

Test Valley Environment Action Group Meeting

at Conference Room 5, Beech Hurst on

Monday 9th March 2009

at 5.30pm

MINUTES

Present:

Chris Watkins (Chair)
Cllr Peter Boulton
Cllr Sandra Hawke
James Moody
Rebecca Windwood
Anton Page
Karen Eastley
Rachel Moroney
Carol Bartholomew
John Cockaday
Graeme Lawes
Edith Lux

1. Welcome

Christine Watkins welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

2. Apologies

Alison Angell
Sharon Goodridge
Christine Cole
Rachel Moroney

3. Review of minutes from EAG meeting 8th December 2009

The minutes of the previous meeting were discussed and agreed.

4. Joint Areas of Focus update

James Moody gave an update on the Joint Areas of Focus (JAFs) which will show where the different groups can work together. The JAFs were approved by the Local Strategic Partnership Board in January 2009. A series of workshops are currently being held based on the JAFs with representatives from the different groups attending to be able to address issues and identify where the groups can work together. The workshop on Community Safety JAFs, for example, can link in aspects such as hands-on environmental activities, which links into Transition Towns. The Environment and Economy JAFs workshop links into issues such as engaging with local businesses.

The next workshops are:

<p>Community Safety JAFs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Domestic Abuse - Alcohol - Anti Social Behaviour - Reduce YP in Criminal Justice System 	<p>24th March</p> <p>2pm – 4:30pm</p>	<p>Guildhall Andover</p>
<p>Environment & Economy JAFs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of the rural economy - Business and Communities acting sustainably 	<p>TBC – likely to be early April</p>	

Please let me know if you would like to attend these workshops.

5. Draft Sustainability Strategy and Draft Carbon Management Plan

The Council are undergoing the Carbon Trust's Local Authority Carbon Management Programme which supports the Council to help them reduce their carbon emissions from the Council's buildings, fleet mileage, commuting and business travel. TVBC's aim is to reduce the Council's emissions by 20% by 2012, based on a 2007 baseline. Anton Page was concerned that although the 20% reduction had a target date of 2012 there was then only an aspiration to reach a 30% reduction in the longer term, with no fixed date given. He felt that the Council should have a date for this target and a plan to reduce the Council's emissions by 80% by 2050.

TVBC has also written a Sustainability Strategy which sets out the Council's current achievements, with detailed action plans of where the Council want to be. It was suggested that the Strategy does not show how bad the Council is currently, that it is not doing enough and that more targets are needed of where the Council want to go. Councillor Boulton said this document is an excellent first step and it would be good if the Council could be an exemplar. Councillor Boulton suggested that Anton could take comments to Cabinet when the documents are taken there.

6. Support from TVBC and the Environment Centre (tEC) for local groups

Information on support from TVBC and the Environment Centre (tEC) was requested, especially in relation to Andover and Romsey's Transition Town groups. Support from TVBC can be given from Sarah Macleod, Senior Community Development Officer. She can be contacted on 01264 528622 or smacleod@testvalley.gov.uk to discuss the support the Council can give. There are small amounts of grants and revenue funding available, up to £10,000. Steve Lees, Head of Planning Policy and Transport can also be contacted to discuss the support that can be given on 01794 367810 or slees@testvalley.gov.uk.

Funding opportunities

Christine Watkins gave an update on funding opportunities available to community groups.

Christine also explained the Environment Centre (tEC) can act as a banker for groups, and has done so for the Better Bags for Romsey group.

7. AOB

Transition Town update

Andover and Romsey both now have groups. It was suggested that the Transition Town groups in Hampshire could work together to have a knowledge exchange, when the groups are off the ground. Part of the aim of the Transition Town groups is for the community to take on land for allotments. This was suggested in relation to East Anton where there is no land provided for allotments. Councillor Boulton suggested that the groups could pressure the local authority to provide land for allotments and the Allotment Society could help with this.

Insulation grants update

Cllr Hawke high-lighted the home improvement fund so there are now grants available for loft top-ups through Warm Front, which is the Government grant scheme for insulation and heating for customers who have got more than 3" or more of loft insulation.

the Environment Centre (tEC) has a freephone number where energy efficiency advice and information on grants is provided and referrals to insulation companies can be made. The number is 0800 804 8601.

National Indicator 187 update

New targets for this National Indicator on fuel poverty have been set. Hampshire will get money if they meet the target.

Fuel poverty bill

The Fuel Poverty Bill is being read on 20th March and there needs to be 300 MPs attending. It was suggested to persuade your local MP to attend.

Christine explained that the Environment Centre (tEC) will no longer be involved in the Environment Action Group anymore. Steve Lees, Head of Planning Policy and Transport at TVBC will be taking this on.

Karen Eastley, Planning Officer from TVBC explained that the government has finished consultation on the definition of zero carbon homes and the Environment Agency's consultation on river basins is running until June.

8. Date of next meeting

June 09 – date to be confirmed.