

Basingstoke Transition Network
Meeting on 4th May 2021, 7.00 pm, by Zoom

Present: Martin Biermann (MB), Martin Heath (MH), Colin Andrews (CA), Mary Andrews (for first half-hour only), Miranda Chubb (MC), Bob Clifford (BC), Malcolm MacInnes (MM), Sheila Peacock (SP);

Apologies: Paul Beevers (PB), Paul Harvey, Arun Mummalaneni, Sarah Warriss-Simmons.

1. Minutes of last meeting – were accepted.

2. Matters arising – none not covered.

3. Hustings 21st April 2021

We agreed that this went very well and that Colin Andrews and the Christ Church Chineham Zoom team are to be thanked for their contribution (**Action – SP** to write a formal thank-you letter to CCC). Anthony Bravo was an excellent chair and engaged well with the occasion. We noted that the Women's Equality Party had carried on the engagement by releasing a video answering the questions that were not covered during the hustings for lack of time. The Socialist and Trade Union party had invited us to an open meeting this evening which we were unfortunately unable to attend. The Community Newspapers would have liked more notice; it would have been good to have the questioners' names associated with their questions; and we wish we had a better way of selecting the independent and small-party candidates when the panel size is constrained.

We agreed:

(a) MB will draw up a list of good and bad points from which we can learn for future occasions; everyone should send points to him (**Action – All, MB**);

(b) We will immediately draw attention to the hustings video in time for Thursday's election (the link is on the website but not prominent) (**Action – CA** (website), **MC** (Facebook), **MH** (Twitter));

(b) We should hold similar future occasions more often, triggered by local political occasions such as planning applications for major developments, or national or local climate legislation, or issues such as recycling, to maintain the pressure on the politicians and remind them of promises made during their campaigns;

(c) We might invite a rep from the Women's Equality party to attend one of our meetings; possibly also the Socialist and Trade Unionist party, since one of their candidates posts on the Clean Air Campaign website.

4. Junction 7 and oak tree campaign

(a) We agreed to promote the Change.org petition to preserve the mature oak trees on the site of the J7 warehouse (**Action - SP**), noting that moving the warehouse a short distance would allow them to be preserved, and that solar panels on its roof would offset carbon as much as a thousand trees. We note the proposed felling of mature trees and loss of biodiversity on all the planned developments around the town, and that replacement trees will take 30 years to become useful carbon sinks, and generally believe that the new developments should be designed around the trees if possible.

(b) The Change.org petition has gathered ~80,000 signatures so should be used as an opportunity to publicise BTN. We agreed that we might make placards and hold a demonstration, COVID rules permitting. MB can make laminated A3 placards (**Action – MB**).

(c) We agreed to send a formal invitation to Maria Miller MP to attend one of our meetings and explain her position on the developments around the town. **Action – SP** to send formal invitation but quote MC's address so that the message is not automatically filtered out as coming from outside the Basingstoke constituency.

5. Manydown and other developments around the town

There was considerable discussion around the dilemma of needing to provide more housing and employment versus preserving biodiversity and nature. We agreed:

- (a) The final version of the Manydown Standard (v 21.05) to be sent to Urban & Civic with a covering letter asking for "their" Manydown Standard and for a meeting with them, and to put it on to our website (**Action – SP**, after **MB** has sent her the latest version);
- (b) At the same time, to make a press release publicising our Manydown Standard and demanding that the same standard be applied to the other developments around the town (e.g. Golf Course). CA agreed to convene a meeting with MM, MC and BC to produce punchy wording (**Action – CA, MM, MC, BC**);
- (c) Consider setting up a public meeting – for our June meeting agenda.

6. Meeting with Katie French, Basingstoke Gazette

The Gazette's "green" column is an editorial produced for the syndicate of several local papers also owned by the publisher, and disappointingly not Basingstoke focused. We agreed that the Observer might be better for Basingstoke-focused material. We are all urged to provide material for local newsletters in our areas e.g. Chineham Chat, BasingA (**Action – all**). BC will see if local community radio station HHRC might be interested in an item for its regular programme (**Action – BC**).

7. HCAN 17th April and 5th June – agreed to publicise HCAN campaigns on BTN website – **Action – SP**; and MM can attend on 5th June (**Action – MM** and anyone else who wishes to attend); and to consider actions in the run-up to COP26 in November (**Action – SP, All**) – for next meeting.

8. Cycle routes - MM asked MB for pictures of the poorly-maintained cycleways in the town – MB hasn't had an opportunity to take these yet but he and MM agreed that Cycle Basingstoke should be asked to take the matter up with the County.

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm.

Next meeting – Tuesday 1st June 2021.