

**Reading Climate Change Partnership Board Meeting  
Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2012  
University of Reading**

**Attendees:**

Sally Coble Environment Agency (Chair)

Summreen Sheikh RBC (minutes)

Paul Gittings Councillor, RBC

Ben Burfoot Reading Borough Council

Paul Harper Greater Reading Environmental Network

Tracey Rawling Church Kyocera Mita

Maria Noguera University of Reading

Tom Yearley University of Reading

Jill Marston Reading Borough Council

Kim Wilkins NHS Berkshire West - Primary Care Trust

**Guests:**

Derek Plews Head of Communications, RBC

Julia Mountford Senior Planning Officer, RBC

**Apologies:**

Joanna Laynesmith Reading Christian Ecology Link

Jenny Allen Peter Bretts Associates

**1 Minutes and matters arising**

Deferred

**2 Social Enterprise Update**

£325,000 out of £450,000 has been invested on 17 community buildings. The FiT will be

collected to be invested in the future by this group. Installations took part after the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March, which was the deadline to obtain the higher FiT rate.

There is a shortfall in spend due to buildings pulling out or their roofs being unsuitable. The amount of 'red tape' involved in the process put applicants off as well (the number of agreements needed and the complicated nature of buildings). Paul Harper asked if it was possible to try to better understand why this occurred and how to overcome it by surveying those who were approached. Can this be made part of RE:Start (RBCs new renewable energy project)? Action BB.

A process to collect money needs to be set up and monitoring in place so the revenue can be spent.

It is proposed that this revenue will be used as part of the Green Deal retrofitting fund as there is not enough money to reinvest it in renewables for more buildings. To retrofit fuel poor houses completely will cost £32,000 investment per house. 10-12% of houses are fuel poor in Reading.

There are three parts to the fund, money will come from

1. LSP set up fees
2. ECO (Energy Company Obligation - this money is committed to fuel poor householders and hard to treat properties to help them get a Green Deal loan)
3. Loan finance from a range of sources.
4. Community share (bond issue).

The rate of interest on the loan given to the householder is still to be decided but it maybe 6.5%, from the Green Deal Finance Company, but there is still uncertainty about what GD will bring.

Urbed are still working on the modeling for this and are trying to finalise it, however, only one approach has been considered, in detail, rather than the three models expected. The model ws based on 9320 houses over 25 years. In the first year 20 householders will be able to sign up for Green Deal, ramping up to a maximum of 400 per year by year 6. It is expected that community training would help to encourage early uptake.

Considering 47% of emissions are made from heating, Paul Harper is worried about the take up from people due to potential under-heating and high assumptions of savings in model, and lack of meaningful savings to the householder. An option to do less work to a property with smaller measures is possible but it won't enable the full benefits or carbon reduction of a whole house retrofit.

There has been a budget put aside for marketing to overcome the expected difficulties to promote this loan. It is hoped that it would appeal to people who are refurbishing in their homes anyway, so some of the costs and disruption are reduced.

Due to the range of support from all political parties, it is hoped that messaging /

promotion will be consistent regardless of politics.

It was felt that the majority of landlords will only take up GD when it is compulsory.

### Proposal to spend remainder of LSP money on Greener Warmer Safer (GWS).

Ben outlined the paper he circulated, which outlined the spending of £20,000. The Board felt it was too quick to make a decision about it and that they need more information.

1. What does 20k buy for GWS?
2. Is GWS effective?
3. Are the LSP happy to allow RCCP to decide how to use this money.

An report will be prepared for July.

Next steps are to choose between the three types of models - Council, Social Enterprise, or private sector led.

Ben added that RBC Environmental Health department are currently undertaking a housing stock survey, of 1000 privately owned properties and will include an energy survey and other Green Deal info within this.

### **3 Publicity & Branding for RCCP - Derek Plews**

Derek suggested that it would be good to develop an effective communication strategy that focusses on the Climate Change Strategy.

Some questions to consider:

What public profile do RCCP want?

How do we want to have an impact?

Can we react to other organisations 'agendas'?

How do we move quickly to respond to news items?

By having a partnership approach, RCCP may be able to short cut some organisational protocols.

Currently people don't know RCCP exists and it would be ideal to be in the minds of those we want to convince and to have a good profile of people who need to know. This doesn't include the wider public necessarily and some 'narrow casting' is needed.

Derek will try to design a logo for RCCP and consult with the Board on designs, he doesn't have much resource to do this.

The January event was perceived to be a council event as RBC were supporting it professionally however no RBC logos were used.

## Strategy launch

Would be better if people were 'warmed up' to this and it isn't a 'big bang'.

Our audience needs to know what the partnership is before the wider consultation process starts and RCCP needs to develop an identity to do this, which the Board agreed to. This will include writing press releases.

One spokesperson from each sector was selected: Tracey for business, Paul H for community and Sally for the public sector. The spokesperson may change depending on the subject but the Chair will be involved with each communication.

Next step is to look at what is coming up in the news and from other sources to comment on, which will raise the profile of RCCP. Is a sub group needed to work alongside development of the strategy? (Audience engagement dips between June and September).

## **4 RCCP consultation & strategy**

Julia Mountford joined the partnership to describe the planning process. Julia is supporting the adaptation theme.

The Local Development Framework consists of a Core Strategy and other supplementary policies.

The National Planning Policy Framework has lots of things feeding into it and therefore it has a range of policies under it. The Spatial Strategy is one of these and is relevant until 2020.

The Sites and Detailed Policies document includes information on decentralised energy and guidelines in relation to climate change.

The Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) states how a design should be implemented, the levels of sustainability that are put into the designs, but is not the policy itself - it described the requirements of the Core Strategy in more detail.

The SPD will specify that a development should reach a percentage of reduction on part L of building regulations. It will not advise on how to do it, specifically. BREEAM Code 4 is required in Reading and a reason has to be given if this cannot be achieved. One thing Planners look at is if sustainability has been considered at the start of the planning process, as it is more expensive during the later stages.

Zero Carbon will become a legal requirement in 2016, through the Building Control Regulations.

Paul commented that community input and links are not strong enough into the planning framework. Are there any openings as part of new framework to revise these new areas? Planning were not aware of any developing neighbourhood plans in Reading.

CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy)- Going out to consultation out on this soon which will determine how money from developments is divided up for community needs.

Public Health - have started talking to planning as health effects are an important consideration. Sally Coble pointed out that this is a new requirement that will affect how areas attract growth. Reading already have Section 106 so developers are used to the process.

#### Progress update and Green City Forum proposal

Draft action plans will be ready by then. Focus on strategy as well by then.

9<sup>th</sup> June is the GREN consultation event.

Start with presentation and flexible workshop approach.

#### **5 Vacant posts**

Joanna has left the RCCp board and there is a vacant post for the Voluntary sector Representative which will be decided through the Voluntary Sector Forum on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June.

Business vacancy - a business to business company would be ideal. Microsoft, Cisco or Oracle to be sent personal invitations.

#### **5 Behaviour change update**

Deferred.

#### **6 Date of next meeting**

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> August.