

ENABLE Steering Group meeting
Minutes of 13th September 2006, 10am
Guthlaxton Committee Room, County Hall, Glenfield.

Apologies	Attendees
Ruth Fenney, Leicestershire and Rutland Federation for Women's Institutes Tony Lockley, Leicestershire County Council Tony Marmont, Beacon Energy Helen Gregory, Oadby and Wigston Borough Council Karl Letten, Charnwood Borough Council Mary Gee, Hinckley and Bosworth Primary Care Trust Bob Scott, Leicestershire Police Constabulary Mark Haslam, Environment Agency	Mrs Camamile – Leicestershire County Council (Chair) Graham Walley, Leicestershire County Council Peter Williams, Leicestershire County Council Hetal Patel, Leicestershire County Council Rachel Sweetland, Leicestershire County Council Jane Neachell, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Revd. Andrew Quigley Leicester Diocese Nick Marriott, Brooksby Melton College Gareth Crossley, North West Leicestershire District Council Kevin Bush, Groundwork Leicester and Leicestershire

1. Apologies

See list above

Action

2. Matters arising

PW advised that StudentForce agreement with Leicestershire County Council has now been signed.

PW advised that contact has been made with Natural History Museum regarding the use of Beacon Hill to monitor the effects of climate change as an example of a SSSI potentially losing biodiversity over time.

3. Feedback from Leicestershire Together Board

RC delivered a feedback report from Mark Haslam of the Environment Agency. For details see attached report.

All

Leicestershire Area Agreement

PW reported that progress has been made with the Cleaner and Greener section although the group has not met for a while. Only one target – to reduce household waste has any funding, the other targets, relating to cycling, walking for health, biodiversity, Green Flags in Country Parks are to be achieved through joint working with partners.

There is a need for agreement with the Biodiversity Action Plan Partnership on the details of what the biodiversity target of 60% over three years actually means.

4. ENABLE Action Planning

RS reported back on work regarding a review of the ENABLE Steering Group as the group has been meeting for 3 years and a number of members never attend meetings.

A number of members have decided to stand down due to other work commitments but still remain a member of the wider partnership:- Paul Tame - National Farmers Union; Alan Tuppen – Leicestershire County Council; Paul Evans – Leicestershire County Council; Heather Broughton – Leicestershire County Council; Alistair Leake – The Allerton Project; Richard Thompson – Leicestershire County Council; Andy Lear – Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust

The group expressed concern about the Wildlife Trust and NFU standing down but it was agreed to send them copies of the minutes to keep open channels of communications. **RS**

RS also raised the issue of increasing awareness about the work ENABLE do. In order to do this a leaflet and pop up banner are to be created asap which can be distributed at events. RS distributed the leaflet text and asked for comments by the end of September. A discussion also took place regarding the banner and it was decided it needed to be bright and eye catching with not much text. RS to contact Leicestershire County Council PR unit for assistance. **All**
RS

5. Climate Change Sub-Group update

Merton Policy letter to District/Boroughs

A follow up letter was sent to all District and Borough Council's Planning Officers with responsibility for developing their Local Development Framework (LDF) on 23rd August. Two letters were distributed – one to those authorities which have included a Merton type policy in their LDF and second to others who are still in issues and options stage of their core strategies. Overall it was revealed that only– Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council and Oadby & Wigston Borough Council have mention of similar reference under Energy Efficiency / Renewable Policies in their preferred options.

HP briefly explained the Merton Rule for those new members of the group not aware of the policy. The rule that developments over 1000m² should incorporate renewable energy equipment within the development capable of producing 10% energy requirements from renewable sources.

For further info see [www.http://themertonrule.org](http://themertonrule.org) , although it is not mandatory.

Although the Merton Rule is a good policy PW raised the point that there should be a focus on energy efficiency as well as renewable energy and KB feels more emphasis should be placed on district heating schemes, especially when they are introduced at the building phase of a development as they increase energy efficiency and have a greater energy efficiency.

The issue of SUDS – Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems was also discussed for their usefulness in managing the water environment and protecting against flash floods but unfortunately has still not been made into government policy as a requirement, only as something that is encouraged. PW advised regional training for planners on SuDS has been cancelled due to funding difficulties within DEFRA. **All**

Climate Change Action Plan

HP advised he has recently updated the road map for the Action Plan and asked the group what they thought the target audience should be – community groups or organisations?

HP briefed the group on the Nottingham Declaration – a call to all Local Authorities to publicly declare their commitment to reducing climate change. For ENABLE to sign the agreement, it would need modification as not being a Local Authority would not be able to sign up to all actions.

HP asked the group to consider the points:-

- Should the Local Strategic Partnership (Leicestershire Together) sign up to the Nottingham Declaration?

-Does the group agree with the model action plan?

-What sort of consultation should ENABLE carry out – public or stakeholder?

The group agreed that stakeholder consultation would be most effective. JN advised doing both as don't get much feedback from consultations and suggested a mini road show using a library van to tour around villages. KB suggested linking up with the local Climate Change Communications Fund winners to find out if can piggy back on to their campaigns.

KB suggested that as the Nottingham Declaration excludes organisations such as the NHS, public utilities companies, quangos and private companies there is a need for ENABLE to encourage these companies to commit to reducing climate change.

HP requested comments on the Action Plan road map asap. KB advised is a good model but requires some fleshing out. The topic will be discussed further at the Climate Change sub group meeting at County Hall, 10 am on Tuesday 19th September. **All**

6. Annual Event

HP advised he wanted to run an event entitled Sustainable Choices with issues such as energy efficiency, local food and recycling all with a focus on climate change. RC suggested using a similar theme to attending existing events such as the Beacon Hill Wood Fair. It was agreed that the next annual event should focus on climate change.

7. Anaerobic Digestion

RC advised she reported back to the cabinet about the recent visit to the Biowaste Digester in Ludlow, Shropshire.

HP advised is currently trying to raise awareness regarding anaerobic digestion to various groups. He has recently given a presentation at County Hall to a number of farmers, and officers from Leicestershire County Council and will be presenting to the Leicestershire Rural Partnership tomorrow. There is sign posting information regarding the project on the ENABLE and LRP website and an article has been included in the regional NFU magazine.

PW

A technical feasibility study now needs to be carried out for two site specific projects. One possibility is Brooksby Melton College using slurry and catering food waste from the college and conference centre as a feedstock and Samworth Brothers, (Melton Mowbray branch) catering food waste. It could be operated as a combined heat and power plant with the college utilising heat to heat various buildings and to provide hot water. There is a need to investigate retrofitting of the existing boiler system. The second possibility is an on-farm digester.

The next stage in the project is to get commitment from the stakeholders, assess consultants briefs and write the final project brief. PW needs to speak to Holly Field, Leicestershire County Council to find out if they fully support the project and whether or not it conflicts with any future waste initiatives.

PW

8. Points of Information on the Environment/Partnership for Environmental Protection/Biodiversity Action Plan update

GW reported back to the group on the following issues:-

Biodiversity Action Plan

The regional, East Midlands Biodiversity Action Plan Forum are currently reviewing their BAP targets in line with national, local and local authority targets so all four sets of targets link together.

Central government have advised that BAPs must now take account of geology which is useful as this links in with soil types.

The regional biodiversity forum would like help from Leicestershire BAP in focussing on areas of regional conservation importance such as Charnwood Forest.

The region's local record centre's, like Holly Hayes, which work in each County are putting together a joint bid to review grassland sites in the region.

Partnership for Environmental Protection

139 wildlife sites have been re-assessed over the past 3 months. There are over 1000 sites which require monitoring in addition to SSSI sites, National Nature Reserves and Local Nature Reserves.

GW asked whether a historic environment/archaeology report would be useful to this group and suggested that the PEP archaeology minutes are made available as historic environment reports can be very useful in planning matters.

Points of Information on the Environment

Trial project with National Biodiversity Network (see www.nbn.org.uk)

This is a national website being developed where one can search for information on local wildlife and heritage sites. Leicestershire County Council is the largest local authority contributor to the site. All

The Leicestershire and Rutland Federation of Women's Institutes have just launched their Wildflower Survey which is being supported both by the HLF, County Council and Parish Councils. Key wildflowers are to be surveyed in parishes throughout Leicestershire. Currently, 35 Parish Councils have signed up and the LRWI are hoping to involve at least 100 Parish Councils.

A Walking to Nature project funded by English Nature has recently been completed. The project was the first to make contact with black and ethnic minority groups with a view to provide better access for this group in the countryside. A leaflet has been produced focussing on the Charnwood Forest identifying a route to visit wildlife areas. This pilot leaflet, if successful will be rolled out for other areas of Leicestershire.

9. ENABLE Newsletter

It was decided to leave the publication of the next newsletter until the end of November to include any potential Christmas articles and to give advanced notification of the annual event. Articles to include:- new leaflet/banner; WI Wildflower survey update, WI Energy event, AD Project update. Please supply articles for the next edition to RS by Friday 24th November.

10. Upcoming events and campaigns

AQ advised that the Diocese of Leicester were carrying out a project entitled 'Shrinking the Footprint' which involves sending out a questionnaire to all churches to find out current energy usage and promote energy efficiency practises.

HP advised about the conference – 'From Brownrice to Bluetooth', a community renewable energy event taking place at Sherwood Energy Village, Ollerton, North Nottinghamshire, Friday 29th September. The aim is to raise awareness of renewable energy at community level and sources of funding available to community groups. For further information and to book a place, see the attached sheet or visit www.sev.org.uk, see the news and events section and click on brochure to access the flyer online. RS

11. Any other business

RS advised she had been in touch with Jane Harris from the Leicestershire and Rutland Federation of Women's Institutes regarding their Energy Action day. It is due to take place in February at Brock's Hill Environment Centre, Oadby. ENABLE has agreed to promote the event via the newsletter, website and membership mail out.

RS asked KB if there would be anyone at Groundwork Leicester and Leicestershire interested in attending the event and was advised to contact Caroline Harman. PW advised contacting Liz Kelly from Country Parks, LCC

for a list of stall holders at the Wood Fair event.

HP distributed an Environment Agency publication entitled – ‘The Environment Agency, what’s in it for you? – Spotlight on Business showing the environmental performance of various business sectors since 2000.

12. Date of next meeting

The next meeting is due to take place on **Wednesday 29th November, 10 am at Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Room.**

The date of February 28th was provisionally booked for the following meeting. This may have to be cancelled depending on the date of the Leicestershire Together meeting early 2007