

LONDON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (LSDC)

12 December 2009, LSDC Workshop

10-1 pm, City Hall, Conference Room 3

Summary

The 12 December half-day LSDC 'Away-day', was organised by the (LSDC) Secretariat at City Hall. The participative audience of twelve Commissioners, supported by the Secretariat team, were 'journeyed' through a pre-agreed tasked programme led by an external facilitator, Fay Blair.

The purpose of the day was:

- to take stock of the LSDC's work programme;
- to reflect on Commissioners' personal impressions of the broader impacts of the LSDC (as a 'pre-task' exercise);
- to map out gaps and new approaches; and,
- to identify new priorities (and/or reaffirm old ones)

Key findings from the day include:

- The need to **adapt and refresh LSDC's two main goals and list of priorities, to rearticulate its mission (goals) and plans and methods of engagement, in the light of radically changed, and changing, economic circumstances.**
- The **new Mayor and administration and forthcoming changes at the GLA** were identified as important aspects. The two **existing goals – focused on carbon emissions and inequalities – were still upheld to be 'the right ones'** but need re-tuning. In effect this was agreed to be a recasting, and reframing job.
- **Emerging themes in the LSDC's new Quality of Life (QoL) Indicators report were re-endorsed** - consumption of resources, community cohesion and innovative ways of working.
- A key aim of the day was to appraise the LSDC's current ways of working and broader engagement, to ensure these are fit for purpose. Building a shared understanding of **the Commission's 'spectrum of influence', showing the**

need for LSDC to change and adapt in tone, style and outreach, was a key outcome.

- Issues arising from the QoL report focused discussion on **the need to challenge, and reframe the current economic model and how key organisations** (especially the GLA and Group), agencies (e.g. LDA) and business and broader society, **value and measure progress**. It was acknowledged that **new and different specialist economic know-how and expertise was needed to both inform the LSDC and help advocate**, and make the case and to influence and champion change.
- The Commission's **London Leaders network was highly rated as a success**, and is recognised as a powerful demonstrator of SD and an agent and mechanism for further change. It is an initiative that clearly is due to expand but this depends on additional resources to maximise its outreach and impact.
- Other networks and institutions were mentioned as worth investigating, either as a means of **co-opting new sources of expertise** (leading academics in green economics), **or forming new partner alliances** (such as the London Economic Forum), or perhaps to recruit new Commissioners. The key identified priority was to link up with those that are well placed to address the economic focus, and challenge the current model to embed ecological economics and social issues and which address 'fair shares' and inequalities.
- LSDC agreed that it needs to work through a more honed consideration of **the Commission's 'spectrum of influence'**, and how action plans (e.g. those evolving for Sustainable Consumption and Production, SCP), project plans, and new regional plans (Economic Development Strategy) can be supported with a broad LSDC engagement strategy. **'Trying to do too much with too little' and the knock-on demands made to the Secretariat's time** are significant issues.
- The overall need for LSDC to transition its role over time was accepted, reflecting that **some work should be 'handed on' or over to others, for monitoring, maintaining or growing, or simply 'letting go'**. **Work such as the incubation of new projects (such as CSL) was regarded as special and, arguably, a unique niche** for LSDC.

- **Critical success factors included winning trust and ongoing support from the new Mayoral team, and the finessing of internal GLA SD advocates within the administration.** It was felt essential to maximise **smarter working with existing and new partners**, organisations, institutions and new individuals, and that the **role of the new Commission Chair would be key in leading and empowering and maintaining 'London as a world leader in Sustainable Development'**.

Building on these findings

The outputs of the workshop have been re-drafted into proposals contained within this paper. These set out the implications for the LSDC vision goals, ways of working (as well as the roles and remit of Commissioners), future priorities and membership.

Based on this an outline work-plan is proposed which details how the priorities will be met on a project-by-project basis in 2009-10.

LSDC Vision and Goals

Two goals are identified within the 2007 LSDC business plan:

'We must reduce our emissions of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases to a level where our climate is stabilised and the environmental, economic and social systems upon which we rely are able to effectively adapt to this altered but stable climate.'

And:

'We must reduce the disparity between the most and the least wealthy so that everyone's contribution is well recognised and rewarded.'

Building on the findings of the Quality of Life indicators report, the full Commission away-day and the review of the LSDC framework, the Commission will review its vision and goals.

This will be based on the assumption that the two existing goals are correct but will need recasting and reframing. This is particularly relevant in the light of radically changed (and changing) – macro economic circumstances - i.e. the 'credit crunch'.