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**Dacorum Environmental Forum
Full Meeting – 15 July 2010**

MINUTES

Attendance

Cllr Herbert Chapman	Dacorum Borough Council
Cllr Carol Green	Dacorum Borough Council
Phil Pennington	DEF Chairman
Paul Harris	Friends of the Earth/Green Party
Hazel Johnson	Green Party
Alan Johnson	Great Gaddesden Parish Council/Green Party
Gruff Edwards	New Conservation Society and DEF Vice-Chairman
Peter Thring	CPRE Hertfordshire
Cllr Garrick Stevens	Berkhamsted Town Council
Cllr David Nobbs	Chipperfield Parish Council
Rudolph Kirst	HM GM Action Group and Kings Langley Biodynamic Group
Jean Blackman	Friends of the Earth
Adrienne Gear	Community Action, Dacorum
Roger Hands	Box Moor Trust
Martin Hicks	Herts Biological Records Centre
Dennis Harvey	Hemel Nature
Emma Norrington	Groundwork/TBCC
Nicky Flynn	Dacorum Partnership Development Officer
Lizzy Staincliffe	Dacorum Borough Council

Apologies

Cllr Alan Anderson	Dacorum Borough Council
Mary Dyson	Berkhamsted Lions Club
Cllr Brian Jones	Northchurch Parish Council

The meeting started at 7.35 pm

Fire instructions were read out and Members notified of exits in the event of having to leave the building.

86. Minutes of Meeting held on 14 April 2010

These were agreed.

87. Matters Arising

- 87.1 P Harris, referred to Minute 78.2 which referred to Minute 75.6 – Allotments – National Society for Allotments and Leisure Gardens from the 21 January meeting and asked Councillor Chapman about the funding for Bennetts End Allotments, as it was noted at that meeting that as the Council is currently in a difficult financial situation they do not have the resources to invest in allotments. He asked if a financial breakdown could be given.

Councillor Chapman replied that he would provide a financial breakdown but the situation had not changed. **ACTION CLLR CHAPMAN**

- 87.3 E Norrington, said that she would be giving an update on the Bennetts End Allotments during the next item on the Agenda.

- 87.4 Minute 79.1 The Members thanked P Pennington and G Edwards for agreeing to be re-elected as Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the Forum and wished them continued success.

88. Dacorum Partnership

- 88.1 E Staincliffe gave a presentation on the updating of the Sustainable Community Strategy ‘Towards 2021’ and outlined the Dacorum Environmental Forum’s role. The Dacorum Partnership published the Strategy in January 2008. In March 2010 DEF’s steering group reviewed the action plan, out of 33 actions only 8 had not been progressed at all. The aim of the Strategy was to encourage organisations across Dacorum to work together to make Dacorum a more sustainable place to live and work. The Dacorum Partnership will be publishing the revised Strategy in January 2011 identifying objectives and actions for the next 3 years. It is being updated because a number of the original objectives and actions have been achieved and circumstances have changed i.e. the credit crunch, the recession, change of Government and natural environmental indicators.

- 88.2 The DEF, as the leading group on the environmental theme, had been asked to update its page with priorities that we believed were important to developing the Borough. The DEF fed in their ideas at a meeting in May and a draft page was created which was taken to the Dacorum Partnership conference in June. The Partnership is encouraging cross-forum working so DEF’s draft was shown to the other Forums to see if any links could be made and resources shared.

- 88.3 DEF produced 5 updated objectives:

1. Increase local food security and independence -1A – 1E
2. Maintain and improve biodiversity 2A – 2C
3. Manage and live within our natural resources 3A – 3E

4. Minimise pollution and toxicity 4A – 4B
 5. Increase public engagement and awareness 5A – 5B
- 88.4 There are potential projects and links with other Forums as a number of organisations expressed an interest in working with the DEF.
- 88.5 E Staincliffe asked for feedback and comments from DEF members on the draft page:
- Are the objectives right
 - Are they backed up with evidence
 - Is there someone in the DEF who can take ownership
 - What resources are required for the actions and do we have access to them.
- 88.6 Members were asked to feedback to Lizzy Staincliffe by 31 August 2010. **ACTION ALL**
- 88.7 Cllr Stevens congratulated E Staincliffe on the presentation and information provided.

Outcome:

- 88.8 E Staincliffe and N Flynn to meet to discuss the review and update of the DEF's Action Plan.
- 88.9 Emma Norrington, DEF representative on the Dacorum Partnership Board gave an update from the Dacorum Partnership meeting held in June. E Norrington highlighted the project "Passport to Go" which was one of four projects that could receive funding from a Performance Reward Grant. The aim of the project was to provide individual, responsive and tailored support for disadvantaged people in the community. The grant is now going through the final phase and will be presented to Cabinet on 27 July 2010. If the bid is successful the project could start from September 2010. E Norrington added that if successful the bid would include progressing the physical improvement of the Bennetts End allotments which would see the regeneration of the current unusable allotment site which would provide access for up to 50 individuals/groups to growing plots. She will be meeting with the New Allotments Officer on Friday 16 July to discuss training facilities. The inclusion of this initiative is to provide a facility which would increase the opportunity to grow local food contributing to the overall health, wellbeing and environmental sustainability of the Borough.
- 88.10 Nicky Flynn, Dacorum Partnerships' Officer gave an update on the Dacorum Sustainable Community Strategy. This document is due to be updated by the Partnership in January 2011. N Flynn said that the document may remain as it is or it may change to a smaller version. It will still outline the 10 themes plus 4 cross cutting themes for the DEF. A draft will be presented to the Dacorum Partnership in December 2010 to be published in January. A survey has been carried out to gauge people's understanding of the Strategy. Training will be offered to theme groups.
- 88.11 Roger Hands noted that the Dacorum Partnership is an important initiative which can only succeed if forums such as the DEF work together to achieve a common objective.

Outcome:

- 88.12 Phil Pennington said that the DEF would be kept informed of any changes. A copy of Lizzy Staincliffe's powerpoint presentation will be circulated with the minutes. **ACTION ES**

89. Biodiversity Group Update

- 89.1 Martin Hicks, Herts Biological Records Centre gave an update on the Dacorum Biodiversity Action Plan review.

- 89.2 A presentation was given setting out the changes. Principal Members are The Boxmoor Trust, Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Herts Biological Records Centre and Marion Baker.

- 89.3 The original document was very long winded, so would like to make it more succinct. A number of meetings have been held.

- 89.4 M Hicks summarised the presentation under a list of headings:

89.4.1 Where have we got to?

Material has been drafted and a formal process is in progress. The Dacorum and National BAPs need to dovetail. Not planning to produce a glossy document but a document that will develop over time.

89.4.2 Where are we going?

The existing work of all bodies is actually recognised as part of the process. A lot of work has already been carried out which needs to be recognised. New projects – what may or may not be included. The amount of resources required will also be briefly reviewed not necessarily the funding but people required to have an input. There will be links formed with other strategies which will be a by-product of other activities.

89.4.3 What are we going to report back?

Using existing reporting systems NI 197 Wildlife Sites will need to be reported back on. Local Authorities should only have to report back on land they own. The Wildlife Trust will also be reporting back BARS data to be used.

89.4.5 How are we going to measure progress or success?

Review of the local BAP is in progress. BARS reporting is positive. There will be future presentations to DEF to update on this progress. We would like to know what you think, feedback required.

89.4.6 How are we going to 'host' the LBAP?

There is a draft interactive website development in progress. Once chunks of the BAP are confirmed they will be put on the website and this will allow feedback to be given. It will be a working document, some sections will remain the same but updates are required under legislation.

89.4.7 Why have a LBAP anyway?

The DEF is the only Forum to attempt to link activities concerning biodiversity. It will measure outcome and success and identify any issues. It would raise the profile of biodiversity.

89.4.8 Who wants to know anyway?

The DEF
Planners
Public
Councillors/local Politicians
Schools

The website will provide information about why, where what etc.

Discussion and Questions

89.5 Hazel Johnson asked if schools were visited regularly.

M Hicks replied that this was not done at present, schools are important but Herts Biological Records do not have the resources to set up visits to schools. He is involved with the Orchard project (during his own time).

89.6 Roger Hands said that the Boxmoor Trust is involved with a lot of schools and a tremendous amount of work is carried out. R Hands is a member of the Biodiversity Work Group and he congratulated M Hicks on his excellent presentation.

89.7 P Pennington said that he would be happy to get information on how schools use local Education Centres i.e. Boxmoor Trust and Ashridge.

ACTION PP

89.8 Dennis Harvey from Hemel Nature asked as Herts Biological Record Centre is County based what were they trying to define, is it intended to ringfence Herts as part of the work you are doing or is it specific to Dacorum?

M Hicks replied that it sits with the National approach, some projects may benefit Dacorum by default but some will not. A shortfall could be identified for Dacorum but we are trying to make it Dacorum based as far as possible. Data is now held electronically so would be able to flag up key things in relation to Dacorum.

89.9 D Harvey asked if there was a local BAP for Dacorum

M Hicks – No there is only a county BAP. This is a profile for the Borough which creates more work.

Outcome:

89.10 Lizzy Staincliffe said that once the presentation and plan were more polished it might be of interest to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Councillor Herbert Chapman will liaise with Councillor Alan Anderson (Chair of the OSC) to see if they would be interested to have it as an information item at a future Committee meeting.

89.11 A copy of the slides will be circulated with the Minutes

ACTION ES

90. Determining Carbon Footprints of Goods and Services

90.1 G Edwards presented information on determining Carbon Footprints of Goods and Services.

90.2 He summarised the report and went through the slides.

90.3 G Edwards particularly highlighted the Diagram on page 3 of the presentation. PAS250 Standards guide was published 2 years ago, but there had not been a huge take up.

90.4 G Edwards said there were issues in Dacorum and he would like to bring a message to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee for DEF comment. Waste Management CO₂ reduction as a component of NI 186 per capita CO₂ emissions. Benefits of re-use/extend life over recycling. 6kwh pp seems modest. In the future we may be able to recycle non-bottle plastics (i.e. food packaging). Also looking for solutions for people who live in flats where there are no green recycling bins available. He said that rocket composters were an option and funding may be forthcoming from a PRG grant.

Discussion and Questions

90.5 D Harvey said that it was a vast topic and asked if it should focus on one thing or was G Edwards implying that by concentrating on recycling household waste, we are focussing on only a small part of the problem.
G Edwards replied that any contribution was significant. We are encouraged to recycle to save energy. The presentation had tried to show how much could be saved, although he was disappointed it was not a bit higher but any energy saving is significant.

90.6 D Harvey – With remit of people who have authority of resources should we be focusing on other issues?

G Edwards. The presentation was referred by the Waste Management Group to see how much household energy could be saved. The Council are in control of household waste recycling and can see what is achievable in our waste stream. 50% could be achieved and there are other little sections hidden away in the energy balance. It could make a difference and we have to start somewhere.

Outcome:

90.7 P Pennington said that the presentation may need to go to the Environment OSC Committee and the DEF would put it forward as a future item.

90.8. This was agreed by the Forum.

90.9 The slides will be circulated with the minutes.

ACTION ES

91. Any Other Business

- 91.1 Rudolph Kirst circulated a report on Food Security. He read out some consultation responses from several meetings he had attended and added that an Insect Pollinators initiative had been launched and there was a £10m fund. He had attended a Seminar at the Westminster Food and Nutrition Forum and the report that had been circulated highlighted some of the points raised.
- 91.2 He announced that there was an open meeting due to be held at the Rothamstead Research Centre on 21 September at 7.30 pm. The theme of the meeting will be "The Impact of Drought on Food Security"

92. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Dacorum Environmental Forum will be on Thursday 15th October 2009 at 7.30pm in the Bulbourne Room, Civic Centre.

Note: The Agendas and Minutes from the Dacorum Environment Forum meetings can be found at www.dacenvforum.org.uk

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm