to engage (possibly via the CSP) with big businesses around the issue of reducing packaging. Jan said this was a difficult thing to do and no detailed proposals had been included in the strategy. This would have to be done with partners.
- 4.11 Paul Steedman suggested a small sub-group be convened to draft a response to the consultation on behalf of the CSP. Jan said that there could be an extension to the consultation deadline by a couple of weeks. *(See point 4.25)*
- 4.12 Gill Mitchell suggested that as a partnership further drilling down could be done on the issue of food waste, particularly with it accounting for 35% of waste. She asked if the Lifecycle Analysis could be brought back to a meeting.
- 4.13 Gill Mitchell asked if tonnage payments for landfill and fines for overuse of landfill applied to trade and hospital waste. Jan said this was not a level playing field. Local Authorities have to comply and reduce biodegradable waste year-on-year; there is a need to compost and recycle or incinerate biodegradable waste. Fines don't apply to the private sector; they pay a landfill tax but there is no threat of fines if they landfill biodegradable waste. It is a grey area around hospitals, language schools, etc. DEFRA have acknowledged that and are looking into it.
- 4.14 Chris Todd said that with regard to targets on reducing overall amounts of waste per person aiming to be reduced by around 12% if the amount had been a lot higher he could understand percentages being lower. He said there was a need to cut organic kitchen waste by 50% - to be ambitious. Recycling rates would then go up anyway; this in turn would

then make recycling rate less ambitious. There's a lot more we should be doing and should be aiming for higher recycling rate. Would like to see targets going both ways.

- 4.15 Chris Todd asked with regard to poor recycling take-up in the City centre, whether City Clean worked with estate agencies to get people on board when they move into properties. There was a need to work with other sectors. Jan said they have worked with estate agents in the past and a mailing had just been done to private landlords in the City.
- 4.16 Chris Todd said he had raised at the last LSP meeting the idea of promoting the recycled market to boost use of recycled products and increase recycling. We could be delivering that message alongside other messages we are delivering.
- 4.17 A member of the public asked which landfill sites the Council is considering using. Jan said there is no facility in the City. Chris Wick said he thought most waste was going to Horton.
- 4.18 Phil Belden agreed that more ambitious targets were needed. Because this is long term that is another reason we should be ambitious rather than the vagaries of political targets.
- 4.19 Chris Wick wondered how compatible this strategy is with the One Planet Living Plan (which might indicate that this is incompatible).
- 4.20 Francesca Iliffe, Sustainability Officer, BHCC asked about community composting; she noted that members of the Sustainability Commission did look several years ago at one initiative in Hackney. There are problems with this as you need members of the community/caretakers to stay involved. However, it helps reduce food waste, brings communities together, and stops waste rotting in bin stores, which attract vermin. She wondered if this could be trailed on estates. Jan said this hasn't been looked at in depth as options are needed that can be rolled out on a large scale; there needs to be the right community and circumstances.
- 4.21 Gill Mitchell noted the huge increase in recycling from 2003 over the last 4-years and the forced behaviour change with the introduction of wheelie bins and availability of lots of recycling boxes. Now we have reached a plateau, another set of behaviour change has to be forced. This is where politics come in; will the Administration upset people in order to bring this in. She asked if there were any details about areas of the City where most food is thrown away. Jan said that some work had been done on this.
- 4.22 Marie Harder said that community groups want to be involved; there is a desire for behaviour change in the City and there is a need for the CSP to bring this together. She noted that the economic recession would probably result in less food waste anyway. She noted also that energy cannot be obtained from wet waste.
- 4.23 Richard Scott (member of the public) acknowledged Francesca's earlier point. Aspect that a lot of beneficial employment and training was provided. We have a lot of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETS) in the City. Composting around council estates was used to improve gardens so people participating in work training gradually became trained as municipal gardeners. It was a great initiative.

- 4.24 The Chair said there was potentially enough interest in seeing if CSP members would be prepared to come to a sub-group meeting to draft a response from the CSP. He suggested sending names to Mita Patel in the Council's Sustainability Team by the end of the week. Jan would advise how much of an extension could be given pass the 7th August consultation deadline. The Chair also noted that people could perhaps email in with points for drafting up a response. The issue of food waste and its associated issues could lever some other things. Mita would email all CSP members, as a number of people were absent today. Jan would email Mita the Lifecycle Analysis Report. **ACTION: Mita Patel/Jan Jonker/ALL**
- 4.25 Vic Else noted that a review of food waste strategy was also being undertaken so that will link back into waste strategy discussions.
- 5. Core Strategy Consultation – Liz Hobden, LDF Team Manager, Local Development Team Manager, BHCC & Helen Pennington, Sustainability Appraisal Officer, BHCC**
- 5.1 Liz Hobden gave a presentation on the LDF and Core Strategy update. She noted that a sustainability appraisal had been carried out on the 8 revised policies.
- 5.2 Jacqui Cuff asked for info on the main findings of the sustainability appraisal on policies rather than the core revised document. The Chair noted that housing, transport and the urban fringe might be areas to comment on. Liz Hobden said that a summary of this would be made available for the CSP. **ACTION: Liz Hobden**
- 5.3 Chris Todd noted that with regard to the overall document there had been concern previously about a lot of duplication between policies for each development area. He said it would be better to have a set of strategic overarching policies for all areas and then the site specific policies would be shorter and more focussed. Liz Hobden said that hopefully this document will have a very different feel to the last one. It was clearer about sites that will be identified for development and that these policies were now more focused and a lot more specific.
- 5.4 Chris Todd also expressed concern that park & ride would not deliver city centre benefits in terms of reduced traffic congestion unless measures were taken to deter cars from entering the city centre, such as removing car parking. Liz Hobden hoped that the whole plan did come across as joined-up. A loss of employment space at Preston Road would be replaced elsewhere in the City; with more employment in more central locations. A study on employment land has been done. She noted Chris's concerns about Park & Ride.
- 5.5 Gill Mitchell noted the use of the urban fringe as a contingency (from 2020 could be considered for housing if city is not reaching its housing targets as these numbers of houses are being reduced all the time). She noted for example that Cabinet had made a decision to reduce housing from 10k to 6k at Shoreham Harbour. Housing is being refused on brownfield and windfall sites and being forced onto urban fringe because numbers are not stacking up. Approvals are not being made. Have always met housing targets up to now. Liz Hobden noted the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), which sets out sites

where we think housing will be delivered, to demonstrate that we can meet housing targets. Windfall allowances are sites we aren't able to allocate. Very modest allowance. Confident that we can meet housing targets. Need to monitor and update the SHLAA. It was prudent to have urban fringe as a contingency.

- 5.6 Gill Mitchell felt there was a lack of a clear transport policy. She was disappointed that the Local Authority was stepping back from a capital transport scheme as there was a need to try for all available money in the City. She was disappointed that there wasn't a clearer shape around this. Liz Hobden said the whole plan is based on sustainable transport.
- 5.7 Paul Steedman asked about the relationship between this and other key documents, e.g., the refreshed Sustainable Community Strategy. He asked how the changes that are sure to come through that refreshed strategy would be reflected. With One Planet Living Plan the opportunities for this plan to reflect some of those things may be adopted or not fit with that timescale. Will we end up with core strategy that doesn't reflect policies in other strategies because of timings? Liz Hobden said that there is a Partnerships Sub-Group and work is being undertaken to ensure there will be consistency between the Core Strategy and the Sustainability Community Strategy refresh, and that work is ongoing with the Partnerships & External Relations Team. She confirmed there was a sustainable building policy within the Core Strategy. This has not significantly changed but will include targets for sustainability in new development.
- 5.8 Phil Belden said there was concern about what is happening to the urban fringe, but that comments were needed by mid-August, even though some things won't have happened or been resolved by that date. There would be some major bits missing.
- 5.9 A member of the public asked about plans for nature conservation. Liz said that with this document they will be publishing a number of studies, including the Green Network Study and Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study which have been finalised and will go to Environment Cabinet Members Meeting at the end of July. The studies will be available from end of the week. Liz also confirmed the council is consulting on the Nature Conservation SPD which is due to be adopted in the autumn.
- 5.10 Jacqui Cuff asked about the implication on affordable housing quotas for mixed use developments. Liz replied that this is up to 40%.
- 5.11 Gill Mitchell, with regard to a green infrastructure network and the need for one, asked if the Valley Gardens project had been removed from the Core Strategy. Gill Mitchell said that with regards to a test of soundness where you have to demonstrate that policies are backed up by finance, the money for the Valley Gardens scheme would fail as funding has been removed. Liz said that it is intended to retain the Valley Gardens policy in the Core Strategy however there will be a change in emphasis towards regeneration of the area.
- 5.12 In response to a question from Chris Wick, Liz confirmed that all new properties will have the highest standards in terms of energy efficiency and that there is a checklist for what developers have to submit.

- 5.13 Chris Wick said that with regards to windfall sites this seems to consist of people building in back gardens, etc, which affects wildlife habitation. He asked what controls were in place for this. Liz confirmed that this was a concern as it changes the character of areas. It is hoped that this would be tackled through the Sustainable Neighbourhoods policy and informed by the Urban Characterisation Study.
- 5.14 Richard Scott (member of the public) said he would like the CSP to get to grips with 'right-sizing' and that there has to be recognition of an optimum population size and correct employment mix, etc. Theoretically the LSP should join everything together.
- 5.15 Chris Todd was concerned about the Valley Gardens scheme; and felt that it had to deliver a lot more than be seen as a tourist-focused scheme as it is a major transport corridor and has to work for local people in terms of air quality and the environmental quality of the area.
- 5.16 Chris Todd expressed concern about the transport impact of new development. We are already 'red-lighting' on CO2 emissions targets so any new development would be adding to that and make it harder to achieve the necessary reductions. We need to be promoting car free developments and he asked whether these were being planned. He also felt that it might not be enough for the CSP to just be given a non-technical summary of the sustainability impact report; he felt access was needed to the full appraisal.
- 5.17 The Chair said that this was something that the CSP would want to return to and take a view on. He noted the impact of macro and micro politics on this.
- 5.18 Liz Hobden emphasised that this was the last chance to get amendments to the document.

6. WAG Update

- 6.1 Deferred (see Item 2.3)

7. AOB

- 7.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the CSP would be held at:
5.30pm – 7.30pm, Monday 7th September at the Brighthelm Centre, North Road, Brighton.