

Highland Environmental Forum

Highland Climate Change Declaration Working Group

MEETING MINUTES

10.00 am - 11.35 pm, Tuesday 27th January 2015. Fairways House

Present: Stephen Carr (SC), The Highland Council (THC) (Joint-Chair); Alison Craig (AC), Home Energy Scotland/Changeworks & Highland Environmental Network (HEN) (Joint-Chair); Daniel Greig (DG), Highland Council; Daniel Johns (DJ), Resource Efficient Scotland (RES)/Changeworks; Chris Donald (CD), Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH); Jane Ferguson (JF), Home Energy Scotland/Changeworks; Rabia Arooj (RA), Home Energy Scotland/Changeworks; Jo Ellen, HEN (minutes)

1.0 Welcome and Apologies

- SC welcomed all present. It was advised that Caireen Ros has left the working group due to a change in job. JF who is the Home Energy & Partnership Liaison Officer for Changeworks has joined the group and RA is temporarily working as an Administrator for Transport & Renewables.

There were apologies from Vanessa Halhead (VH), HEN.

Actions from the Previous Meeting

2.0 Action 1

DJ confirmed Bruce Wares from Home Energy Scotland attended a Chamber of Commerce event recently. DJ to advise DG if any further visits are planned.

Action 2

There was no update if Alex Hilliam is still looking for more companies to volunteer for ISM workshops. DG to check the situation with him.

Action 3

AC advised that this has not been progressed as yet and suggested discussing this under item 3.0.

Action 4

DG advised that the administrators of THC web-site are not keen for a live list of signatories (and other relevant information) to be put on the CCD web page. Further discussion on this took place under item 3.0.

Action 5

DG advised that following the discussions at the last meeting a form had been drafted to put to those interested in signing up to the CCD. He will distribute this for comment to the group.

He also confirmed that on investigation, Data Protection only relates to households, not businesses. However it was felt that the data provided by companies must still only be used for purposes relevant to the CCD.

Action 6

The action to trial run any new signatory recruitment process with a small business to assess its suitability was not progressed as yet.

Action 7

DG advised that due to time constraints the resources produced for the Energy Saving Expo were used at the CC Conference, rather than producing the postcard discussed at the last meeting. However if suitable promotional opportunities or events are identified for this year a postcard could be produced.

Action 8

SC confirmed that EST & RES did assist with the running of two workshops at the CC Conference.

Action 9

It was confirmed that Cllr Drew Hendry highlighted the CCD during his keynote

3.0 Reflection of progress to date

- . SC asked for comments on the progress of the CCD a year after this working group was set up. A detailed discussion followed with the following questions raised:
 - Why should new businesses sign up to the CCD?
 - What are the 57 current signatories benefiting from the CCD?
 - How do we know who has signed up?
 - What is the CCD brand? How do we make this more attractive?

It was agreed that the development of a regularly updated web-site with useful information for signatories is crucial to the success for the CCD. Following on from DG reporting that the current THC web-site cannot be significantly improved he suggested that a microsite might be developed. Other groups such as the Biodiversity Forum and Highland Economic Forum have taken this approach. DG agreed to look into developing this for Carbon CLEVER and the Declaration would be able to have its own pages, including a variety of information (e.g Case Studies, current list of signatories, news, a tool kit for downloading relevant branding, etc).

What we want to achieve in 2015

- 4.0 Discussion followed on what can be achieved this year. It was felt that the launch of a microsite would make promoting the CCD much easier for all concerned. The article in the Executive magazine in March will also help. Recruiting new signatories will then hopefully be more straightforward.

The benefits of highlighting successful case studies was discussed with a number of options given. DJ felt that Tomatin Distillery would be a good example of larger company who have implemented carbon reducing measures. RA suggested Knockfarrel Produce as an example of a smaller operation which has made significant improvements.

SC advised that it is hoped that CC can have a stand at the Belladrum music festival this year and the Declaration could be promoted as part of this.

AC suggested that it would be beneficial to try to inform more businesses of the CCD. DJ suggested holding joint RES/CCD workshops could be useful. He will talk to Mike Smith at BID to discuss this and establish what help businesses would like. Strengthening links with other business networks such as sector specific organisations (e.g the Hoteliers Association) was felt to be useful too.

Discussion took place on how current signatories can be asked what more they would like from the CCD. EST & RES work with some at present but accessing the others is more challenging. It was agreed it would be beneficial to have a short questionnaire where signatories can report how they are currently using the CCD and what more they would like to get from it during discussions with EST & RES. AC to look at this.

What the CCD can offer was discussed with issues such as Marketing, Business Advantage, Financial Savings and Procurement advantages raised. Making this clear to current and potential signatories is vital. It was emphasised that working out how much carbon has been reduced by companies is important data and will hopefully be collated by them reporting annually or by RES & EST follow-ups. However SC stressed that when the CCD was set up it was felt that compelling companies to provide this information would just result in the CCD failing through lack of support. We will ideally get this data, but the main priority is for signatories to benefit from their joining and ultimately reduce their carbon footprint.

5.0 Rational for Reporting

- . A brief discussion took place on reporting. It was felt it would be appropriate to ask signatories for an update a year after joining. Once the Microsite is up and running it will be clearer for signatories to see what resources there are for them.

Update to HEF

- 6.0 SC confirmed that the next meeting is on 17th March. SC & AC to work on a short statement for the meeting.

AOB

7.0 CC Community Grant Fund

After a query SC confirmed that a paper is going to the Resource Committee in February to finalise the details of the Fund. It will have £200,000 to distribute to local areas.

Community Planning Partnership

DG advised that Caroline from HEN has requested contact details of group members for the CPP work stream directory. There were no objections to this.

Carbon CLEVER Conference

CD asked about the actions that had come from the breakout sessions at the Conference. SC confirmed they will be picked up and will be progressed in the next 4-6 weeks.

SNH Consultation

CD suggested that the group have a look at a consultation document on the SNH website entitled 'Carbon Rich Soil, Deep Peat and Priority Peatland Habitats'.

Tree Audit

CD suggested that an audit of trees in Inverness would be useful to enable accurate calculations to be done in the future to establish levels of carbon absorption. SC confirmed that tree planting is acknowledged by THC as being very important and reported it is working towards achieving i-trees. This is a project that aims to demonstrate the importance of trees and other types of greenery in the fight against climate change in our towns and cities. Nicole Wallace from THC is leading this project.

Scottish Rural Development Programme

- 8.0 CD advised that this will be launched soon. Sustainability will be part of the basic contract.

Date of Next Meeting

To be confirmed. JE to arrange a Doodle request to confirm the date.

The meeting finished at 11.35am

Actions:

R e f	Who	Action	When
1	DJ	To check if any further Chamber of Commerce visits are planned	ASAP
2	DG	To speak to Alex Hilliam to find out if volunteers are still required for ISM workshops	ASAP
3	DG	To distribute the draft signatory sign up form to the group for comment	ASAP
4	DG & All group	DG to check if the deadline for ideas for the Executive Article can be moved and the rest of the group to think of ideas for this.	By 2 nd February
5	DJ & SC	DJ to speak to Bruno Berardelli and SC to Melanie Murray regarding finding new members for this group	ASAP
6	DG	To investigate having a CC microsite and if possible start developing it	ASAP
7	DJ	To speak to Mike Smith from BID to discuss helping local businesses	ASAP
8	AC	To look at the how to get information from signatories during RES & EST calls.	ASAP
9	SC & AC	To write a short statement for the next HEF meeting	By 17 th March
10	JE	To arrange a date for the next meeting	ASAP