

Summary Report 23rd September 2010

Climate South East AGM

Holiday Inn, Woking

Climate SE are a not for profit, regional partnership of organisations from across the public, private and voluntary sectors committed to taking action to tackle the causes and effects of climate change in South East England.

Morning presentations were the usual AGM reports and presentation.

The Future of Adaptation Delivery

Mark Filley, Adapting to Climate Change Team, Defra

There is a significant amount of change within Defra at the moment; obviously concerning the change in ministerial team and the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR). However the new ministers, led by Caroline Spelman, are enthusiastic about the work Defra carries out (more information here: <http://ww2.defra.gov.uk/about/ministers>).

They are currently working on the White Paper - Natural environment: an invitation to shape the nature of England. This is due for publication during 2011.

Measuring progress for improvements will be challenging; fixed targets are not currently in vogue. Additionally outcomes are future based (20-30 years) so delivery will only be understood as successful then; what impacts and how to assess for immediate projects.

The UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) is due to be published soon and this is already a useful international document. The CCRA will draw together evidence and analysis which will enable all UK Administrations to:

- Understand the level of risk (including opportunities as well as threats) posed by climate change for the UK, where risk is a consideration of the likelihood of an impact and the magnitude of the consequences.
- Compare the risks posed by a changing climate with other pressures on the Government
- Prioritise adaptation policy
- Assess the costs and benefits of adaptation actions

This is the first assessment in a series that will be updated in 5 year cycles. As such, it will draw heavily on existing evidence and provide a framework on which future assessments can build

The departmental adaption plan can be found here: <http://ww2.defra.gov.uk/about/our-priorities>.

Defra and the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) are working closely together.

Planning and Climate Change in the New Political Landscape

Sean Rendall, ECSC Ltd

There is significant upheaval in the planning system both nationally, with the abolition of the IPC, and locally as regional spatial strategies are revoked. Opportunities from this include reduced power

of the inspectorate to local plans, freedom to implement local policies and a continued presumption in favour of sustainable developments.

A continued agenda for Climate SE (of which some ties in with GSSE work) is to:

- Public advocacy and education
- Stimulate local involvement and engagement
- Far-sightedness for climate change adaptation
- Ensure climate change on agenda of new Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP's)
- Look towards deliver mechanism

WORKSHOPS

Health Impacts of Climate Change

Imogen Stephens, Department of Health

Determinants of health fall into one of three groups:

Heritable – difficult to influence to effect benefits on individual's health

Proximal – can be influenced although less easily, for example diet, smoking etc.

Built Environment – can be influenced to improve the benefits for individual

All set within context of social inequalities. There is significant scope for creative projects that can hit many different target agendas here.

Economic Impacts of Climate Change

Craig White, ARUP

ARUP have recently been consultants in the North East to study the economic impacts of climate change. In an extensive project the threats and opportunities to various industries were mapped across the region. The report is due to be published soon and will be found here: <http://www.climatenortheast.com>.

Biodiversity Impacts of Climate Change

Sarah Taylor, Natural England

NE has carried out some Vulnerability Assessments – GIS mapping of habitats – that will be more or less vulnerable to the effects of climate change. They will be available soon for general use to influence management plans, value BAP habitats and higher designations and understand exposure and adaptive capabilities.

Sir Crispin Tickell

President of Climate SE

His talk explained that regarding climate change businesses are ahead of the game in comparison to government and local government. He is keen to look at the environment as a whole without distinguishing climate change as separate from the biosphere. Transition will be difficult; the science is far ahead of public awareness in terms of seriousness of the issue. It is a 'long and rickety bridge'.

The Stern Review continues to be an important document for policy makers; although with politics there is a lack of scientific knowledge and a lack of immediacy. He sees a positive influence on the current administration with senior politicians having a greater understanding than others.

Going forward the role of the individual will be increasingly important and there is a need to communicate this to local communities.

Recommended further information can be found:

- New Economics Foundation – <http://www.neweconomics.org>
- Global Footprint Record - <http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN>