

Basingstoke Transition Network

Meeting on Tuesday 3rd March 2020, 6.45 pm, Village Hotel, Basing View, Basingstoke
RG21 4HG

Present: Martin Biermann (MB), Martin Heath (MH), Bob Clifford (BC), Rob Score (RS),
Sheila Peacock (SP);

Apologies: Arun Mummalaneni (AM)

1. **Minutes of last meeting** – approved; no matters arising not on agenda.

2. **AGM** – MB's agreement with Village Hotel is for a single monthly sitting (free) so we agreed to use the March sitting, booked already for the first Tuesday (5th), for the AGM not a committee meeting, starting at 6.45 pm. Suggestions for speaker (to be approached in order): Cllr. John Izett on "Greening Manydown"; Catherine Waters-Clarke from Inspero; someone who knows about tree planting, possibly Terena Plowright. **Action – SP.**

3. **Green Week update** – Green Week is 19-26 Sept with Brookvale Sustainability Day on 26th. The next meeting of the Green Week committee is in early April. Sam Taylor, the BDBC Climate Change director, has taken an interest (and promotion of Green Week was mentioned in Cllr. Eachus' reply to our queries at the Council meeting on 27th February). We agreed to try to hold a CafeSci talk relevant to Green Week (on Mon 28th) but BC is still looking for a regular place to hold CafeSci (his preferred site at present is the Proteus Creation Space). We are confident that somewhere can be hired specially for Green Week if necessary. **Action – all** to make suggestions of possible speakers to BC.

4. **Manydown 24th March 6.30 pm Planning Committee meeting** – this got omitted by mistake! **Action – ALL** plan to attend this meeting and look at the Manydown plans and prepare questions.

5. **Climate Emergency**

(a) *Revise BTN's climate manifesto* – **Action – All** to come up with suggestions for this for next meeting;

(b) *Hampshire Climate Network on Saturday 29th Feb* – general questions were getting concerted action from Hampshire CC since it has declared a climate emergency, and inconsistency between declared climate emergency and planning actions such as airport expansion (Southampton and Farnborough). HCC's workshop for Parish Councils was useful (MH and Terena Plowright spoke on community energy and "greening" respectively). It was particularly noted that both the leader and deputy leader of HCC attended the whole workshop and showed commitment. The activists at HCAN expressed the view that with climate emergencies now declared by HCC and several local councils, their role was less about protesting and more about becoming reliable partners and consultants to the councils in drawing up policies. It was noted that the Local Government Association might be a useful source of template climate action policies for local councils.

(c) *Results of Council meeting 27th Feb* – this was well attended including MB, MH, SP, RS and AM, Heather Rainbow, and some non-speakers (three Green Party members) who were in the overflow room (committee room) watching on CCTV. SP asked about community energy projects and Cllr. Eachus asked for further info on the Reading project. **Action – SP.** MH has since been invited by Cllr. Rhatigan (council leader) to a meeting about community energy projects so we hope that Cllr. Eachus will be present at that. MB asked about transport strategy and about slow progress since the climate emergency was declared. Cllr. Ruffell replied expressing impatience with HCC over the transport strategy. He responded to a follow-up email from MB saying that he is meeting Network Rail and will

ask about a railway halt at Chineham. MH asked about a climate emergency SPD, and was promised by Cllr. Eachus a reply that evening or next day to his emails (action point from our last meeting) asking for this (but he has yet to receive a reply). Cllr. Ruffell said that a SPD would take 18 months to draw up and by then it would be too close to the 2023 preparation of the next Local Plan: MH pointed out that with the 2030 target for zero carbon the gain of the SPD over waiting for the next Local Plan was significant. MH's other question was about the financial assets of the Council that are held as cash and earning effectively negative interest, and that the £1/2M set aside for the Climate Emergency was insufficient. A Labour motion increasing the amount to £1M was passed later in the evening, and Cllr. Rebecca Bean, finance portfolio holder, has offered to meet MH to explain the figures. Heather Rainbow asked about the poor provision for cycling, particularly the cycle path under construction to the Holly Blue pub on the A30, which includes a flight of 12 or so steps. Former Councillor Paula Baker asked about the poor record of recycling in the Borough and got the reply that the claimed recycling was genuinely being done while this was not so for other councils. WRAP figures on recycling show that much higher but still genuine rates (i.e. not counting items that are sent abroad for "recycling" and incinerated or put into landfill instead) are achieved in those councils that have switched to fortnightly collection of non-recycleable waste. We agreed that BTN should continue to press for this in Basingstoke & Deane, not least because it would save a million on the waste disposal contract.

6. Hampshire Food Partnership – there wasn't time to go into this so all are asked to look at the websites <http://sustainablefoodcities.org> and <https://www.hugofox.com/community/winchester-food-partnership-15117/home>. **Action – All.**

7. AOB

(a) MH is meeting the chair of WinACC on behalf of BES Co-op about community energy projects but will take the opportunity to raise collaboration between BTN and WinACC; he has also been invited to both Overton and Whitchurch sustainability groups to discuss community energy.

(b) The government's concession on onshore wind unfortunately unlocks only one of the two doors necessary for widespread construction: it allows onshore wind and solar electricity to be sold to the grid, but does not remove the restriction that prevents planning permission being given to onshore wind unless it is explicitly written into Local Plans (which it isn't in Basingstoke).

(c) BC and Paul Dennison from BCAC attended the Bishop of Winchester's meeting with environmental activists on Friday 28th Feb. About 25 people attended. Much of the discussion was about the problems of getting solar panels on to listed churches, but the Bishop is keen to promote eco-churches in the diocese.

(d) BDBC has announced that it will serve fixed penalty notices on motorists who continue to idle their engines after being asked not to, but there is concern that the traffic wardens lack the resources to enforce this. We note Clean Air Day is on 18th June this year.

The meeting closed at 8.05 pm

Next meeting – Tuesday 7th April 2020, 6.45 pm, Village Hotel.