

GLOUCESTERSHIRE ENVIRONMENT PARTNERSHIP BOARD
Meeting Notes
9th February 2010, Shire Hall

Present:

Stewart Baker, Environment Agency
Andrew Burns, Natural England
Tony Childs, Waste Services and Sustainability Manager, Glos County Council
Catherine Farrell, Gloucestershire First
Cllr. Mark Hawthorne Chair, Cabinet Member, Planning & Regeneration and
Communications, Glos County Council
Tim Quinton, Natural England
Catrin Maby, NBE Block Champion (Severn Wye Energy Agency)
Jess Mace, Voluntary and Community Sector
Gill Morris, Urban LSP Representative (Cheltenham Borough Council, Deputy)
Sophie Price, Rural LSP Representative (Cotswold District Council (Deputy)
Colin Studholme, Voluntary and Community Sector (Glos Wildlife Trust)
Barry Wyatt, Gloucestershire District Councils (Strategic Director, Stroud District
Council)

In attendance:

Nichola Hughes, Climate Change Officer, Glos County Council
John Seddon, Development Co-ordination Manager, Glos County Council

Apologies:

David Dowdell, University of Gloucestershire
Duncan Jordan, Affordable Housing & Flood Risk (Group Director: Environment,
Gloucestershire County Council)
David Hagg, Gloucestershire District Councils (Stroud District Council)
Chris Hickey, Urban LSP Representative
David Owen, Gloucestershire First
Simon Pickering, Glos Biodiversity Partnership
Nigel Riglar, Transport Sub –Partnership (Director, Environment, Gloucestershire
County Council)
Peter Wiggins, Corporate Sustainability Manager, Glos County Council

1. Welcome and Introductions

Cllr Hawthorne welcomed Board members, speakers and observers to the meeting.

2. Notes of the last meeting: 24th Nov 2009

Notes of last meeting agreed

3. Matters Arising

Waste strategy response

GEP board members were asked to read draft joint response circulated and included in papers for this meeting. Mark Hawthorne would prefer not to input to this response as he is the Cabinet Member for Waste Core Strategy group. **Action: All** to send their feedback on response to Simon Pickering by 12th February 2010.

GEP Climate Change Communication Plan

Communication Plan was carried over from the last GEP meeting. Catrin Maby, NBE Block Champion, Director, Severn Wye Energy Agency gave the update. CM explained that the communications plan is still a working document reminded the group that GEP is a relatively young partnership. CM stressed that communications is a shared responsibility.

Action: All members to review Communication Plan and feedback to Catrin.

4. Future Direction of GEP

Proposal for re-focus

MH summarises key points arising from the 'Repositioning of GEP board' report. The Gloucestershire Environment Partnership currently has 3 priorities that can be summarised as waste, transport and climate Change (carbon reduction, fuel poverty and adaptation). Of these 3 areas, transport and waste already have consultation already in place. The report recommends that for a period of at least 2-years the GEP Board focuses the bulk of its time and effort on taking and getting others to take action on climate change and fuel poverty.

A discussion/ debate of GEP re-focussing followed. The group agreed re-focussing was a good idea and should minimise repetition, however, raised concern that waste and transport are also climate change issues and they should be kept aligned. The group agreed that while climate change issues should be the focus of their work, links to waste and transport should remain in place.

A discussion about synergies between waste and climate change issues followed. The role of the Joint Waste Strategy was highlighted and TC described how collection and disposal issues can dovetail e.g. the 60% recyclable waste such as bio-waste may be treated by AD or other sustainable technologies.

All members present were happy to approve the proposal.

Joint Strategic Commissioning Plans

Tony Childs provided an overview of JSCP content, discussing contents of the draft plan for the Environment Partnership. GEP Board must identify priority outcomes; methods of monitoring performance and a vision for the partnership by end March 2010.

Action: TC to circulate electronically JSCP template for Env Partnership for consideration / input. All feed back to TC by end March.

Budget

Draft budget for 2010/11 available on GEP website. CM summarised the elements of the budget to the Board.

Questions arose around VCS costs in GEP expenditure e.g. organisation of GEP stakeholder event. **Action:** SWEA to circulate detailed VCS proposal.

Management of GEP has been reallocated to a team within SWEA as the GEP Manager has moved to a new job, and it has not been possible to recruit a replacement while future funding is unsure. The new arrangements include an allocation of time for the relevant senior and technical staff to support the relatively complex NI186 and 187 programmes of work, as well as covering the main GEP management functions, in cooperation with staff at the County Council.

The Budget was approved by the Board.

Action: for greater accountability of funds, reports on projects funded will be brought to future meetings of the Board

Resourcing of 186 and 187 delivery

CM presented a paper setting out the resourcing needs for delivery of the 186 and 187 plans for the forthcoming financial year, on behalf of the GEP Executive group. This has been prepared to raise awareness of the implications of partners not allocating sufficient resources to deliver these programmes, and to steer thinking in terms of how reward grant for achieving the stretch targets might be allocated.

CM emphasised however that the resourcing paper is not only about the reward grant, which is in any case unlikely to be paid until later in the year, and possibly them only in part, with a second tranche in 2011.

While the way in which reward grant is spent is ultimately the decision of individual partners in receipt of reward, GEP is required to confirm (or otherwise) the provisional recommendations for allocation. CM reminded the Board of the recommendation from the Health and Well Being Partnership that the reward grant for LI 19 (Warm and Well) be ring-fenced to continue work to alleviate fuel poverty (NI 187). The paper supports this approach and extends it to the LI 20 and 21 stretch target rewards, proposing that partners re-invest the reward to further progress the carbon emission reduction (186) programme of work, and sets out how this might be done in practice.

On the other hand, should the Board wish to recommend an amendment to the allocation of reward grant, a proposal will need to be developed to detail this – CM recommended that this be developed as soon as possible by any partners who preferred this approach. There has, for example, been a difference in the level of investment by Districts to date, with Stroud investing proportionally more in achieving the renewable targets. CM suggested that a fair balance on re-investment of the reward might however avoid the need to spend time on reviewing the allocations.

The Board discussed the possible implications of future funding cuts. MH suggested a risk analysis might be useful in order to assess impact to delivery of projects if funding is cut, and have a contingency delivery plan for such an eventuality.

GM pointed out that Districts need to know where funding is coming from (e.g. direct from LAGBE or from County Council) and how much funding is available in order to plan projects.

Action: All members to consider the paper, and be ready to make firmer decisions at the next GEP Board meeting in May.

GEP representatives to talk to districts, to ensure that they are fully informed and able to feed into decision - BW

5. Report back on LAA delivery Plan

LAA Q2 report

Catrin Maby gave a summary of the Quarter 2 report.

NI 188 – Planning to adapt to Climate Change

MH provided the update on the Adaptation Task Group. NI188 is designed to measure progress in preparedness in assessing and addressing the risks & opportunities of a changing climate. Local Authorities in Gloucestershire have committed to achieve level 2 of NI 188 by April 2010. All Authorities will have put key service managers and officers through a COIN Climate Change and risk management workshop by March 2010. Authorities have also carried out a comprehensive risk assessment of their vulnerability to severe weather and climate change. A list of priority risks was presented at the most recent meeting of the Adaptation Working Group, attended by the lead Officer, Director and Member from each Authority. It was agreed that there were a large amount of similarities in the risks faced by each Authority and that a collaborative approach was necessary to avoid repetition. It was agreed that officers would also identify control measures already in place to mitigate climate risks in their own Authority and proceed to identify the most effective adaptive actions to mitigate against risks which currently have little or no control measure in place. The importance of community engagement was stressed.

For background information see The Gloucestershire Approach.

http://www.stroud.gov.uk/docs/community/climate_change_glos.asp

LTP3

John Seddon gave a brief update on the current status of LTP3 including:

- the online consultation;
- workshops and issues arising from these;

- number of parallel studies underway including Halcrow environmental impact assessment and Health Impact Assessment;
- Role of Sustainable transport in LTP3;
- access remapping; and
- fund allocations.

Schools Initiatives (YEP! and GEEP)

CM gave a short update on schools projects. The SWEA YEP project has proved successful in engaging secondary schools in managing energy better, and raising awareness, as well as having benefits for the businesses where the pupils are placed for work experience. The County Council has extended the programme to an additional 15 schools, in particular to support the CRC carbon emission reduction targets.

6. Updates

GEP Risk Register

Carried over to next meeting.

Community Strategy Executive Board

JM provided an update on compact commissioning and urged districts and agencies to look at and complete online survey and/or come to one of the organised events.

Gloucestershire Strategic Partnership

MH: no updates.

7. Key messages for Gloucestershire Conference Bulletin

- Well done to SWEA: GEP recognise achievement of stretch targets
- GEP refocusing: Focus over the next 2 to 3 years will be on climate change/ carbon reduction
- Issues/challenges: resourcing fuel poverty and carbon reduction projects

8. A.O.B

Group suggested the successes of the GEP to date be part of the communication plan e.g. work of GEP, difference it has made. The allocation of advertisement space in the Gloucestershire Echo may be a way to do this. **Action: GEP Executive group** to contact Hayley Vinings (Communications, Glos County Council) about this.

CS gave an update on the new Gloucestershire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). The BAP it is strongly focussed around landscape scale delivery. More information will be provided at the next GEP Board meeting. **Action CM:** to allocate an agenda item to Gloucestershire BAP (Simon Pickering).

9. Dates of next meetings

At 2.00pm – 4.00pm, Shire Hall, Gloucester

Tuesday 18th May 2010*

Tuesday 27th July 2010

Tuesday 2nd November 2010

*MH suggested some presentations at the next Board meeting e.g. some examples of best practice from other Counties / Local Authorities.