

**Environment and Regeneration (E&R SSP) Meeting Minutes**  
**Marketing Suite, Municipal Building, Kingsway, Widnes WA8 7QF**

**3<sup>rd</sup> May 2011**

**Present:**

Claire Bunter	(CB) (Chair)	Environment Agency
Ian Boyd	(IB)	Halton Borough Council
Eleanor Carter	(EC)	Halton Borough Council
Alan Graham	(AG)	Halton Borough Council
Debbie Houghton	(DH)	Halton Borough Council
Allison Kirk	(AK)	Norton Priory Museum
Paul Mullane	(PM)	Halton Housing Trust
Mick Noone	(MN)	Halton Borough Council
Michelle Phillips	(MP)	Halton Housing Trust
Karen Wickstead	(KW)	Cheshire Constabulary
Jim Yates	(JY)	Halton Borough Council

**Apologies:**

Claire Griffiths	(CG)	PlusDane Housing
Cllr Ron Hignett	(RH)	Halton Borough Council
Clare Olver	(CO)	Mersey Forest
Andrew Sharp	(AS)	STFC – Daresbury Labs
Jimmy Unsworth	(JU)	Halton Borough Council

				<u>Actions</u>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies, Minutes &amp; Matters Arising</b>	1.1	The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a correct record.	
		1.2	There were no matters arising that were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Funding for Low Carbon Initiatives</b>	2.1.	DH gave the group an overview of some of the funding available for low carbon initiatives:	
		2.2.	<b>Housing</b>	
		2.2.1	<u>CESP</u>  The Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP) is a statutory obligation on the largest energy suppliers to improve energy standards and reduce fuel bills of households living in the poorest 10% LSOAs in the country. In Halton this includes LSOAs in Windmill Hill, Halton Lea, Halton Castle, Kingsway, Halton Brook, Riverside, Norton South,	

Grange, Appleton, Mersey, Broadheath and Hough Green wards. CESP will run until December 2012 and energy companies are keen to engage RSLs to identify properties within their housing stock that would qualify for CESP funding as soon as possible.

Each utility company may have a different approach to undertaking the work and may be able to offer different levels of funding up to 100%. For example, at the Halton Housing Summit meeting on 18th April British Gas offered to meet with each RSL to go through their stock lists to identify opportunities. They would sign a non disclosure agreement, provide software and undertake the work themselves to minimise work for the RSL. The offer also includes links to training and skills development, use of local firms to undertake the work and investment in other initiatives such as soccer schools addressing ASB in the area.

Since all RSL stock in Halton now meets the Decent Homes Standard the "whole house" approach offered by CESP may not be suitable. However it could be a useful source of funding to insulate hard to treat properties and for the installation of solar pv (if utility companies agree to fund single measures.) The large concentration of RSL stock in deprived LSOAs in Halton could prove to be attractive to utility companies since it offers the opportunity to develop large scale area based schemes. If RSLs wish to pursue CESP, the Council would encourage them to approach all interested utility companies to ensure they secure the best possible deal for Halton residents, not only in terms of savings on fuel bills but also to maximise local employment and skills/training opportunities. The Council would be happy to support the development of such schemes and offer practical assistance as required.

There is a follow up meeting to the Housing Summit later in May and there will be a discussion on taking this work forward at that meeting.

## 2.3 **Other funding opportunities**

### 2.3.1 Solar Panels and Feed in Tariffs (FiTs)

Utility Companies and a number of private

companies currently offer a number of funding options for solar panel installations. This takes advantage of the Feed in Tariff which incentivises the installations through a monetary reward of between 32p and 43p per kWh generated by the system and an Export Tariff paid if the energy generated isn't used, although this is less generous at only 4p per kWh generated. Obviously if the energy generated by the solar panels is used on site then this will also give rise to energy savings for the building occupier.

- "rent a roof" – no upfront cost for owner of building but company would retain the FiT payment, with owner benefiting from free or discounted electricity supply.
- Owner and Company share upfront costs and share feed in tariff
- Owner pays upfront costs but retains 100% of FiT payment

### 2.3.2 Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI)

Administered by Ofgem, the first phase of RHI will run from July 2011 to October 2012 and will offer the following:

From July 2011 – communal biomass heating

From Oct 2012 – air source and ground source heat pumps and solar thermal.

As an example of how RHI would work a £500,000 biomass system serving 147 properties would generate a payment of £43,892 per annum and save £39,600 per annum in gas bills. It would cost approximately £45,000 in wood fuel to run the system per annum.

### 2.3.3 Green Deal

Green Deal will replace the Warm Front scheme and is due to be introduced in 2012 although some companies, including British Gas are keen to pilot the scheme earlier. The key difference with Green Deal is that rather than the cost of work being paid for by a grant (as with Warm Front), the work is funded through an interest bearing loan from an approved Green Deal supplier (M & S and B & Q amongst others have expressed an interest) which is repaid by the householder through savings on

their fuel bills. It is imperative therefore that the cost of measures should not exceed the savings to be made (known as The Golden Rule)

While the Green Deal will lead to reductions in energy consumption it will not immediately lead to savings in household fuel bills until the measures have been paid. For this reason (and the fact that the loan will attract interest) the Green Deal may be more suitable for fuel rich households. The Council aims, through its Affordable Warmth Strategy, to promote Warm Front as widely as possible while it is still available to ensure those households who qualify are able to access improvements before Green Deal is introduced.

2.3.4 Energy Company Obligation (ECO)

ECO will replace CESP and work with the fuel poor in areas of deprivation and on very hard to treat properties such as solid wall.

2.3.5 Work with business

The ARUP Study carried out across Merseyside identified a number of opportunities to deliver de-centralised energy systems across the sub region. For Halton this primarily focused on new proposed development, however it is likely that there will be other opportunities that could be supported within the area. In response to the study The Mersey Partnership is in the process of creating an energy partnership with Eon and Scottish Power to maximise low carbon opportunities in the city region arising from the Low Carbon Economy Action Plan, however this will not preclude the council or others from working with other utility companies, particularly as others may be able to offer a better deal for Halton. In addition there is a lot of other related work in the sub region with many RSLs and businesses are already doing work themselves.

2.3.6 Council

The council are currently in the process of tendering for the supply and installation of solar panels on a number of our buildings. This would generate an income for the council from the Feed in Tariff (FiT) and also reduce our energy bills within

		<p>the buildings. We have developed a tendering framework document which we have offered to share with any partners who may be interested in taking a similar approach. In addition we have carried out energy efficiency work within our buildings, consisting of a range of technical measures including smart meters and raising staff awareness to reduce energy consumption. This has reduced energy consumption in the buildings concerned.</p> <p>2.3.8 <u>Way Forward</u></p> <p>It was agreed at the Environment and Regeneration Partnership Meeting that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Karen Wickstead from Cheshire Police talked about the work they were doing with a company to look to sell carbon savings on a sub regional basis. Karen has offered to arrange a meeting with the company and invite along members of the SSP who are interested</li> <li>• The partnership needs to make businesses aware of the funding available for projects such as installation of solar panels. It was agreed that conversations are had with Wesley Rourke and Chamber of Commerce and the planning team about how best to take this forward</li> <li>• Feedback will be provided from the follow up Housing Summit meeting regarding progressing projects with RSLs.</li> <li>• Members of the SSP will provide details of actions planned that will contribute to this agenda so that areas where we can work together and share best practice will be identified.</li> </ul>	<p>KW</p> <p>HBC/ Chamber of Commerce</p> <p>DH</p> <p>ALL</p>
3.	<b>Development of SSP Action Plan – performance measures</b>	<p>3.1</p> <p>It was noted that at the development day in January this year, partners agreed various actions linking to the delivery of the strategic objectives listed in the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS). DH gave an overview as to the background for and role and function of the SCS. It was agreed that EC would circulate a simple template to group members which would form the basis of a prioritised action</p>	<p>EC</p>

4.	<b>Any other Business</b>		<p>plan from which milestones would be identified and progress against these monitored. Each partner is to confirm it's top 5 priorities/actions that will go towards meeting the 5 SCS Strategic Priorities and provide these details on the Action Plan. It was agreed that actions should not be solely about chasing funding. Partners will be asked to provide these details to EC by the end of June, so that contributions can be shared with the SSP prior to the next meeting in September</p> <p>3.2 IB gave a brief update on Eco-Manager and its potential role in driving down carbon emissions and improving the fuel efficiency of vehicles.</p> <p>3.3 In terms of future reporting of E&amp;R SSP meetings, it was agreed that a one-page summary of each meeting would be circulated to the next PPB meeting and queries and issues raised by the PPB would be fed back into the next SSP meeting. In this way both groups will be able to raise the profile of their work across all the organisations involved.</p> <p>4.1 AG talked through the Marketing Team's plan for the next year and he requested that group members let him know of possible events, projects or other potential media opportunities as soon as possible so that they can be planned into the work programme.</p> <p>4.2 There was discussion around potential opportunities for publicity through, for example, the Chamber of Commerce e-newsletter and of sharing opportunities for consultation across the partnership. The example of the Cheshire and Warrington Eco-rep handbook was discussed, along with the recent "Meet the Buyer" even that was held at the Stobart Stadium, Halton.</p> <p>4.3 Attendees were reminded that there has always been a standing item on the agenda that is know as "Members' Agenda Items". This is their opportunity to bring information or notice of opportunities to the table and have their say, if the topic were not to be covered elsewhere on the agenda. It could, for example, be to suggest presentations for future meetings or to raise matters not previously discussed by with are of relevant to the SSP. These could be furnished to the secretariat in advance of the meeting or raised at the meeting if something had come to a Partners' notice. This item will appear on future agendas.</p> <p>4.4 The Terms of Reference were agreed by the group and will therefore be adopted.</p>	
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<b>5.</b>	<b>Next Meeting &amp; Future Diary Dates</b>	10.1	<b>3pm – 6<sup>th</sup> September 2011</b> <b>3pm – 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2011</b> <b>Venue to be confirmed</b>	
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