

## Environmental Sustainability Thematic Group

**Date:** 8<sup>th</sup> September 2009  
**Time:** 2pm - 4pm  
**Venue:** Room 269c, County Hall

<b>Attending:</b> Cheshire West and Chester Council	Peter Bulmer, Climate Change Team Leader Alison Butler, Waste Policy & Performance Manager Steve Kent, Director of Environment Ian Marshall, Specialist Environmental Services Manager Gill Rogerson, Performance Manager Jeremy Owens, Senior Manager Spatial Planning Cllr. Neil Ritchie, Environment Portfolio Holder Alan Slater, Head of Strategic Housing & Spatial Planning Robbie Taylor, Partnership Manager Richard Turley, Head of Highways & Transportation
Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service	John Salt, (Vice Chair), CW&C Unitary Manager
Groundwork Cheshire	Jane Staley, (Chair), Executive Director

**Support Staff:** Elaine Grant, Partnership Assistant

**Apologies:** Helen De Lemos, Waste Strategy Manager, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Jim Hughes, NHS Western Cheshire

<b>Item 1</b> Welcome, Apologies & Introductions	Jane Staley welcomed everyone to the meeting, apologies were noted and introductions made.
<b>Item 2</b> Minutes and actions from the last meeting (8/7/09)	There had been a late amendment on the delivery plan discussion for Waste from the last meeting. Minutes were available at the meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The link between waste and the planning of new housing developments had been made between Alan Slater and Helen De Lemos.</li> <li>• The large amount of information on the Kirklees example was still to be collated and cascaded to the Group</li> <li>• The responsibility for the indicators was still ongoing – this would be fed to the LSP</li> <li>• Mapping exercise to follow, dependent on completion of all delivery plan sections.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ESTG had viewed the local area Self Assessment Report</li> </ul>
<p><b>Item 3</b> LAA Delivery Progress Report (verbal)</p> <p><b><u>Action/Decision</u></b></p>	<p>Gill confirmed that information being collected on the delivery progress would be fed through to Robbie Taylor, in time to be reported at the next Thematic Chairs meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> September.</p> <p><b>NI186: Per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in the Local Authority Area.</b> The key activities were listed in section 3 of the delivery plan implementation and included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established baseline and reduction targets for NI185, which feeds into NI186</li> <li>The 186 group that had been established to engage partners had met once with Alan Lupton (Home Energy Conservation Officer).</li> <li>The public sector carbon reduction group had been established and had drawn 20 organisations together with the aim to take ownership on collaborative projects.</li> </ul> <p>The milestones included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The confirmation of the energy efficiency budget still to be secured.</li> <li>The planning of data collection reporting systems</li> </ul> <p>Peter reported that budgets were strained and questioned if the locally targeted energy efficiency work could be further supported by unallocated ABG (Area Based Grant)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The area based grant would be a future item for the Thematic Leads meeting to discuss.</li> <li>A comprehensive action plan based on the Worcestershire model is available from Peter on request.</li> </ul> <p><b>NI154: Net additional homes provided</b> <b>NI155: Number of new affordable homes delivered</b></p> <p>Alan, reporting on NI154 confirmed there would be no problem delivering the target for this year. The housing market appeared to be stabilising and changes were expected in the next 12 months. The news was relatively good with the Government releasing £1.5 billion nationally and proposed housing units in the pipeline numbering up of 1500 units, would be available for development through 2010/2012. However, there was a need for more affordable homes, as waiting lists show no sign of shortening.</p>

<p><b><u>Action/Decision</u></b></p>	<p>Jeremy reported more optimistic news, there was now more developer interest with house builders looking to purchase building sites and there had been an upturn in planning applications. Prospects were brighter and there had been a steady growth over a short period of time but affordable homes were still not being delivered at a level which would hit the target.</p> <p>£2.5 million of 'New Growth Point' capital funding had been allocated and the targeting of the funds was now being looked at. There was the potential of purchasing a site in Winsford that would accommodate approx. 60 units. Pro-active work was now happening to give certainty to the planning process.</p> <p>Housing associations were producing a good body of work with grant rates being relaxed over the last 12 months. There was more enthusiasm to build social homes with less inclination for shared ownership. There was a social housing waiting list of 13,000 people, but this is a problem nationally too.</p> <p>There is a need to be ambitious locally and the challenge of doubling the total number of units. There were future risks relating to public subsidies and capital resources for housing after the next general election. At the moment all affordable housing must meet the level 3 code on the energy performance certificate, but this would be going up level 6 in 2016. The Government had set an ambitious target which they seemed committed to.</p> <p>None.</p> <p><b>NI191 Residual household waste per household</b> <b>NI192 Percentage of household waste sent for refuse</b></p> <p>Alison reported that first quarter data for NI191 and NI192 is still not available. A new system called U-WIS (Unitary Waste Information System) would bring data together for waste disposal and waste collection and recycling, was being developed. There was a deadline of the 30<sup>th</sup> September for Waste Data Flow to be inputted for the April-June quarter.</p> <p>An extensive programme of work was currently being undertaken to ensure that the first quarter's data is accurate. Reporting for the following quarter is expected to improve significantly.</p> <p>The key activities included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The new Chester Household collection</li> <li>• Key partners waste awareness</li> <li>• Work ongoing for the procurement of the single waste collection contract</li> </ul>
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<p><b><u>Action/Decision</u></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevention campaign with input from WRAP ( Waste Resources Action Programme)</li> </ul> <p>Following Alison’s presentation the group discussed the complexity of presenting the information to the APB’s due to the contrasting APB’s geographical areas and the collection areas, which are based on old Borough Council footprints.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indicative information could be given to APB’s based on estimated performance data, so that they can instigate priority actions for specific areas. (e.g. waste Kg per household)</li> <li>• The new single contract due to start in 2012 could be negotiated on APB boundaries</li> </ul> <p>None.</p> <p><b>NI169: Non –principal classified roads where maintenance should be considered.</b> <b>NI 168: Principal Roads where maintenance should be considered</b></p> <p>Richard reported that the Highways Maintenance programme was well under way. A Scrutiny Review of Highways Maintenance had taken place in June, with recommendations of being smarter and more effective. The core principle was in looking after the assets. Performance was only measurable from April to June 2010 as the indicator is produced according to National reporting requirements. Annual data is reported in Q1 of the following year. Richard confirmed that he had not been approached about renegotiation of targets by GONW. Roads could potentially be allocated within the APB areas.</p>
<p><b>Item 4</b> Feedback from West Cheshire Together LSP and Thematic Leads Meeting</p>	<p>Jane was conscious of the time constraints of the meeting at this point so only actions were raised for this item.</p>
<p><b>Action - Decision</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was agreed for Robbie to circulate the West Cheshire Together LSP minutes from the 30<sup>th</sup> July and the minutes from the Thematic Leads meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> August to the ESTG.</li> <li>• The group were asked to feed back any comments they may have on the Sustainable Community Strategy to Robbie so they can inform the shape of the draft Strategy before public consultation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Item 5</b> In –Year LAA</p>	<p>It was agreed that the majority of this item had been covered in the previous discussion.</p>

Reporting Guidance and	In order to monitor any future programmes of work and report on performance, it would be helpful if a full timetable of work programmes from all the directorates was made available.
<b>Item 6</b> Area Partnership Boards: “Linking the Strategic with the Local”	<p>Robbie gave a short presentation which explained the broader LSP Framework, the partnership planning and delivery cycle, the key roles of the Thematic Partnerships and Area Partnership Boards.</p> <p>The Group discussed the mechanism of how local issues would be taken to the stage that they are dealt with and asked how the Area Partnership Boards commissioned work.</p> <p>It was accepted that it was still the early days of the new partnership and relationships still needed to be formally agreed and embedded through practice into the Partnership Framework. John Salt had just accepted the remaining position of Chair, of the Area Partnership Board for Winsford and East.</p> <p>Steve who sits on both a Thematic Group and Area Partnership Board (Rural West) suggested that the thematic groups should perhaps set the priorities and then APB’s localise them via the information coming through the Community Forums. A number of outstanding questions remain, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terms of reference for APB’s are still a work in progress</li> <li>• More clarity required of the mechanism rather than the principles of how APB’s will work</li> <li>• What are the governance procedures for APBs?</li> <li>• When will the details be finalised?</li> </ul>
<b>Action / Decision</b>	None
<b>Item 7</b> Local Development Framework process	<p>Jeremy briefly explained to the Group, the significance of the documents that feed into the Local Development Framework which will supersede all previous development plans over the next couple of years.</p> <p>The Regional Spatial Strategy is the most significant document that determines all planning proposals.</p> <p>The Core Strategy document contains the 15 year vision for the area, including regeneration priorities and policies. Work on the Core Strategy is underway, subject to statutory process and will be in place by March 2012. The Government is looking at front leading to speed up the process. The 1<sup>st</sup> stage is in the form of an issue an options paper with a 6 week public consultation and would be submitted in 2011 after two formal consultations.</p>

	<p>Other documents included the Local Development Scheme, which contains the 3 year action plan, Statement of Community Involvement and the Supplementary Planning Documents which add the detail to the implementation.</p> <p>The LDF was evidence based on studies covering housing, transport, water recycling etc.</p> <p>Jeremy asked for support from the Thematic Groups in moving through the consultation stages. A discussion followed on how this could be achieved.</p> <p>Suggestions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email to canvas for volunteers to take as a starting point</li> <li>• LDF Steering Group</li> <li>• LDF as a delivery vehicle for SCS , benefits of not working in isolation</li> <li>• That the ESTG should be used a clearing house</li> </ul>
<b>Action / Decision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jeremy was already working closely with a number of Council colleagues and partners and offered to share the detailed calendar of LDF consultation, so the engagement opportunities can be combined with other draft strategies e.g. the LTP and SCS</li> <li>• LDF will be a standard agenda item at future meetings</li> </ul>
<b>Item 8</b> Thematic Partnership: Action Plans	Covered by Peter Bulmer under item 3
<b>Item 9.</b> Any Other Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The “Whatever it Takes” initiative to be put on the agenda for the next meeting</li> <li>• Contact Robbie regarding the R&amp;I postal survey</li> <li>• Chester Environmental Forum - Jane Staley, Steve Kent and Cllr. Ritchie to discuss post meeting</li> </ul>
<b>Item 10.</b> Future Meetings	Members of ESTG to be canvassed for a date for the next ESTG meeting in October.

Signed (Chair): .....

Date: .....