

Devon Futures Group Decision and Action Log

Date: 12 July 2007

Present: Jay Talbot (Chief Executive, Community Council of Devon, representing VCS), Chair, Paul Sadler (Environment Agency), Ian Hutchcroft (DCC & member, Devon Sustainable Energy Partnership), Tim Jones (Devon Economic Partnership), Caroline Rae (Development Officer, Devon Strategic Partnership), Ian Hobbs (DCC), Teresa Butchers (Devon and Cornwall Housing Association), Tony Norton (University of Exeter), Nicola Channon (notes)

Apologies: Edward Chorlton (DCC), Steve Noyes (Met Office), Sue Smith (DCC), Sue Craythorne (DCC), Phil Collins (Natural England)

No.	Decision or Action or Message	Who will Action?	Who will Communicate?	When?	Action Completed?
1	<p><u>Action log from meeting on 25 April 2007</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In the notes on item 3 the term 'affordable housing' had been used. It was noted that affordable housing had become a precise term that applied to housing that generally had higher build standards and expectations than other forms. The general sense of the point made at the meeting was that cheaper housing that was being privately funded might not have sufficiently high standards of materials that would enable long term sustainability. ▪ The reference to the BBC campaign should read 'Planet Devon'. 				
2	<p><u>Transport and accessibility</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tony Norton gave a presentation which highlighted the current projections for carbon emissions for Devon, and the challenges for reducing emissions to meet the stated CO₂ targets. ▪ There was a discussion about 'peak oil' and the impact that price rises will have on the extraction of currently uneconomic resources which carbon intensive methods to extract. ▪ It was identified that current national transport plans did not take into account whether or not there would be sufficient oil to fuel the projected growth in demand across the world. ▪ The paper from DCC that had been circulated before the meeting was discussed. In particular the approach to community transport was noted. ▪ The response of villages and communities in finding innovative solutions to their needs was discussed. It was noted that established village communities were more successful in providing their own solutions to travel 				

	<p>problems than communities that largely supported commuting.</p>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The need to reduce commuting by providing alternatives to travelling to work was discussed. Flexible working is one response, although this may not be suitable for SMEs. However, ‘working hubs’, or places across the County that enable people to work in a working environment but away from their employer, would provide an opportunity to reduce commuting travel. ▪ The impetus for any change will need to come from employers, so that any travel plan should aim to reduce demand which is the key to reducing emissions. ▪ It was reported that to date no travel plan had been developed with CO₂ in mind. The next stage of the delivery plan which should be available in September should aim to identify where the majority of emissions are coming from (eg freight, tourism, leisure, commuting) and how these can be reduced. ▪ It was agreed that, in general, full use had yet to be made of possible IT solutions by employers. Even technology that was tried and tested and had been in place for some time was not being used to its full extent. New technology was taking too long to be identified as a reliable and usable resource. ▪ It was reported that public authorities will shortly have a carbon account which will cover all activities with an expectation that this will result in reduced emissions. ▪ The need to maximise the number of people in a car, and to increase the use of public transport, was agreed. In particular it was noted that alternatives to the car, and to travelling long distances, need to be provided before drivers are deterred from using the car for every journey. ▪ The encouragement of new and innovative developments to help the situation was also discussed. 				
	<p><u>The following points were agreed to go to the Delivery Board</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The encouragement for employers to establish, and encourage the use of, community hubs would reduce commuting and business mileage, and have the potential to enable people who are currently constrained by distance to work. If all partners were prepared to offer some space for others to use, and to encourage their staff to work from other centres, there could be a noticeable reduction in car travel as a consequence. ▪ Employers should be encouraged to make more creative use of the 				

	<p>possibilities provided by technology.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There should be ‘stress testing’ of Devon transport against a 10 fold increase in fuel prices as this might assist in finding out whether the current plans are viable. ▪ All DSP partners should be encouraged to develop green travel plans and, as they are completed, they should be shared so that others can gain from experience and identify areas of good practice. ▪ Ways of providing incentives, as well as disincentives, for greener travel arrangements should be identified. For example the current mileage rates for using private cars are 40p per mile, but only 1p per passenger is added. ▪ Methods should be found to encourage enterprise solutions to travel problems. ▪ Whilst it is believed that the cost of installing light rail solutions is prohibitive, greater use of fast ferry links could assist in reducing the demand on car travel. ▪ Communities should be assisted to identify their own solutions to travel problems. A small amount of funding to support a community network could bring disproportionate benefits. ▪ Transport planning should be based on CO₂ emissions and the production of an evidence base to show where these emissions are currently being produced would help inform future planning decisions. ▪ The need to reduce travel, and the impact of changes to public facilities, should be part of all planning decisions including, for example, the focusing of health provision in a smaller number of sites and the closure of post offices. 				
3	<p><u>Next meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The theme for the next meeting will be ‘Stronger Communities’ ▪ To ensure maximum attendance, the next meeting will be on 31 October at Lucombe House, County Hall. ▪ The need to continue discussions between meetings was discussed and work will be done to identify the best way to facilitate such discussions. 	Nicola Nicola			