

### BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

### SUSTAINABILITY CABINET COMMITTEE

2.00PM 22 OCTOBER 2010

### COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

### MINUTES

**Present:** Councillors Fallon-Khan (Chairman), Simson

**Also in attendance:** Councillor Steedman

### PART ONE

#### 18. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

##### 18A Declarations of Interest

18a.1 There were none.

##### 18B Exclusion of Press and Public

18b.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).

18b.2 **RESOLVED** - That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting.

#### 19. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

19.1 Further to paragraph 12.6 of the minutes, the Chairman reported that he had been invited to Eon Climate & Renewables for the opening of the Robin Rigg offshore wind farm, which would be similar to the one planned off the coast of Brighton. He advised that it had served to cement the council's relationship with Eon and that he looked forward to working closely with them to realise the project in Brighton & Hove and to making the most of the economic benefits for the city.

19.2 **RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2010 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**20. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS**

- 20.1 The Chairman, Councillor Fallon-Khan, advised that Councillors Mears and Caulfield had sent their apologies and that he would chair meeting, with Councillor Simson present as a substitute.
- 20.2 The Chairman reported that Brighton & Hove had retained third place in the 2010 Sustainable Cities Index and was the only city of 20 in the UK to have been in the top three since the index began four years ago. The city scored really well on a wider range of indicators, not least for climate and future proofing, for business start ups and educational attainment. While the city was scored down on ecological footprint, this was hard to improve as the methodology was based on socio-economic profiling and average consumption data, which made it impossible to take account of specific local activities.

According to Forum for the Future Brighton & Hove was part of the leading group of cities that had “set themselves ambitious targets and are guided by long-term visions of how to improve life for their citizens by reducing their impact on the environment and seizing new opportunities in the green economy”.

- 20.3 The Chairman advised the council was partnering with the Low Carbon Trust and the city's Permaculture Trust to run Eco Open Houses again this year. The next weekend for visits would be October 30<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>. Thousands of people were expected to take advantage of the opportunity to find out first hand about practical environmental lifestyles in the home.
- 20.4 The Chairman announced that the launch event for the annual national Energy Saving Week was being held in the city on 25 October and would feature the Energy Saving Trust's 'Smarter Driving' simulator, which would allow residents and visitors to test and improve their skills at driving more fuel-efficiently.
- 20.5 The Chairman reported that the Sustainability Team would be seeing a number of staff changes in the coming weeks.
- Mita Patel, Senior Sustainability Consultant, would shortly be starting maternity leave. The Chairman gave his personal thanks and congratulations to Mita and family and also passed on best wishes from the Leader of the Council.
  - Susie Howells had been recruited to cover Mita's leave and was experienced environmental consultant, having worked for many years on environmental management for BAA at Gatwick.
  - A new Sustainability Consultant had also been recruited within budget to complete the team; Shelaine Weller was very experienced and well-known to the business community in West Sussex where she had involved them in an extensive environmental management programme.
  - Following a successful placement in the previous year, the team would be welcoming another Masters in Sustainable Development Leadership student, Alison Freeman, from Forum for the Future for a placement in November. Forum for the Future was so impressed with the learning their student received last year that they have waived their fee this time.

- 20.6 Councillor Steedman stated that, as a former graduate of Forum for the Future, it was good that they were impressed with the experience gained by their previous student during their time with the council.

With reference to the 2010 Sustainable Cities Index, Councillor Steedman asked whether the council would consider working with the universities to undertake a bottom-up approach to gathering information to obtain a better picture of the city's ecological footprint.

- 20.7 The Chairman advised that he would discuss the suggestion with the Leader and contact Councillors Steedman and Mitchell, but warned that it would be difficult to identify any resources for such a piece of work.

## **21. ITEMS RESERVED FOR DISCUSSION**

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

## **22. PETITIONS**

- 22.1 There were none.

## **23. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

- 23.1 There were none.

## **24. DEPUTATIONS**

- 24.1 There were none.

## **25. LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS**

- 25.1 There were none.

## **26. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

- 26.1 There were none.

## **27. NOTICES OF MOTIONS REFERRED FROM COUNCIL**

- 27.1 There were none.

## **28. HARVEST FOOD GROWING PROGRAMME UPDATE**

- 28.1 The Cabinet Committee received a presentation from Vic Borrill, Director of the City Food Partnership concerning the Harvest food growing project (see Appendix 1).

- 28.2 Ms Borrill explained that the aim of the project was to encourage people to grow their own food on any available pieces of land in order to support a sustainable food system and a vibrant food economy. She reported that the project had met most of the targets

set at the beginning of the first year and created both jobs and volunteering opportunities within the city.

Ms Borrill highlighted a number of the successes including raising awareness, providing training, work placements for the unemployed, a mentoring programme, reducing food miles within the city, the Grow It competition and finding new land on which to grow food. She advised that aims for the future included increasing composting, helping growers to sell their produce and working to engage students.

Ms Borrill thanked Members and council officers for their support for and interest in Harvest.

- 23.3 Councillor Steedman stated that Harvest had achieved an extraordinary amount within one year. He noted that the council's Core Strategy had originally not made any reference to food growing, but that despite this, the Harvest project was making it happen throughout the city.
- 23.4 The Assistant Director for CityClean and City Parks advised that the gardeners at Preston Park were initially sceptical about the demonstration garden that Harvest had created there, but that they now recognise its success and would like for the size of it to be increased.
- 23.5 Ms Borrill explained that the next step would be use adjacent plots to demonstrate how food can be grown in different small locations, as well as to show companion growing. She added that no true vandalism had been seen and that this was in part due to the vigilance of local residents.
- 23.6 The Chairman stated that the council had pursued the idea of growing food on its own pieces of land, however, small, and that this work would continue.
- 23.7 Councillor Simson stated that it was clear that a gap had existed for some time and that it was now time to promote food growing through projects like Harvest and through one's own family.
- 23.8 **RESOLVED** – That the presentation be noted.

## **29. 10:10 CAMPAIGN**

- 29.1 The Cabinet Committee received an update from the Head of Sustainability & Environmental Policy concerning the 10:10 campaign.
- 29.2 The Head of Sustainability & Environmental Policy reported the following:

### City 10:10 Campaign

- Support provided to social entrepreneurs in setting up the campaign had had a real effect on sign up and the strength of commitment seen in the city had resulted in the Brighton & Hove being used as a model city by the national campaign.
- The aim was to achieve 2500 sign ups within a year and the campaign had been heavily promoted at many community events during the summer; the city had achieved the largest batch of offline sign ups over the year in the UK.

- Progress was being made in the business, health and education strands and, to date, 1800 sign ups had been achieved, including approximately 1500 individuals, 100 businesses, 13 schools, 12 charities and 5 universities.
- The council had provided match funding for a Knowledge Transfer Partnership with the University of Brighton, enabling the recruitment of a project manager for a year, with academic support.

#### Council 10:10 Campaign

- The Water & Energy Team and the Communications had worked together to launch the first 'Footprint Fortnight', during which stickers had been placed on computers and monitors in King's House found to be left on over night in order to raise awareness and encourage staff to switch off appliances at night.
- Work was continuing towards reducing the number of servers; 100 had been decommissioned so far, resulting in a reduction in energy consumption by over a quarter with scope for more to be done.
- Accommodation strategies were focused on increasing flexible working and smartspace to reduce emissions.
- Work on staff travel habits was looking at promoting telephone conferencing and increasing awareness.

He added that the employee to emissions ratio for the council was positive compared to other similar local authorities in the South East.

- 29.3 In response to questions from Councillor Steedman, the Head of Sustainability & Environmental Policy advised that it was not yet possible to determine how close the city or the council was to achieving the aim of a 10% reduction in carbon emissions as there were many factors to consider; in particular, it was difficult to measure real time energy consumption until the council obtained automatic meter readings. There was a sense that good progress was being made, but it was important to note that many of the measures would result in longer term improvements.

The council was committed to the ongoing measurement of its own CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, despite the abolition of National Indicators, however, the ongoing measurement of the city's emissions was uncertain because currently this was funded by DEFRA.

- 29.4 At the request of Councillor Steedman, the Chairman agreed to write to the Secretary of State about future measurement of emissions and added that the council had taken every step to be a leading example in the 10:10 campaign, most notably the reduction of emissions through the new printer contract and the establishment of 10:10 pioneering groups.

- 29.5 **RESOLVED** – That the update be noted.

### 30. SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT

- 30.1 The Cabinet Committee received an update from the Senior Procurement Advisor concerning sustainable procurement.

30.2 The Senior Procurement Advisor reported the following:

- a change to the type of pre-qualification questionnaires used for lower value contracts would streamline and simplify the process for smaller local businesses.
- 'Top Tips for Tenderers' had been launched on the council's website to provide simple advice for smaller businesses and ensure that they understand the evaluation process.
- A 'Frequently Asked Questions' documents would also be launched soon.
- Officers were currently working on two significant contracts:
  1. Corporate stationary contract – focusing on transportation, packaging, reducing deliveries, increasing the number of environmental options, provider awareness of sustainability issues and electronic ordering processes.
  2. School meals contract for 63 schools – focusing on fresh seasonal produce, Fairtrade, composting and recycling, local sourcing and reducing food miles.
- Contracts were also evaluated for their community benefit and the Procurement Team were aware of the right questions to ask in relation to sustainability issues.

30.3 In response to questions from Councillor Steedman the Senior Procurement Advisor explained that once the new contract had been approved, it would be publicised internally and all teams would be encouraged to utilise it; however it was likely that a small number of teams would use alternative suppliers.

30.4 The Chairman stated that he felt that all teams within the council should use only the corporate contract where one existed and requested further information on those teams not utilising the current stationary contract.

30.5 Councillor Simson advised that the new contract should be clearly communicated to the city's schools to ensure that they also made use of it.

30.6 With regard to the school meals contract, Councillor Steedman advised that the Food for Life Silver Standard should be included as a requirement for the preferred bidder.

30.7 **RESOLVED** – That the update be noted.

## 31. BIOSPHERE RESERVE

31.1 The Cabinet Committee received an update from the Assistant Director for CityClean and City Parks concerning work undertaken in pursuit of a Biosphere Reserve designation for the city.

31.2 The Assistant Director reported that the UK branch of UNESCO had visited the city to meet with members of the steering group and were very supportive of the concept of a biosphere reserve for Brighton & Hove. UNESCO provided the following information:

- The biosphere reserve must focus on the downland, but could include urban areas and should also take in the coast.
- The biosphere reserve was likely to cross administrative boundaries.
- High levels of consultation would be required and should include residents, public bodies and businesses.
- Achieving biosphere reserve designation was an accolade.

- It would take two years to prepare for a bid and the assessment process would take up to one year.
- A detailed management plan would need to be established for the whole of the proposed area and it must show any actions undertaken and future plans; a steering group would be required to manage this.
- The designated area would need to include: (1) a core area; (2) a buffer area; and (3) a transition area.
- It would be necessary to identify policy gaps across organisations.

The Assistant Director advised that work was already underway on the following:

- Sites of Nature Conservation Interest review
- Identifying policy gaps within the council
- Organising meetings within other local authorities
- Raising the matter with the Local Strategic Partnership
- Reviewing how the council consults on in green spaces.

31.3 **RESOLVED** – That the update be noted.

## 32. PILOT ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM PROJECTS

32.1 The Cabinet Committee considered a report of the Acting Director of Strategy & Governance updating Members on the implementation of an Environmental Management System (EMS) as a pilot into two service areas of the council.

32.2 The Senior Sustainability Consultant explained that EMSs would bring significant benefits in the challenging economic climate and that they also served to support a number of key council strategies. She reported that Brighton & Hove City Council was the first local authority to hold the ISO14001 and BS8901 standards simultaneously.

32.3 In response to a question from Councillor Steedman, the Senior Sustainability Consultant explained that a staggered approach to rolling out EMSs across the council was preferred so that the necessary work could be undertaken to identify those service areas that would benefit most.

32.4 **RESOLVED** - That, having considered the information and the reasons set out in the report, the Cabinet Committee accepted the following recommendation:

- (1) That progress made within the relevant services in which the EMS has been piloted so far be noted, and approved as a business case for implementation of an EMS into other suitable service areas of the council portfolio.

## 33. REPORT OF THE CITY SUSTAINABILITY PARTNERSHIP

33.1 The Cabinet Committee considered the minutes of the City Sustainability Partnership 13 September 2010.

33.2 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes be noted.

The meeting concluded at 3.40pm

Signed

Chairman

Dated this

day of