

**Basingstoke Transition Network**  
**Meeting on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022, 7.00 pm, by Zoom**

Present: Miranda Chubb (MC), Martin Heath (MH), Martin Biermann (MB), Colin Andrews (CA), Jean Wilde (JW), Malcolm MacInnes (MM), Paul Beevers (PB), Sheila Peacock (SP), Bob Clifford (BC) (last 10 mins only);  
Apologies: Lucy Jones, Stacy Hart.

**1. Minutes of last meeting** – were approved

**2. Matters arising not covered elsewhere**

- (a) MB had approached the Village Hotel about face-to-face meetings but personnel changes there made it difficult. We agreed to pursue this further in June depending on the situation then.
- (b) MC has had no reply to several emails chasing Urban & Civic for answers to the document of queries sent to them after our most recent meeting;
- (c) Registering BTN with Friends of the Earth (FoE) Climate Action Groups – see below on constitution.

**3. Updates from recent meetings**

(a) PB reported on meeting of Cllr. Ruffell with Natural Basingstoke on 16<sup>th</sup> Feb on the Ecological Emergency. There was good news that the Borough is increasing the number of Rangers to three and an apprentice, but maintenance is still neglected and their operation contract was not discussed. The borough's ethos is top-down rather than encouraging communities to manage open spaces. Cllr. Ruffell suggested another meeting in May but this might be affected by the outcome of the local election.

(b) Borough Council investment strategy – meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> February with the Chief Executive and the Finance Manager. MH, MC and MM were present. There was some movement in that the presumption against green investment has been removed from the investment strategy. The council officers recognised that it was necessary to determine whether the investment funds in which council financial investments are held include shares in fossil fuel companies. Their investment managers are already preferring “ESG” funds. They have also recognised the carbon footprint of their investment properties and appointed surveyors to consider reducing it,.

(c) Full Council meeting 28<sup>th</sup> Feb – we didn't attend this but note the confirmation of Cllr. Simon Bound as the new Council Leader.

**4. Future meetings**

(a) Economic, Planning and Housing (EPH) Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> March 6.30 pm on Housing Standard Method and the Local Plan. The government has yet to announce revised housing targets. MH has booked a slot and intends to speak about the new climate change policy, which is “not bad” but has a number of weaknesses, including little emphasis on Scope 3 emissions. PB has a slot but might not use it.

(b) Community, Environment and Partnerships (CEP) Committee 16<sup>th</sup> March 6.30 pm - update on Climate Emergency – MB will book a slot;

Looking for the detailed agendas and for volunteers to attend:

(c) Manydown Executive Committee 21<sup>st</sup> March 5 pm;

(d) Full Council meeting 24<sup>th</sup> March 6.30 pm – investment strategies, pension funds and housing.

## 5. Future Direct Action

The committee met last night and defined "Direct Action" to be public, pro-active, attention-grabbing and non-violent actions; MB pointed out that the House of Commons had just passed the Police & Crime Bill rejecting the Lords' amendments, so public demonstrations would be much more difficult to run legally. Besides running local actions we should become more involved in nationwide collective action.

On the Town Hall meeting, we have sent an invitation to Cllr. Bound asking him to suggest a date; the suggested programme would involve his responding to either another Councillor or an executive from a neighbouring council (West Berks?) on the Borough's performance and plans on green matters.

## 6. May Local Elections

MB's questions (see Feb minutes), with an additional one on biodiversity and an open-ended question asking for other suggestions, will be circulated to those candidates whose emails we can easily obtain once the list of candidates is published (April). We might write a letter to the Gazette encouraging candidates to respond. **Action – MB** to update the questions; probably **SP** to email them out.

## 7. Green Week

MM has had no response from Sam Taylor and will chase. He has arranged three expert speakers for Brookvale Sustainability Day (24<sup>th</sup> Sept), on green corridor mapping, mycology, and adaptation. **Action – MM.** JW attended a Church of England seminar on green action and reports that there was strong encouragement to churches to take part in National Green Week, with a training session in April. JW will send the details to SP who will try to get them posted in One Church Basingstoke's e-newsletter. **Action – JW, SP.** PB knows of two churches, in Cliddesden and Old Basing, that have been preserving their churchyards as biodiversity areas.

## 8. Publicity and Information

The group (LJ, CA, MC) had met and was considering rebranding and a name change for BTN; it is meeting again on 8<sup>th</sup> March.

## 9. Governance and Constitution

To be recognised by Friends of the Earth we need to align our constitution with theirs; also we were approached by a 6<sup>th</sup> former interested in working with BTN, and our constitution bars people under 18 years old. We agreed that the policies should be reviewed and new ones added to achieve these:

- Constitution – **MH, MC and BC**; to include a declaration of political impartiality; BC suggested borrowing from the U3A constitution;
- Data Protection policy – **CA**;
- Safeguarding policy – **MC, Beth** – with due regard to our insurance policy wording.

We aim to have new versions ready by May.

## 10. Financial review

CA reported that we have £1201.96 of which £149.80 belongs to Basingstoke Clean Air Campaign.

## 11. Council consultations

(a) Lyford Road natural area has been cleared and bulldozed although a consultation on its use as a play and rewilded area was ongoing: MC to ask Council whether it had been surveyed for flora and fauna; and to ask for the reference number of the railway cottages adjacent. **Action – MC.**

(b) Leisure Park – the consultation is open but does not specifically mention Saunders Field: PB encouraged us to respond to it and use the freeform box to call for the field to be managed as a wetland biodiversity area.

The meeting ended at 8:45 pm.

Next meeting: Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022, 7 pm by Zoom.