

**Basingstoke Transition Network**  
**Meeting on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2020, 6.45 pm, by Zoom teleconference**

Present: Martin Biermann (MB, chair), Martin Heath (MH), Paul Beevers (PB), Malcolm MacInnes (MM), Rob Score (RS), Bob Clifford (BC), Sheila Peacock (SP).

1. **Timing and date of next meeting – 7 pm (not 6.45 pm) on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2020**, by Zoom conference.
2. **Minutes of meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020** – approved;
3. **Notes of impromptu discussion on 31<sup>st</sup> March** – these are retitled as such and Martin Biermann's absence due to technical problems noted; action points on these notes to be fed into today's meeting;
4. **Matters arising from 3<sup>rd</sup> March minutes:**  
Item 2, AGM – SP to try to get agreement in principle from one or more of the three suggested speakers to address the AGM whenever we are able to hold it. **Action – SP.**

**5. Manydown; Local Plan**

(a) Democracy

After failure of Planning Committee to meet on 24<sup>th</sup> March the Manydown outline plan cannot be granted permission without meeting the legal requirements for public participation, unless the law is overridden for the Coronavirus emergency, as for instance it is for the emergency Coronavirus hospital in Chineham. There is a risk that the Council finds it expedient to use these emergency powers to give planning consent to items outside the strict emergency, including the Manydown outline plan – and once that is approved, it becomes very difficult to obtain meaningful changes at the “detail” stage. There is also a risk that if the project is perceived to be delayed by the completion of climate and biodiversity impact assessments, the penalty clause of the contract with Urban & Civic for delivery of the Manydown project could be invoked against the Council. The Council already has an SPD for “large developments” including Manydown, but it does not cover climate change nor require an impact assessment. Agreed **MH** pursue Cllr Eachus and Cllr. Ruffell for a response to our request for an SPD on climate change. Waiting to modify the existing Local Plan will take too long. ; **MM** draft and circulate a letter on behalf of BTN to Council officers Matthew Evans and Mark Lambert, copied to Mel Barrett and Cllr. Ken Rhatigan, asking for details of mechanisms for ensuring that the virus crisis not be used to omit public consultation from planning procedures. MB to write to Mel Barrett querying the exitance and status of group of councillors and officers (reported by MH) who were thought to be “secretly” steering the Local Plan Update (beyond the usual MAP).

(b) Climate emergency

We note that it is now a year since the Council declared a climate emergency and we do not believe that it has achieved the required 100,000t cut in carbon emissions required to set it on course for net zero by 2030. We need to push the Council to do what it can, particularly in planning, where it has authority, although other actors (county council, businesses, central government) also need to act. It is particularly important that impact analyses are carried out on all aspects of Council planning and development, with the aim of demonstrating that all will lead towards the 2030 net-zero-carbon target. Agreed we update BTN's climate change manifesto and submit it as input to the 2025 Local Plan. **Action – all** to make input to this. Agreed also that we start dialogues with Council officers with relevant responsibilities: **MH** to approach Sam Taylor (new Climate Emergency officer); **PB** to approach Matthew Evans and Mark Lambert on the process and engagement approach being adopted to formulate policy on mitigation and adaptation to

climate change and biodiversity and ecosystem services degradation; **MB** to approach Mel Barrett and Council Leader Rhatigan (see above); **MM** to approach Council deputy leader and Communities portfolio holder Simon Bound. We also need to consider how to mobilise public opinion, which has generally moved in our favour (supported at national level), in a bottom-up process to counter the top-down procedure of consultation on the Local Plan and the consequent narrowing of the agenda at every stage.

#### **6. Green Week update**

While it is unlikely that Green Week will go ahead, MM was asked to consider holding Brookvale Sustainability Day by video, possibly engaging a notable speaker similar to Portsmouth Sceptics in the Pub (Jim Al-Khalilli). **MM** will take this up with Brookvale Community Association (noting that it will be expensive and there is no income to offset the expense).

#### **7. Hospital climate change officer**

MB met the North Hampshire Hospital climate-change officer, Gillian Brown, who has ambitious plans for improving provision for cyclists and electric vehicles, and “greening” in general, at the hospital, and will be involved in planning the new hospital (see 31<sup>st</sup> March notes) if that goes ahead. She would be delighted to attend and address one of our meetings in the future.

**8. Food retailing** – we postponed discussion of this to a future meeting but generally agreed with Heather Rainbow’s suggestion that we urge our followers (via Facebook) to petition supermarkets to carry more local and sustainable produce. **Action – SP.**

#### **9. “After the Virus”**

The Council needs to show leadership and stick with its Horizon-2050 vision for local energy generation and waste consumption. We will push this through the Local Plan process, and aim to have the Council consider the end-to-end processes involved in: energy generation and consumption; transport; food, farming and biodiversity; building standards. MB suggests we consider each taking up one of these areas as our special responsibility. The local elections, postponed from 7<sup>th</sup> May, will be important with opportunities for hustings and questions to candidates in, possibly, a different political climate from usual, and possibly with more emphasis on social media and teleconferencing. Overall, behaviour change throughout the borough is necessary, and this takes a lot of effort. BC will approach “Better Points”, a Reading-based consultancy on behaviour change, and pass on any information (as well as engaging them for a Cafe Scientifique talk once the emergency is over). **Action – BC.**

#### **10. Cllr. Tilbury (Independent)**

MB agreed to contact Cllr. Tilbury, chair of the Climate Change scrutiny committee, to establish common ground on planning, energy reduction and sustainability, particularly to do with Manydown. **Action – MB.**

The meeting ended at 8.15 pm.