

Truro & Kenwyn Neighbourhood Plan

**Meeting of the Environment and Climate Change Working Group
Tuesday 22nd November 2011
at 6.00 pm in the Municipal Buildings, Truro**

Minutes

ATTENDEES: Councillor Lindsay Southcombe – Truro City Council
Councillor Richard Tinney – Kenwyn Parish Council
Councillor William Robinson – Kenwyn Parish Council
Hilary Gooch – Cornwall Council
Cheryl Marriott – Cornwall Wildlife Trust
Mr Roger Gazzard – Town Clerk, Truro City Council

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Anthony Ayers (Truro City Council)

Item		Action
1	Chairman It was agreed that the Chairman would be rotated for each meeting.	-
2	Minutes The minutes of the meeting held on 24 th October 2011 were approved as a correct record.	-
3	Report from Cornwall Council on Current Environment and Climate Change Situation Hilary Gooch outlined her work at Cornwall Council and informed the group they needed to look at the issue of sustainability as soon as possible due to time restraints. She also impressed the importance of defining the term 'sustainability' as a group, as people tended to have their own definitions. In her own work, she defined it as being made up of social, economical, and ecological issues, and the balance that existed between the three. She also pointed out that sustainability was an ongoing process, and that the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report that was produced by Cornwall Council had the ability to challenge any planning proposal. However, the issue of sustainability could not simply be applied at the end of a planning process, but had to be considered throughout and shape the decisions made along the way. Roger Gazzard asked if it was important to involve the people who would be writing the appraisal early on in the process. Hilary Gooch responded that they could be involved from the start, but sometimes it was worthwhile bringing them in at key points as they would be able to be more objective if they were not directly involved in the creation of the Neighbourhood Plan. It was also discussed that the working group should be feeding the information it obtained back to the steering group so the other working groups could take the evidence into consideration during their decision making process.	<p style="text-align: right;">HG</p> <p style="text-align: right;">HG</p> <p style="text-align: right;">RG HG</p>

Truro & Kenwyn Neighbourhood Plan

	<p>Hilary also advised the working group made itself familiar with Cornwall Council's Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report, and in particular the objectives and decision-making criteria within, and it might be possible to shortcut on the creation of the working group's own Sustainability Appraisal by extracting the relevant sections of Cornwall Council's document. It was added that as the report had already been to consultation there would be no worries about agencies rebutting decisions that had been based on this evidence.</p>	HG
	<p>It was also discussed that a Habitat Regulations Assessment would need to be produced as it was important to statutory designations, and if any areas were highlighted then screening reports would need to be produced for them as it had the ability to stop planning going ahead. Hilary Gooch advised that she was unable to officially advise on this document and that consultants may be needed, though Cheryl Marriott suggested that Natural England may be able to point out relevant sites. It was also mentioned that a Habitat Regulations Assessment had already been completed for the Core Strategy, covering the whole of Cornwall, so the sections relating to the Neighbourhood Plan could be extracted and used.</p>	HG
	<p>Hilary Gooch also addressed the specific issue of climate change and stated that the Core Strategy recognised climate change was a serious problem that growth would have significant impact upon. However, the Core Strategy looked at the difference between growth options in both the short and long term with the aim to identify appropriate mitigation. Based on this, assumptions regarding travel, food, farming, renewables, design of development etc, would have to be made. It was pointed out that in the case of the Core Strategy, climate change wasn't given weight over other issues, and the working group would have to decide how much weight to give it.</p>	HG
	<p>Cheryl Marriott informed the group that a hierarchy of site use existed, which listed different types of areas (such as concrete city areas or farmland) based on many factors such as biodiversity levels etc, and the group would need to take these factors into consideration when making recommendations. Councillor Tinney suggested a similar document had been produced for the Interim Plan, and Robert Lacey may be able to provide more information.</p>	CM
		RT
	<p>Hilary Gooch also spoke about the Cornwall-wide Green Infrastructure Strategy which looked at non-developed space around Truro and potential uses (access, recreation etc). She also mentioned there was hope to have the strategy imbedded into the planning process, and Cornwall Council was in the process of mapping the areas where Green Infrastructure had resources in areas identified for growth. Hilary said she would be able to provide an update for the Truro area.</p>	HG
	<p>Additionally, Hilary talked about the Green Cornwall Program and its action plan, which had been introduced since the unitary change, and was working to move towards a low carbon economy, initially by reducing Cornwall Council's own carbon footprint through leadership, reduction of carbon emissions, and the support of renewable energy. The program has set specific targets for Cornwall Council, and by extension Cornwall itself.</p>	HG
	<p>The group also discussed European Funding and the Sustainable Energy</p>	HG

Truro & Kenwyn Neighbourhood Plan

	<p>Project, which had involved a covenant of Mayors, and that part of the project was to develop a Sustainable Energy Action Plan for Cornwall with specific targets to reduce carbon emissions. Hilary advised that if any members of the group wished to attend an internal event at Cornwall Council on Thursday 24 November 2011 between 10am and 2pm, entitled 'Seminar for Sustainable Energy Action Plan' then they were welcome, as the Neighbourhood Plan fell under exceptional circumstances, and that she would provide any paperwork produced for the event.</p> <p>The Design Guide, a document that sets design standards for planning in Cornwall, was also mentioned, and Hilary said that she would provide more information on it if possible, pointing out that within decision-making of planning processes a balance would always have to be struck, and that it wasn't always possible to achieve everything, and therefore a multi-functional approach was always wise.</p> <p>Roger Gazzard asked Hilary how migration fit with sustainability within the Core Strategy. Hilary responded that they do not deal with the calculations involved in the process, but were presented with the end growth figures which had been based on evidence and trends.</p> <p>Cheryl spoke about ecological resources and pointed out that the sites were often lumped into one (natural, scientific interest etc) for the purpose of planning, and that she would draft together a rough map of these sites to bring to the next meeting, which would highlight key issues from a species and habitat point of view. It was pointed out that such sites should not simply be maintained, but growth should be actively encouraged.</p> <p>Councillor Tinney informed the group that Mary Coombe, who is a Farm Conservation Adviser, would be available to come to talk about issues the group may wish for more advice on.</p> <p>Finally, Hilary told the group about a study that was currently underway, with the results due in December, about the socio-economic value of green infrastructure in Cornwall, and would act as a tool to aid decision making in which resources should be kept, including predictions for the future, and would look at marginal changes and the perception of the changes. It was reiterated that this was an economic modelling and did not include ecosystems evaluations.</p>	<p>HG</p> <p>RG HG</p> <p>CM</p> <p>RT</p> <p>HG</p>
4	<p>Action Plan To decide on a definition of 'sustainability'.</p> <p>Hilary Gooch to provide copies of the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability for Core Strategy • Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report • Habitat Regulations Assessment • Green Infrastructure Strategy (2009) – update for Truro/Kenwyn • Green Cornwall Program <p>Cheryl Marriott to provide a rough map of ecological resources in Truro/Kenwyn.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>HG</p> <p>CM</p>

Truro & Kenwyn Neighbourhood Plan

	Roger Gazzard to speak to Rob Lacey about budgets for the working group.	RG
5	Date of Next Meeting Tuesday 13 th December 2011 at 6pm.	-

The Meeting closed at 7.20 pm

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CHAIRMAN