

London Sustainable Development Commission
June 13, 2008, 10am-1pm, Committee Room 3

Attendees: Paul de Zylva (temporary Chair), Shirley Rodriguez (Part), Tony Medawar, Shaun McCarthy, Robin Stott, Richard Stephenson, Peter Head, Penny Bramwell, Robert Runcie, Mike Tuffrey, Nusrat Yousuf, Abbe Marks, Martha Halbert, Bryony Mathie, Patrick Feehily, Helen Meekings (Part), Anna Marks (Part)

Apologies: June Barnes, Chris Church, Samantha Heath, Sue Riddlestone, Maria Lee, Pamela Gardner, Dinah Cox

1. Chair Comments (Paul de Zylva, temporary Chair)

- June Barnes has stepped down from her role as Chair but is prepared to play a continued role in discussions with new administration and Mayoral Team
- Dinah Cox has resigned from the Commission having reached the end of her original 6-year term.
- PDZ noted that this was Abbe's last meeting as a member of the Secretariat, and thanked her for her work.

2. Minutes and Action from last meeting

- PDZ noted that although no official Commission consultation response has been submitted to the Environment Agency following on from the last meeting's TE2100 presentation, there will be further opportunity to do so in the Autumn.
- The half day-day session on the LSDC Effectiveness Paper has been postponed, and will be discussed further at a later date. JB has signed off the paper, which will help guide discussion with the new administration.

3. Election, new chair and recruitment

- Patrick briefed the meeting on developments with the new Mayor and his team. A meeting has been requested between the Mayor, JB and PH. Sir Simon Milton has been appointed temporary advisor on Sustainable Development. An initial meeting has been conducted between Simon Milton, JB, PF and David Lunts. Approval has been given for London Leaders events on June 5 and 19. SM suggested that the new administration may have a preference for a change of terminology, from 'Sustainable Development' to 'Quality of Life'.
- Simon Milton asked JB and PF to attend a 'brain-storming' session on June 26th to discuss this new approach. It is intended that the Secretariat would submit a policy paper to guide this session. The LSDC Executive will discuss after the meeting the best way to contribute to the paper. PF confirmed that JB would also contribute.
- SM and PDZ queried the best way to continue the work of the Commission, in light of uncertainty around the new administration's intentions.

- PF confirmed that the Commission could carry on in a shadow capacity, but to first check each funding decision with the Mayor's Office.
- The Commission discussed the proposed QOL approach:
 - o PH stressed that QOL needs to be phrased to incorporate the long-term nature of the sustainable development approach.
 - o TM commented that sustainable development is quality of life in the long-term and that there is opportunity to simplify our message.

Concerns raised included the effect that a change of terminology could have on the continuity as well as content of the work of the LSDC.

- RS called for emphasis to be placed on the value of input from outside the public sector, as seen in the Commission, as well as the need to continue to focus on key themes of Climate Change and Inequality.
- SR suggested including an appendix to the paper, detailing the achievements of the Commission to date.

Action

In the interests of coherence, it was agreed that a shadow chair should be appointed, to be a liaison point for the secretariat, and to attend further meetings with the new administration. PDZ and SMcC suggested a short meeting of the executive at the end of today's meeting to discuss this.

Commissioners to provide PF with any feedback on paper to contribute the Quality of Life brainstorming session.

4. Virtual Cycles Project Presentation

AM introduced the project, the original purpose of which was to serve as a Communication from the LSDC and evidence base for virtuous cycles. The intention is that this work will lead to further delivery and dissemination phases. There have been key inputs from a steering group.

The presentation by Golder Associates (Helen Meekings and Anna Marks) detailed progress from last meeting, including the final case study shortlist. The East London Recycling Scheme has now replaced a case study of the Sustainable Industrial Park, due to lack of publicly available financial information. A definition of Virtuous Cycles was proposed for LSDC comments. Possibilities for visual models of VC thinking were introduced, as well as the use of the Cost Benefit analysis tool.

Feedback on the Draft Report

- PB stressed importance of highlighting case studies which show potential of mainstreaming VC thinking into strategy and project development. That greater environmental and social benefits can be achieved for lower cost through integrated thinking.
- RS noted the capacity of VC to contribute to multi-faceted decision making, whereby all disciplines could experience benefits. RS also thought that definition needed to be shorter and simpler.

- Need to demonstrate that QOL can be improved through VC policy.

Action

The Commission will re-assess the definition, especially with reference to the language therein, and further advise Helen and Anna.

PDZ thanked the group involved in the work to date, and also noted that the images used in the report should be checked to ensure that they are compatible with earlier LSDC reports.

Secretariat to review report in light of new Administration and ensure next steps for use are clear and defined.

5. Quality of Life Indicators

Abbe updated the group on progress on this project. The report will be further discussed at a meeting on June 26th. The aim is still to launch the report in September. The proposed approach is to circulate the report via email to all Commissioners, and receive feedback, with the final sign-off being delegated to the GLA Sub-Group on June 18th.

A decision was required on whether the Commission was happy to stick to the September launch timetable

- PF added a caveat- given the increased workload on the Secretariat, this date may be subject to change.
- AM added that if the Mayor were to launch the report, it would be given priority.
- Also, suggested that the launch be low key, but that the report is used to engage stakeholders in discussions.
- PDZ suggested a possible link-up with London Councils' Annual conferences in the Autumn, e.g. workshops at these events
- RR commented that making a launch low-key would underplay its significance.
- RS echoed this, given that report is four-yearly.
- AM affirmed that a launch could still take place but that the focus ought to be on the practical application of the report.
- TM cited possibility that the Mayor would wish to instigate his own QOL report, and that the LSDC report may constitute a part of this.
- Discussion regarding the Commissioners advocacy role in promoting this.

Action

In the email to be circulated to the LSDC about the QOL report, the content of this meeting's discussion regarding the report should be included so as to give context to the decision and input.

- PDZ thanked AM for her work on this project.

6. Sustainable Consumption and Production

AM presented an update on this project.
Two questions to be addressed-

- Approval for deferral of the sign-off on this report to a sub-group chaired by Sue Riddlestone. Also, ascertain interest in sitting in this group.
- Discussion of proposal to grant the £10,000 budget for this project to BioRegional, to complete an action plan for a 'One Planet London'.

(At this point, RS, as a trustee of BioRegional, excused himself from the room)

- PR commented that there is a conflict of interests with regard to the procurement of this funding, given SR's role in BioRegional. Any grant funding would need to follow appropriate procurement guidelines.
- PDZ mentioned the logistical concerns, given the Secretariat's present workload.

Action

More discussion on this item is needed, in particular with SR re logistics and timing.

7. LAA's

BM reported on progress on this project. The main focus in this area is a Capital Ambition proposal, which aims to raise senior level buy-in and embed Sustainable Development in the Boroughs. The ongoing research of the UK SDC in compiling a basket of indicators is also relevant.

- PDZ noted the importance of a link with the UK SDC, and that exploratory conversation would be desirable.

Action

BM to set up a meeting with Craig Myers and Denny Grey at the SDC.

It was queried whether it would be possible to delegate a piece of discreet research on indicators to an intern.

The Commission agreed that a review of LAAs/Sustainable Community Strategies was not appropriate for an intern.

Discussion as to whether the Capital Ambition proposal fits with key purpose of LSDC or whether what is needed is work to establish how LAAs are delivered.

LAA Partnership to take forward this work.

8. DEFRA Sustainable Development Transition and Transformation Fund

PF clarified that this funding proposal does not reflect a hierarchy of projects in the work programme, rather DEFRA priorities and capacity for match funding. Patrick also fed in Samantha Heath's comments regarding supporting the LAA proposal.

Preliminary discussions with DEFRA on funding assignment. DEFRA supported funding of

- Review of the London Sustainable Development Framework and the Integrated Impact Assessment Framework
- LAA Project.

- However, they considered the 'One Planet' project to be outside their scope for funding. DEFRA also indicated that if a stronger Environmental element were added to the Income and Inequality work, it would be suitable to be funded.
- Proposals need to be submitted to DEFRA by the end of this month.
- RS noted the link between Income and Equality Research, and broader Quality of Life emphasis.
- TM noted that DEFRA are more likely to fund a framework review.

Action

PDZ suggested a package to be proposed to DEFRA, whereby half the funding would go to the Income and Equality work, and half to the London Leaders. This would make the total funding in the budget for this work:

£28,500 to go to Income and Equality work

£43,500 to go to London Leaders work

Released £15,000 could then be assigned to a review of the SD Framework.

Secretariat to attend meeting with GOL for further feedback before final submission.

9. AOB

PDZ emphasised that it will be useful to distribute minutes of this meeting quickly, along with an outline of the workload of the Secretariat for the next few months, in order to set a context for the Commission.

Next meeting: Friday 19 September