

Coventry Partnership Environment Theme Group

Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 26th June 2008

1. Welcome and apologies

Present:

Claire Cunniffe	Warwickshire Wildlife Trust
Jacqueline Jones	West Midlands Fire Service
Phil Jones	Community Empowerment Network
Bob Keith	Groundwork Coventry and Warwickshire (Chair)
Mike Murray	CCC Planning and Transportation
June Morley	Coventry Partnership Secretariat
Chris Thomas	CCC Sustainable Cities Team
Andy Vaughan	CCC Street Services and Public Protection
Eleanor House	NDC
Mark Yates	NDC
David Hudson	Environment Agency
Eric Shakespeare	Community Empowerment Network

Apologies:

Ann Oliver	CCC Environmental Protection
Jackie Fox	Neighbourhood Management
Jamie Whitehouse	CCC Parks Development

Item	Issue	Discussion	Action
2	Minutes of the last meeting & Matters Arising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group were reminded that this was to be the final meeting of the group in its present form. Bob advised that the meeting of the 4th September was to be cancelled as the new structure would be in place shortly thereafter. 	June to circulate a copy of the LAA
	Local Area Agreement (LAA)	<p>The group were informed that the 35 indicators chosen through Partnership consultation were with government ministers and were due to be signed off imminently.</p> <p>LAA action plans which detail how each indicator will be delivered are being created. These should be available in time for the first meetings of the newly structured Environment sub-groups in September.</p>	
	Sustainable Community Strategy	<p>The group were advised that this document is in its final stages (regarding layout and not content) and should be available on the City Council and Coventry Partnership websites by the end of July.</p>	

	<p>Climate Change</p> <p>Local Development Framework</p> <p>Waste Strategy presentation (not on agenda)</p> <p>Green Space Strategy</p>	<p>Andy Vaughan updated the group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council are to recruit a Sustainability and Campaign manager • The Climate Change Bill is expected to be enacted in the Autumn <p>New regulations have been published with no mention of the preferred options stage. Councils could go straight to submission stage. Coventry has opted to continue with the preferred option stage and will do so in near future. Consultation will take place (dates tbc.) prior to submission.</p> <p>The group briefly discussed the Warwick housing agenda which looks at growth incorporating land to the South of Coventry. The group noted that any housing that Warwick build in the area is additional to Coventry's own growth agenda and will have an additional environmental impact.</p> <p>Andy Vaughan gave a presentation on the draft 2008-2020 City Council Waste Strategy. Andy noted that Coventry send a very small amount of waste to landfill owing to the use of the waste to energy plant which provides heat and power locally, but levels of recycling are behind national averages. Construction waste (75% of Coventry's waste) is not covered by this strategy. The strategy will be consulted on from August to October 2008 and should be adopted by the Council in early 2009. Theme Group members were encouraged to respond to the consultation on an individual basis.</p> <p>Jamie Whitehouse gave a presentation to the group. It was noted that the 1994 Green Space Strategy recommendations have now all been implemented and it is timely for a 2008 updated document. There is a legal requirement (PPG17 audit) to audit green space use looking at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality - Quantity - Accessibility <p>The outcomes of the audit will inform the 2008 strategy. Consultation on the strategy ended June 30th 2008. Council Cabinet will receive a report in August 08.</p> <p>There was a brief discussion around the meaning of accessibility (e.g. disabled access). It was noted that accessibility referred to distance only. (although a disability play assessment has been done)</p>	<p>June to circulate presentation</p>
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<p>4</p>	<p>Street Lighting Private Finance Initiative (PFI)</p>	<p>The group queried maintenance of the green spaces. The group were advised that Culture and Leisure (City Council) are to hold a database of detail and via hand held technology will look at the standard of the green space over a period of time. Local people are being trained to be “friends of” to undertake annual assessments.</p> <p>Although factually correct, the document was felt to lack a “Coventry feel” without local detail or an overall vision for the city. It was also felt that the document is not currently inspirational and is lacking in aspiration.</p> <p>The group raised challenges as to how the strategy links to the Sustainable Community Strategy or Climate Change strategies – i.e. do they fit together?</p> <p>The strategy will be delivered over a 10 year period.</p> <p>Karen Seager gave a presentation to the group on the city’s street lighting and noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 80% of current street lights are below standard – Aim is to be more sensitive to the climate (reduce CO2, minimise energy consumption, minimise light pollution) – Evaluation of tenders for the PFI will consider environmental and sustainability factors <p>Karen advised the group that they hope to utilise “white light” technology (improves vision, captures colour and facial features on CCTV etc better – for crime related reasons). Future lights will reduce “up-lighting” (lighting the sky). A pilot will take place trialling LED street lights, and the aim will be to use locally produced energy from wind farms etc.</p> <p>Karen confirmed that the contract will have clauses for monetary deductions if providers do not adhere to the contract.</p> <p>The group queried if there will be domehawk provision – Karen confirmed there would be, and has liaised with Community Safety over this.</p> <p>Impact of works on trees was briefly discussed - Karen assured the group the impact should be minimal, and that the PFI contractor will be liaising with the tree officer.</p> <p>Karen confirmed that where aesthetically good lights are replaced they should be replaced with similar looking ones.</p>	
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5	Future Direction of the Group	<p>Bob updated the group following approval from the Partnership Board for the Group to restructure in line with the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS).</p> <p>It is envisaged that the overarching Environmental Theme Group will meet 3-4 times a year with 2 sub groups (aligned to the SCS themes of “Cleaner and Greener” and “Climate Change”).</p> <p>There is to be a launch of the new structure on 12th September 2008 (Venue and agenda tbc)</p> <p>Following the launch there will be an initial meeting of the 3 groups to look at Terms Of Reference and Membership. Advisers to the 3 groups will be: Andy Vaughan – Environmental Theme Group Michael Checklin – Climate Change Sue Morrison – Cleaner and Greener. Chairs will be determined at a later date.</p> <p>Current theme group members should consider where they would like to be involved.</p>	
6	Any Other Business	Bob circulated details of the National Lottery's Community Spaces	
		Thanks were given to Bob for his support and commitment to the group over the years he has Chaired it and moved it forwards.	
		The group noted the paper circulated on Transition Towns (community led involvement looking at peak oil and climate change) and heard of a new community group in Earlsdon who were in the early stages of looking at this. The topic will be pursued by the re-structured group.	
		<p>It was noted that closer links need to be made to the 2 local universities – especially with regard to their transport and development plans.</p> <p>Mike asked if a small group could be formed to undertake a sustainability appraisal for the preferred options stage of the LDF.</p>	

Date of Next Meeting:

- **Launch of new structure: 12th September 2008 (venue tbc)**