

Basingstoke Transition Network
Meeting on Tuesday 7th January 2020, 7.00 pm, Belvedere House, Basing View,
Basingstoke

Present: Martin Heath (MH), Martin Biermann (MB), chair; Malcolm MacInnes (MM), Rob Score (RS), Sheila Peacock (SP);

Apologies: Bob Clifford (BC).

1. Minutes of last meeting – were approved with addition of time of this meeting – should have been 6.45 pm.

2. Matters arising not covered elsewhere:

Item 4 – SP submitted BTN response; MB submitted a separate response; SP to circulate MB's response. **Action – SP.**

Item 5 – Cafe Scientifique has moved to the King of Wessex pub in Winchester Road; still needs speakers for February and March slots – invite Colin Grenville (environmental consultant); try to come up with other names. **Action – SP; all.**

Item 6 – MB and MH attended the Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council (BDBC) Environment Summit on 5th December. MH gave a stimulating presentation. MH is concerned that it was not clear what action would follow from the summit. Few Councillors attended although Council Leader Ken Rhatigan seemed keen, and Cllr. Izett asked for a list of the top 100 carbon emitters in the Borough. No report of the meeting has been circulated yet. BTN is concerned at the lack of invitations to anyone other than local businesses. We agreed to write to Cllr Hayley Eachus (environment portfolio holder) cc. Mark Lambert, expressing disappointment that BTN was not invited to this meeting and asking for a similar meeting for community groups, because climate emergency action extends beyond businesses. We don't wish to suggest specific groups in the letter but could invite the Council to contact us for suggestions. The letter should also suggest that such a meeting might pave the way for a series of Citizens' Assemblies to work through the climate emergency issues. **Action – SP.** We note that the Council is inviting Parish Councils to a meeting, so that the borough outside the town is engaged, but we want to make sure that the town itself and its communities are not omitted because they are not represented by parish councils.

Item 7 – hustings 5th December – MM and MH submitted questions to the One Church Basingstoke hustings at St. Mary's Eastrop, but unfortunately they were not taken because of lack of time. SP attended the hustings for Hampshire North West candidates in Tadley and asked the question about the candidates' attitude to fracking and onshore wind, reminding the audience about the Bullington Cross site. Kit Malthouse MP described himself as "not a fan" of onshore wind.

3. Climate emergency

(a) HCC - we noted that Hampshire County Council (HCC) cabinet discussed the climate emergency yesterday, and hope to get the outcome from HCAN members who were present. **Action – SP to ask HCAN.** HCC is also holding a meeting for all Parish Councils this Thursday (9/1) – MH will attend.

(b) House-building standards and Local Plan – We agreed to make a submission to BDBC consultation on its Housing and Homelessness plan (deadline 17th January), reminding it to set a BREEM-6 or Passivhaus standard for new house building in the Borough. We will encourage the Council not to follow any national trend to lower house-building standards, and to facilitate modular construction of cheap but highly-insulated houses, particularly in Manydown. **Action – SP.** Colin Grenville (environmental consultant) has warned us that

there is a national plan to decrease the standard of new house builds (see <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/the-future-homes-standard-changes-to-part-l-and-part-f-of-the-building-regulations-for-new-dwellings>). He sent SP a copy of a letter he has sent to Kit Malthouse MP opposing this, and encourages us to write to our MPs. SP to circulate his letter so we can write to Maria Miller and Kit Malthouse, and put a call on to social media for others to write. **Action – SP; MH to tweet; all to write. DEADLINE 7th Feb, 11.45 am (sic).**

(c) Local Plan amendment and SPD – BDBC has set a timetable to amend its Local Plan, with consultations in summer 2020 and spring 2021 and spring 2022, with final adoption in 2023. This is too late to be helpful with most of the current large housing projects. We need to campaign for the amended plan to specify exactly a high standard (Passivhaus, BREEAM-6) otherwise developers cannot be held to it and will win appeals against Council attempts to enforce it. The current plan has no such specification. Also the current plan does not set aside enough land for the required number of houses, which will allow developers to “seize” unplanned land until an amendment is passed allocating more land. It might be possible for the Council to pass a supplementary planning document (SPD) (or multiple SPDs for specific sites) requiring higher standards – one is planned for Manydown, requiring a higher standard than the national one for new build. We agreed to write to portfolio holder Cllr. Ruffell asking for a climate-change focused SPD and offering BTN’s services to help draft it. **Action – MH.**

4. Priorities for action against climate change

MM had circulated a list of actions, most of which require national legislation. Agreed we should select priority actions for BTN at next meeting. **Action – all** to look at list and consider priorities.

5. Space heating/hydrogen

MB described tests of hydrogen gas supply in standard gas networks in Leeds. Up to 20% hydrogen can be circulated without the need to replace gas burners. He suggests that Basingstoke, especially Manydown, should carry out such a trial, but reminds us that the hydrogen should be generated by electrolysis of water using renewable electricity, e.g. from onshore wind, not by cracking methane, which issues CO₂, since there is no viable carbon-capture-and-storage available.

6. Next meeting

Tuesday 4th February, **6.45 pm (note earlier time)**, Belvedere House.

The meeting closed at 8.10 pm.