

**Stockton Environment Partnership Meeting**  
**Minutes of meeting held Thursday 12 November 2009**  
**Education Centre, Junction Road, Norton**

**Present:** J Garside (Chair) (JG), Cllr Mrs J Beaumont (JB), J McCann (JMcC), C Straughan (CS), M Chicken (MC), G Clingan (GC), R Wren (RW), N Ellison (NE), R S Atkinson (RSA), J Hutchinson (JH), (H Clayton (HC) (Minute Taker)

**Apologies:** Cllr Mrs M Rigg, N McKay, S Morrow, Stuttard, T Lewis, D Fionda

**1. Minutes & Matters Arising from Previous Meeting held 24 September 2009**

Previous minutes were accepted as a true record.

Matters arising – JG asked about updates from some of the previous agenda items.

Covenant of Mayors – MC advised the group that SBC's action plan would be submitted in January 2010. There are 3 ways of achieving the 20% carbon reduction target:- i) remove carbon from energy system, ii) energy efficiency, iii) behaviour change.

E-genda – MC has advised Democratic Services that this group wishes to continue using the existing system of how information is recorded and distributed, rather than use the electronic system of reference and sharing information.

**2. Carbon Reduction Commitment – M Chicken**

MC circulated a briefing paper regarding the introduction of a mandatory scheme for high energy users who do not qualify for participation in the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. It will be a "cap and trade" scheme called the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) to be introduced in April 2010. This will apply to organisations that use in excess of 6,000MWh, measured during calendar year 2008 by the consumption of half hourly metered electricity. Whilst those below this figure will still have to provide information on consumptions and emissions. The scheme also includes gas and other fuel consumption, which must also be recorded and reported, so that all carbon emissions can be calculated.

CRC requires allowances to be bought for each tonne of carbon dioxide company's are expected to omit in that financial year. The Government's predicted cost will be £12 per tonne. A carbon footprint report will be required to cover emissions in 2010/2011. The first sale of allowances will be April 2011 and must be purchased in advance to cover predicted emissions for 2011/12. Stockton Borough Council current estimated costs of allowances will be around £350k to £400k per year, for the first year a payment of up to £800k must be planned for.

The information submitted to the Government will be drawn up into league table positions and Stockton is expected to be middle table.

High profile companies like the major supermarkets could hand over sums in the region of £10 million. The bonus/penalty will rise around 10 per cent per year to +/- 50 per cent by year 5, so a good league table position is important to guarantee a reasonable payback is achieved.

Return payments will be made each October and are dependent on league table position and the allocation of bonus or penalty payments amounting to +/- 10% of the total collected sum.

Failure to provide a footprint report by the deadline incurs a fine of £5,000 also failure to provide the annual report and keep adequate records also incurs fines.

RSA thought that this is a money raising scheme rather than reducing carbon reduction. MC said yes in theory. The Environment Agency will manage this in an enforcement role.

JMcC said organisations in the bottom 10 percent of the league table would lose out. They are already disadvantaged, it is a double whammy charging them double and is it effected in our economic section, companies will slip off the scale and we should support them. The league table approach discourages collaboration.

MC advised that businesses will produce what they use. Organisations pass on the cost, it will be financially driven. Cap and trade already in Europe but it doesn't work.

MC explained that all data reported must be backed up with meter readings and utility consumption data showing an audit trail. SBC are already providing the basis for this with the carbon management programme and national indicator reporting.

He also advised that there is an incentive to install solar panels on flat roofs but this doesn't count towards the carbon footprint reading.

### **3. Sustainable Design Supplementary Planning Document – R Wren**

RW discussed her draft briefing paper with the group. It has been drawn up to reflect Government guidance to improve sustainability. There is a section encouraging design elements/green areas and open spaces.

JG enquired if it was the intention for it to become part of the LDF? RW advised it will provide advice to developers on how to achieve it. Principles for layout, solar panels, water efficiency etc. The timescale for this is mid 2010 with adoption to be later in 2010. JG asked how it is kept current? RW advised there are principles to look at energy efficiency measures.

NL gave the example of installing battery charging points at new developments when there becomes a national role out for electric vehicles.

JB asked if this is a legal requirement? RW said it is not policy, just guidance for builders and planners to achieve it. A scoring regime will be brought based on

the performance of the building against a set of 9 criteria, it will be mandatory that homes achieve level 6 by 2016.

JG asked GC how it fits into the Green Infrastructure strategy? Site selection and national green space potential should be factored in. Landscaping should reflect landscape character and needs to be considered as part of the process.

The SPD is being drafted in preparation for discussion with various sections of the Council including Urban Design, Care For Your Area and Environmental Policy. Comments received will inform the development of the document prior to presentation to Council members and Planning Committee and Cabinet. The intention is that the document will be ready for public consultation in 2010. RW will return to this group with a further update.

#### **4. Environmental Performance update – J McCann**

JMcC briefed the group on Environmental performance indicators and went through the information and what it meant. He advised the good news was that detritus and graffiti were on track to achieve the annual target. National Indicators and Best Value indicators are used as management tools to assess the performance information.

E001 – a local indicator shows only missed 11 bins out of 2 million collections during the year to date. The missed bins were probably due to them not being put out at the correct time.

Grffiti has, over the last 10 years reduced significantly.

NI 192 – Waste Management indicates that around 35% of waste has already been recycled and by end of year the annual target of 30% will be achieved. Even though green waste collections will cease after October, the final roll out of the plastics and cardboard second phase will off-set that. Unfortunately, SBC won't reach the national government target of 40% for recycling with the current collection regime, although some other authorities are achieving it.

NI 193 – This performance target has slipped due to the Energy from Waste plant operating at reduced capacity because of a recent fire, which has had a severe effect on waste, and how much is now having to go to landfill. This has a negative effect on performance and is unlikely to achieve the end target this year.

GC advised the group on NI 197 – new measures were introduced last year regarding local wildlife sites across the borough. CP5 refers to the new Green Infrastructure Strategy which was approved by Cabinet. Partnership group set up on how it will be endorsed. GC will update this group at a later date. GC advised that some of the progress indicators which are currently on track will be achieved during Q3.

JMcC advised that CFYA are still trying to achieve 5 over 7 working patterns. Waste Management links in with planning to get most out of waste as a resource.

RSA suggested that a reduction of packaging nationally would be a good thing. JB commented that a European Directive regarding packaging didn't achieve the right results. What is needed is a financial penalty.

MC advised that the biggest reduction has been in plastic carrier bags, but certain items still require wrapping to protect them creating a longer shelf-life, like cucumbers which last 3 times longer when plastic shrink wrapped.

JB enquired about Phase 3 of the plastics and cardboard recycling scheme, and was it above or below expectations. JMcC advised that as it was only into its third week, it was too early to predict.

## **5. Electric Vehicles – N Ellison**

NE advised the group that transport currently is responsible for 25% of the national carbon emissions. The three main areas where transport issues need to be tackled are:-

- Expected improvements in technology to drive down emissions in petrol and diesel cars.
- Change in use of vehicles – national level road pricing; alternative ways of transport; equal driving course.
- Electric cars – 1.7m plug in hybrids by 2020. Battery technology improvements by 20% each year in capacity and re-charging. Range of cars – currently around 80 miles before a top up. In the next 5 years estimated it will be 250 miles from plug-ins.

NE is working on a project to put electric re-charging points into various locations throughout the borough. These will re-charge the vehicle and bill the user. Electric vehicle re-charge points have already been installed in Newcastle and Sheffield's Meadow hall shopping centre. The scheme will be funded through an Infrastructure Grant Programme (IGP). Stockton will be one of the first local authorities to bid for the fund outside London. Teesside Retail Park will support the installation of the hub electric points. It was suggested to site hubs at our Country Parks. Electric motors are very efficient around 90-92%. Newcastle Council is using an electric minibus. Stockton have recently purchased 2 electric vehicles for the Cleansing section, but the downside is there is nowhere for them to re-charge whilst out around the borough, therefore journeys have to be carefully monitored so the vehicle doesn't become stranded.

NE advised of the importance to get the infrastructure in place by way of grants. New planning applications should include hub points. NE suggested that departments pass information to him where hub points can be positioned in SBC building car parks. It will take about 5 months to install them around the borough. The ability to re-charge batteries extremely rapidly is the favoured option. JB enquired about costings. NE advised around 90 miles would cost about five pence. Billing will be similar to that used for mobile phone charges.

JMcC raised the issue of this creating parking problems, and keeping bays free for electric vehicle usage. NE advised that London will be ironing out any issues like this.

**6. Any Other Business**

MC advised that Ed Restall has agreed to give a talk to the group on light pollution levels. This will be the main topic at the next meeting and will take place at the Planetarium, Wynyard Woodland Park. Further details will be sent out with the next agenda.

**7. Date of Next Meeting:** Thursday 28 January 2010