

Test Valley Environment Action Group Meeting

at Test Valley Borough Council Offices, Duttons Road, Romsey on

Monday 7th March 2011 at 5.30pm

MINUTES

Present:

Karen Eastley (TVBC), Kevin Harrington (TVBC), Robert Page (Romsey and District Society Natural Environment Committee), Wendy Davis (TTA), Carol Bartholomew (TTA).

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies were received from Kim Candler (TVEI), Sebastian Blake (TTA), Steve Lees (TVBC), Rebecca Chivers (EA), Councillor Hawke.

2. Update on Local Biodiversity Action Plan

The Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) was adopted in 2008. Lots of work has been undertaken by the partners involved in delivering the actions included within the BAP. A review has been undertaken for the period August 2008 to December 2009 (draft version was presented for comment at the meeting on the 22nd September 2010). One of the key issues flagged up during the review was the number of actions within the Biodiversity Action Plan; therefore it is intended to slim down the number of actions to provide a clearer focus.

A meeting was held in January with a number of key organisations involved in delivering the BAP actions. The actions focused on core areas of business of organisations will not be taken forward within the BAP, as they are happening anyway. Initial feedback has suggested that in the future there is likely to be a greater focus on non-statutory designations (such as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs)). Work is continuing in relation to identifying more focused actions and a draft document will be circulated for comment when available.

It will be important to clarify where the Biodiversity Action Plan sits in relation to the Environment Group, to include whether a separate partnership group should be established to focus on the Biodiversity Action Plan.

3. Update on the JAF Review

The Partnership Manager prepared a report which was circulated at the meeting updating the Environment Group on the Joint Area of Focus (JAF) review process. In 2009, 14 JAFs were established for the Partnership for the period 2009-2011. It was agreed by the Partnership Board that the JAFs should be reviewed. Based on the review process to date, the Partnership Board agreed to develop 4 replacement JAFs, namely:

- JAF 1: Increase the capacity within our communities to take a lead on and resolve issues that are important to them.
- JAF 2: Tackling the root causes and effects of anti social behaviour and alcohol misuse.
- JAF 3: Sustaining the learning environment within Test Valley in order to develop skills so that people can achieve their potential.
- JAF 4: Tackling health inequalities in a targeted way to support independent living and active communities.

Discussion based on the report noted the importance of identifying focused action points, with communication being important. While there will be opportunities to link into the JAFs, it is not essential that all actions of the group fall within the JAFs. There are likely to also be

benefits of working with other groups within the Partnership to facilitate the delivery of projects.

4. Objectives for the Environment Group

There was discussion about what partners want to get out of the group. It was acknowledged that there is a need to re-focus the group with clearer action points. It may be appropriate for the group to divide activities based on key areas of focus to try and encourage other partner organisations to get more actively involved, such as a group specifically focusing on the delivery of the Biodiversity Action Plan (see item 2).

5. Andover Trees Project

Wendy Davis provided an outline of the Andover Trees Project. Through working with the Earth Restoration Service, woodland tree saplings are available to schools to establish tree nurseries, with the trees being planted in the local area when sufficiently mature. Virtually all of the schools (from primary schools to the college) within the Andover area have expressed an interest in being involved in this project. It is hoped that one area of land for all the schools to plant the trees being grown can be identified, if this is not possible it would be envisaged that a number of smaller sites could be identified across the town.

The national charity Garden Organic is also involved and may be able to provide support and training through their Master Gardeners programme. Through this, members of the community are trained to be able to provide advice and support to others within community. A range of other organisations and public bodies are also engaged in the project. Wendy Davis is keen to raise awareness of the project and the potential training that might be available through the Master Gardeners programme.

6. School Travel Planning

There was a brief discussion about the involvement of different partners in the implementation of projects and discussion of problems associated with School Travel Plans.

Action: KE to get back to WD about who to speak to about problems identified for school travel but that are not included within School Travel Plans.

7. Notes of Last Meeting (22nd September 2010)

No comments other than in relation to the actions. Updates on actions as follows:

Action	Update
KE to provide an electronic copy of the BAP Monitoring Report to Bob Page.	Completed.
All to get any comments back to Karen Eastley by 7th October 2010.	Comments received have been passed on to Kevin Harrington.
KE to send a reminder email to members regarding the suggested priorities in advance of the JAF Stakeholder Day.	Not applicable.
KE to provide a link between the Council's website and the appropriate page on the Test Valley Partnership.	Completed. The link is within the Environment and Sustainability section of the website.

8. Any Other Business

Test Valley Borough Council has launched a litter campaign called Love Where You Live. Residents can become community litter pickers, or community groups / businesses can arrange community clean ups with the support of the Environmental Service at the Council. Residents can also report environmental issues by email, phone or text. More information is available at: www.testvalley.gov.uk/love/

The Council is currently undertaking a consultation on its Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report; this is used to provide background information and the framework for the assessment of planning policy documents. The consultation ends on the 25th March. The consultation documents are available to view at the Council's offices or via the Council's website at: <http://www.testvalley.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=6860>

Hampshire County Council is currently undertaking consultation in relation to the development of the Minerals and Waste Plan. This consultation runs until the 24th March. More information is available at: <http://consult.hants.gov.uk/portal/>

9. Date of Future Meetings

Future meetings of the group have been scheduled for:

- 7th June 2011 – TVBC Beech Hurst Offices, Andover – starting 5.30pm
- 15th September 2011 – TVBC Offices, Duttons Road, Romsey – starting 5.30pm
- 8th December 2011 – TVBC Beech Hurst Offices, Andover – starting 5.30pm