

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Climate Change Working Group held on
Friday, 12 August 2011 at 10.00 a.m.

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| PRESENT: | Councillor David Bard – Chairman Councillor Steve Harangozo – Vice-Chairman | |
| Councillors: | Richard Barrett Douglas de Lacey Peter Topping | Jose Hales Bridget Smith |
| Officers: | Richard Hales John King Jo Mills Philly Sewell | Team Leader (Communities) Community Technical Manager Corporate Manager, Planning and New Communities Democratic Services Officer |

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tom Bygott and Mick Martin and David Whiteman-Downes, who had sent a substitute.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Steve Harangozo declared a personal interest in minute 7 as Chairman of Comberton Renewable Energy Group.

Councillor Douglas de Lacey declared a personal interest in minute 7 as a member of Sustainable Girton.

Councillor Bridget Smith declared a personal interest in minute 7 by virtue of her husband being the director of Gamlingay wind turbine project, and by virtue of being employed by Gamlingay EcoHub.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Climate Change Working Group authorised the Chairman to sign, as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 May 2011, subject to the following:

1. Election of Chairman of the Climate Change Working Group

Correct wording to read: "...that Councillor David Bard be elected..."

5. CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN: 2011-2013

The Team Leader (Sustainable Communities) reported that this action plan had been drawn up in response to Central Government changes, and was a concise plan that sought to outline what the Council hoped to achieve over the next 12 months. He added that an Expert Forum had taken place in March 2011, the outcome of which was included as Appendix two attached to this report. This Action Plan was due to be agreed at the Sustainability, Planning and Climate Change Portfolio Holder meeting in September before going on to full Council.

The following amendments (italicised) were made to the action plan:

...We will achieve this by:

- setting exemplary standards *for energy use* in the way we operate our business and provide our services;
- working with local communities across the district to make the transition to *low energy living*;
- *helping businesses to prosper while using energy more sustainably.*

Working with local communities

Addition of bullet point:

- *support communities to bring forward renewable energy projects.*

Understanding and responding to the needs of business in making the transition to more sustainable energy use in their operations:

- *provide open conversations and local events to bring forward sustainable energy opportunities for the District's major business sectors, particularly in relation to awareness of the Green Deal opportunities for business;*
- *help businesses to facilitate the reduction of excess packaging and improve recycling rates;*
- engage with local smaller businesses through the Sustainable Parish Energy Partnership and under the auspices of the Cambridge Climate Change Charter.

These changes were made in order to reflect the aims of the plan and the working group as well as the business policies of the Council, and were phrased as to be applicable to a wide audience. It was agreed that the Richard Hales would rephrase the bullet point concerning the "Green Team Champions network" to ensure clarity.

Members debated the issue of recycling and how it was wider than merely increasing levels. Food waste was a key factor, as was the need for companies to reduce packaging. This was agreed to be a national issue, and thus difficult to address in this succinct action plan, though promotion of farmers' markets and the current targeting of reducing construction packaging were identified as possible developments.

The question of sustainability in procurement was raised, and in response to Members' queries, the Corporate Manager reported that she believed companies would be expected to outline details such as their supply chain, labour, and general sustainability provisions in tenders. Members felt it was important that SCDC abide by the standards they set for businesses, especially with regard to new communities and developments. It was also felt that lowering carbon output should not inadvertently raise another company's emissions, and this was logged as a subject for future consideration.

The Working Group agreed to put the Climate Change Action Plan forward to the Sustainability, Planning and Climate Change Portfolio Holder, subject to the agreed amendments. It was also agreed that the final plan should appear in the South Cambs Magazine.

6. INSTALLATION OF PHOTOVOLTAIC PANELS AT SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE HALL

The Community Technical Manager gave a progress report on the installation of Photovoltaic panels on the roof of South Cambridgeshire Hall. The scheme had four main aims:

- (1) To reduce energy consumption from the National Grid;
- (2) To reduce CO₂ emissions;
- (3) To reduce energy costs; and
- (4) To take advantage of FIT scheme instigated by Central Government to generate income for SCDC.

In their meeting on 21 July 2011, Council had approved an increase in the capital programme of up to £190,000 to fund the installation of an array of photovoltaic panels at South Cambridgeshire Hall, provided installation takes place before the end of March 2012. PRP Environmental had now been appointed to carry out the planning and design work, and two large roofs had been identified for the panels. Polycrystalline silicon panels were recommended as they were in common usage with a good reliability record, a reasonable efficiency level and offered the best value for money. The final choice would be made when the detail design was complete, when availability of panels had been confirmed and when tenders had been received. The real time energy display to be located in the main reception was currently being developed; it was hoped that real-time traffic information could be displayed along with the energy performance of the PV cells and the building in general.

The Community Technical Manager ran through the time scale of events, outlining concern over delivery time for panels and the disadvantage of working throughout the winter months. The schedule would fit the limited time-period, but would require careful management and a reliable contractor. A tender list for suitable companies was currently being drawn up. The tender period would run from September to November 2011, with work commencing in December and finishing by the end of March 2012.

Members discussed the report, highlighting their own experiences with similar schemes particularly in relation to the tight time scale, and requested the contract be phrased in such a way to allow for weekend and evening work on the panels in order to meet the final deadline.

In response to members' queries, it was established that generally other panels were slightly more efficient, but there was less information on how these performed over time and they were considerably more expensive. It was noted that there was as yet no knowledge of the level of feed in tariffs that would be available after March 2012. It was confirmed that maintenance costs had been included in the original estimates, and electrical output from the panels was anticipated to exceed current electricity usage.

Members asked for energy output reports to be published on the Council website, and possibly have them appear in the magazine. It was also requested that the feasibility study be made available to Members. Thanks were extended to John King for his work on this project and the comprehensive report given at the meeting. The Climate Change Working Group noted the report.

7. THE SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE SUSTAINABLE PARISH ENERGY PARTNERSHIP: NEW OPPORTUNITIES AND LONG TERM DELIVERY OPTIONS

The Team Leader (Sustainable Communities) gave a general update of the background and progress of the South Cambs Sustainable Parish Energy Partnership (SPEP). This

sought to support Parish Councils and communities around South Cambridgeshire in reducing energy costs and carbon emissions to help secure a more sustainable future. Central Government were changing the means of delivery around renewables and energy efficiency, particularly with the new Green Deal, and alternate mechanisms were being considered to support the funding for SPEP.

Four options were proposed:

- (1) Seeking funding contributions from Parish Council Partners;
- (2) Developing a referral fee arrangement with local installers;
- (3) Linking SPEP into the Green Deal provider chain as an agent for unlocking consumer demand; or
- (4) Endeavouring to secure an external support grant/award.

These options were expanded upon, and their advantages and disadvantages were outlined (details included in main report attached to agenda). Members ruled out the fourth option as the main course of action as it would not be sustainable long-term.

Members discussed the possible options, taking into account the various Parish Council opinions. The Corporate Manager emphasised the importance of remaining clear about the nature of the partnership itself with regard to budget setting implications. It was felt that SPEP needed to demonstrate its value and the advantages offered in response to the more negative views, and to generate more enthusiasm for the partnership throughout the District. Members considered the connections between the Climate Change Action Plan and the SPEP, and the manpower and funding required in order to achieve the objectives of both.

After further discussion, the Climate Change Working Group agreed on option 3, to link SPEP into the Green Deal provider chain as an agent for unlocking consumer demands. The group also decided to set up a smaller sub-group to meet more frequently and develop this option and report back at a future meeting. This group would consist of Councillors David Bard, Jose Hales, Stephen Harangozo, Bridget Smith and Peter Topping, with attendance varying depending on availability.

8. WORK PROGRAMME 2011/12

Members agreed to cancel the meeting scheduled for 6 September 2011, but retain 1 November 2011, 6 March 2012 and 1 May 2012 as formal meeting dates. These would be supplemented by informal and sub-group meetings as and when required including external speakers and relevant off-site visits.

The Meeting ended at 12.20 p.m.
