

**Reading Climate Change Partnership Board Meeting
Wednesday 1st August 2012
Reading Civic Offices**

Attendees:

Sally Coble	Environment Agency (Chair)
Summreen Sheikh	RBC (minutes)
Ben Burfoot	Reading Borough Council
Paul Harper	Greater Reading Environmental Network
Tracey Rawling	Church Kyocera Mita
Jill Marston	Reading Borough Council
Kim Wilkins	NHS Berkshire West - Primary Care Trust
Jenny Allen	Peter Bretts Associates

Apologies:

Tom Yearley	University of Reading
Paul Gittings	Councillor, RBC

1 New member welcome & Matters Arising

Chris Rhodes is from Transition Town Reading. He is a Professor of physical chemistry and among his many experiences, has more recently appeared on Radio 4's program 'Material World' and regularly gives interviews to media and lectures on oil related issues and sustainable communities. He is also a published novelist.

Minutes of last meeting:

2) When Re:start has officially started, Reubena will be in touch to start this piece of work (lessons learned from LSP renewables project).

Strategy launch: Derek said that he will look to designing a logo in September due to high work load they have not been able to do this as yet.

2 Social Enterprise Update & Greener Warmer Safer Program

No final version from Urbed.

The cost of retrofitting a house is £32k which includes solid wall insulation and renewable energy installation. This is too expensive to finance without low interest finance. Spending less would allow a higher interest rate and enable the model to work at Green Deal Finance Company rates.

Currently RBC are waiting for the final business case from Urbed. They need more understanding on the risks and benefits. The money used for this project will be borrowed capital from RBC and not tax payers money. The LSP Board were pleased to hear of the persistence with this project.

Ben mentioned that DECC might offer financial support for those homeowners who would take up a Green Deal loan early (£200m may be made available).

3 Climate Change Strategy

Referring to the paper circulated 'Issues for Consideration', Jill asked for decisions to each of the questions posed.

- 1) It was agreed that the title of the strategy be retained as 'Reading Means Business on Climate Change'. The strategy doesn't have control over the borough to set a target for it. There was a desire to have the set target above the national target of 34% on 1990 levels.
- 2) Regarding the target, it was agreed that the wording 'significant reductions' instead of '50% reduction' should be used. This will be followed up by a footnote which will give more information on the definition of significant. Ben will also make the Communities of Practice definition clearer.
- 3) It was agreed to use a charter as a concept / action in the strategy to aid participation.
- 4) All the actions are to be included in the action plan. Actions will come out of narrative of the chapter. Organisations will have their action plans with more details with reference within the climate change strategy being a signpost.
- 5) What is going out to consultation? Will there be enough in the action plan and strategy to consult on? A delay to the timetable is needed at this stage to get a proper consultation. An extension of the editing deadline was agreed: 1st November for the consultation draft to be ready.
- 6) It was agreed that the action plan will be a 3 year rolling programme, revised annually. There would not be consultation each time but the partnership would publicise it and have a mechanism to collect feedback.
Sally agreed to do a presentation at the GCOSF event on the 1st of November to give it a RCC partnership feel. This new deadline won't necessarily push back the launch of the strategy as less editing will be needed during the later stages. A shorter consultation period is acceptable as it's been a transparent process all the way through.
- 7) Amendments need to be done sensitively and reflected back to the partnership or strategy group. This sub group meets monthly and includes Kim, Tracey, Paul H, Paul G and occasionally Ben. They will be looking across all chapters and consider duplications made etc.

In recognition of the possibility that only a few people would read the full document, it was decided that producing a non-technical summary strategy document would be beneficial.

Vision draft

Ben has written a greening economy chapter, presenting this as a strong element of the strategy. Ben was asked to express the ideas in a more general way so people would understand the global link to local economy.

Possibility that this could be included in an 'influencing chapter' and cover economic opportunities as well.

Other wording in the chapter will also need to be reviewed, for example 'climate change' could be rephrased as 'changing climate' and 'adaptation' to something simpler as well. Jill will work on this and Ben will update the draft vision. Jill will talk to the LSP in Sept / October to update them on progress.

4 Knowledge Transfer partnership

Paul has met with Transition Town Reading and the University of Reading to discuss a proposal to bring this project to Reading. Paul is proposing to use funds from the solar community scheme to fund this.

It was pointed out that the funds from the solar community scheme have already been agreed to support fuel poverty and carbon reduction projects.

In summary, the KTP aims to

- a) engage with a neighbourhood and plan a vision for their local area with them
- b) this vision would become a legal document to which the local planning authorities have to abide by in the Local Development Framework.

This is a new approach to planning and is supported by government funding. The work would have to be carried out within an organization. The costs are £40-£60k p/a, with £20k proposed to come from the solar community project. The duration of the proposed project is 1 - 3 years. More money is available from the government if a smaller organization is hosting the KTP.

Sally stated that the EA have worked with pilot projects in Buckingham, Thame and Woodcote. Buckingham made progress on water quality but the others were not so effective.

Paul explained that this work is a focus for action in the chapter localism and community. It was suggested that using a MSc student, instead of a PhD student, wouldn't cost as much money and match funding could be provided. It was pointed out, however, that

this is a full time job, not a study that can be completed in a MSc students spare time, so more appropriate for a PhD student.

It was suggested that instead of selecting a neighbourhood to work with, the neighbourhood should be choosing to do this visioning. However, the community has not as yet been consulted on this opportunity. Therefore, an initial step in supporting communities to take up this approach is to explain what neighbourhood planning is and then follow it up with an offer to implement it in their neighbourhoods. RBC are willing to help with this, in particular, Planning department will have good community contacts.

The risk of Neighbourhood planning as a 'charter for businesses' was discussed and it was felt that if the community had something specific it wanted, or didn't want then this could be used to facilitate that vision.

GWS funding.

The proposal was for the community solar funding to be used for supporting the existing fuel poverty programme 'Greener, Warmer, Safer'.

The current arrangement with the LSP is for the funds to be used for low carbon and fuel poverty and although KTP brings in more money in terms of match funding, it would be a steering away from the original arrangement.

Jenny added that business funding is possible if a commercial area is chosen for the KTP as they may benefit from the outcome. It would also benefit a residential community who are under threat from planning.

As the council would need to be involved in this, Ben suggested putting this item on the agenda for discussion at a future Green Cities & Open Spaces Forum.

Paul will explain to Richard at UoR that there is no match funding available and that communication with the community is needed as an initial step.

5 Date of next meeting

17th October 2012, at Reading University.