

Steering Group Meeting: Minutes



Wednesday 22nd November 2017

Managed in the UK by Severn Wye Energy Agency

These minutes are supported by appendix 1, the presentation used during the meeting.

Item 1(a): Attendees & Apologies

The following members attended the meeting:

Luke Beard (Two Rivers Housing); Victoria Boynton (Severn Wye Energy Agency); Rachel Brain (Severn Wye Energy Agency); Brian Canning (Severn Wye Energy Agency); James Clarke (Severn Eye Energy Agency); Kate Hull (GFirst LEP); Richard Jessup (Stride Treglown); Matt Lennard (Gloucestershire VCS Alliance); Neil Penny (GCC & GCCG); Simon Taylor (Gloucester City Homes); Howard Thomas (Stride Treglown); Paul White (National Landlord's Association); Barry Wyatt (Stroud District Council)

Apologies from:

Mike Brain (Severn Wye Energy Agency); Mary Morgan (GCC & GCCG); Andrew Edwards (Eon Energy); James Griffiths (Gloucester City Homes); George Ridd (SGS Berkeley Green Campus); Chris Rowston (Severn Controls); Chris Short (University of Gloucestershire); Pete Wiggins (GCC)

Additional notes:

Miriam Short (University of Gloucestershire) and Caroline Walker (Cheltenham Borough Homes) will be invited to the next meeting to represent Action 9 and the Oakley aspect of Action 4 respectively.

Item 1(b): Welcome & Review of Progress

Review of Actions

Victoria Boynton (VB) explained the draft nature of the Action Plan and suggested participants review and give feedback on this while it is in this flexible state. She explained that the current draft was a collation of ideas from stakeholders: Steering Group member and relevant stakeholders are able to change any aspect of the plan that they have taken ownership of.

VB explained that the focus of the meeting would be:

- *What do we need to do?*
- *What money do we need to find and where from?*
- *Who is taking forward each action?*

The Action Plan is due to be implemented from September 2018 and we are now beginning a transition period to full stakeholder ownership. Therefore, stakeholders will need to agree and lead on the implementation plans for relevant actions with the support of VB and Severn Wye. VB will be

the coordinator from September 2018 for information flow, transfer, and to monitor progress; unfortunately funding will not support extensive additional support.

VB summarised the activities which have taken place since the meeting in July 2017. These included:

- Producing the: *Topic report on citizen involvement, energy culture and energy poverty*. This has been submitted to the Lead Partners for final edits.
- Submitting contributions for the Innovation Map. Interestingly battery storage, performance analysis, and modular building were, by chance, key foci for the UK submissions.
- Attending the Consortium Meeting in Sweden. Howard Thomas and Richard Jessop joined Severn Wye staff and presented on behalf of the Steering Group: our sincerest thanks go to both Howard and Richard. The meeting demonstrated a good model for stakeholder engagement in ‘change’ using the Cleveland Appreciative Inquiry approach. An introductory video about this method can be found [here](#).

Build2LC links to policy & funds

All Build2LC local actions must link to policy, especially EU Structural Investment Fund (ESIF) Thematic Objective 4 which is the primary project policy instrument. Severn Wye has drafted a map of the local, national and EU links on the diagram below:

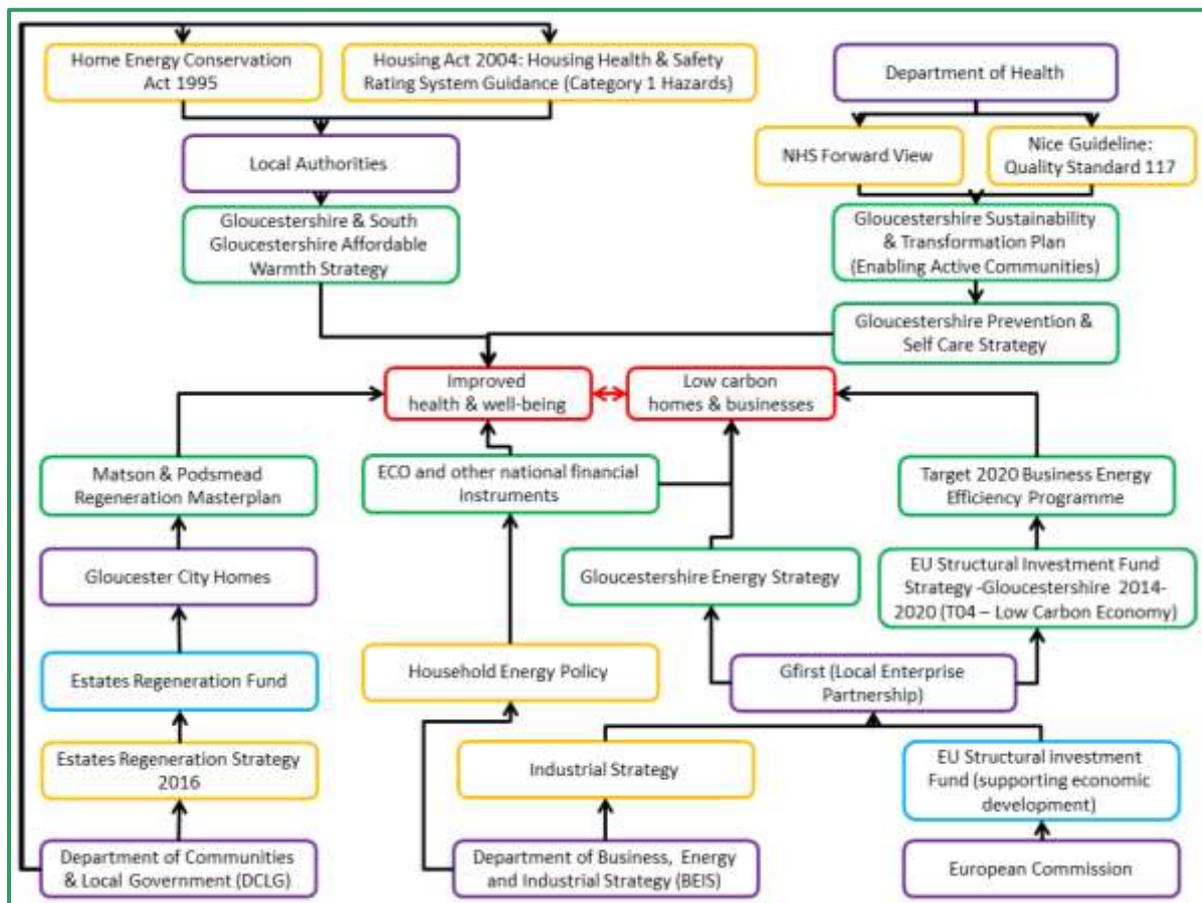


Figure 1: Draft policy map

The group discussed the map and suggested edits that need to be made. These include:

- *Removing 'supporting economic development' from the EU Structural Investment Fund.*
- *Adding 'DEFRA, DWP and DCLG' as 3 branches between the European Commission and EU Structural Investment Fund. Each of these departments is responsible for a section of European Structural Funds.*
- *Add '5 Year' into NHS Forward View.*
- *Add 'Economic well-being' as a central box.*
- *Add 'Better Care Fund' to both the local authority and CCG branch.*
- *Add a legend.*
- *Include the 'Clean Growth Strategy' and 'Each Home Counts'.*
- *Link BEIS, DCLG and LAs directly to ECO.*
- *Under the local authority section, add: 'Building Regulations Part L'; 'Planning & Building Control (efficiency and sustainable buildings)'; 'Building Control Approval' – e.g. to ensure sustainability; 'ES1 Checklist' – This is optional but it gets people to consider options beyond the basic recommendations.*

ACTION: VB and James Clarke to update the policy map and circulate for checking.

ACTION: Neil Penny to ensure health & well-being policy text refers to all relevant documents e.g. Healthy Homes Action Plan.

The need for the local Build2LC Action Plan to influence policy was explained. Influence can take three forms: implementation of a new project; improved governance (how the policy instrument/activity is managed); change in strategic focus of a policy (changing what's done).

ACTION: All to make links to policy and how policy/activity/strategy is 'influenced' in the relevant parts of the Action Plan.

Rachel Brain briefly outlined the Warm Homes Fund: it is likely that additional funds will come in to support retrofit over next 3 years through grants direct to householders.

Linking to Gloucestershire 2014-2020 EU Structural Investment Fund Strategy Thematic Objective 4 (Low Carbon) is particularly important as well as other EU funds and local policy. Kate Hull sees potential in feeding into the new Gloucestershire Energy Strategy which will be a longer term view. Whilst a longer term view is fine, we need to add an action for Energy Strategy development at a local level in conjunction with the Energy Sector Group (LEP) into the Action Plan.

Local authorities also have plans around new build development. It was suggested that this should be linked into the Energy Strategy planning, covering questions around the number of homes and build specification. For example: Should there be more homes of lower specification or not? What are the priorities for retrofit? A link to social landlords should also be included.

ACTION: VB and Kate Hull to add a new action to the plan to include the development of the Energy Strategy.

Item 2: Action Plan Review & Progression

The majority of the meeting was spent reviewing each action with a view to agreeing:

- *Links to policy and funding*
- *Key stakeholders*
- *Developing an implementation plan*
- *Ownership of each action*

Action 1 was reviewed as an example with an emphasis on the need to find action leads. Action implementation will predominantly be focused between September 2018 and August 2020 but a longer term process is ok that will work towards strategic aims e.g. application for funding for projects that will take place later in 2020. Actions can also be timetabled to begin before September 2018.

All action plans will need to be submitted by action leads by **Wednesday 21st February 2018**.

Action 1: Social Prescribing

Draft actions have been suggested. Neil Penny will lead on completing the plan.

Action: Neil Penny to lead the completion of the Action Plan for Action 1.

Action 2: Partnerships with the VCS and public sector

Draft actions have been suggested. VB and Severn Wye will lead on completing the plan with the support of Matt Lennard.

Action: VB to lead the completion of the Action Plan for Action 2. Matt Lennard to support.

Action 3: Action Research for the Housing Database

The nature of the database was discussed with a view to considering the following two approaches:

- a) A database for the community to access all relevant organisations (e.g. via Your Circle).
- b) A database of relevant research demonstrating the links and evidence between housing and health.

There needs to be an idea of what is in place already: 'Your Circle' is being developed and could be the right avenue for part (a). Neil Penny will take this action forward with CCG and GCC.

Action: Neil Penny to lead the completion of the Action Plan for Action 3.

Action 4: Pilot for Growth – Matson and Oakley

Matson: Simon Taylor outlined the Matson & Podsmead Regeneration Masterplan. GCH have funding to create a masterplan which will involve a lot of new build but the plan will also include wider regeneration. The aim will be to dovetail the Build2LC plan with the masterplan and develop both in conjunction. Build2LC will only run for the first two years of the masterplan's implementation so this would be factored in. Build2LC efforts would surround: engagement, training and education of residents and young people; establishing referral and support partnerships; training for installers/contractors; and retrofit. Low carbon elements for new build could also be considered.

Consultation events are currently taking place in the communities. Facilitation that helps residents actually identify their energy issues would be useful in making sure the right issues are raised.

Training to GCH staff and residents could support a greater community focused response to issues of fuel poverty. The principle that occupants need to be understood and that occupants need to have a practical and long term understanding of retrofit and technologies will ensure greater success.

Richard Jessup explained the importance of monitoring, information management, and coordinating retrofit approaches to manage 'knock on effects' of change.

An in depth consideration of the client group is needed to help prevent issues that arise by tenants failing to understand the need for things like ventilation for example. Education will also support this by growing the understanding of how buildings work.

Action: Simon Taylor to establish a joint session with the master planners. (Ideally GCH would take ownership of this part of the plan with support from S.Wye)

Action: Simon Taylor to broaden the scope of 'Matson' to 'Matson & Podsmead' in the action plan.

Oakley: Rachel Brain outlined the Place Based Social Action Fund (Big Lottery Fund) which can provide funding to engage the community to develop the action plan for the area to manage deprivation and preventative care. *Note: The Expression of Interest (EOI) was submitted to the Big Lottery with support from Cheltenham Borough Council and Cheltenham Borough Homes on 28th November 2018.*

Action: VB and Rachel Brain to develop the action plan with CBH and CBC factoring in the outcome of the EOI.

Action: VB to invite a representative from CBC and CBH to the next meeting to ensure Oakley is represented.

Action 5: Education for young people

Action 5 involves three strands:

- a) Launching the Pupils Against Fuel Poverty project (PAFP). Ideally this would be piloted in Matson & Oakley first.
- b) Developing a project with extra-curricular clubs (e.g. a badge for Brownies).
- c) Developing and running a media campaign to target young people.

The PAFP project was shortlisted for the Natwest Skills & Opportunities Fund. *Since the meeting we have found out that the project did not receive the funding so alternative sources will need to be secured.*

Severn Wye will take the lead for Action 5(a) and (b). Neil Penny will lead on (c).

Action: VB and S.Wye to develop the plan for 5(a) and 5(b).

Action: Neil Penny to develop the plan for 5(c).

Action 6: Energy Bank

Rachel Brain briefly outlined the aim to create an Energy Bank as a result of energy generation from new energy sources in Gloucestershire. The group discussed whether other renewable energy generation opportunities could also be part of the bank or that recommendations are made for this. The bank would use 'profits' towards supporting vulnerable consumers with their energy costs.

Other possibilities discussed were:

- Could Ecotricity use the Energy Bank as an established scheme for their CSR responsibility?
- Would this be an option for food waste and anaerobic digestion?
- Follow other examples, utilities like Bristol Energy (set up by BCC) support social action through their tariffs.

Although local authorities are looking at revenue generation from renewables, this is to meet the short fall in core services and they are not necessarily able to use this to support good causes.

Action: Mike Brain to develop Action 6 with Pete Wiggins.

Action: Mike Brain and Pete Wiggins to link Action 6 into the new Gloucestershire Energy Strategy.

Action 7: 0% loan and other financial support

The aim is to develop a 0% loan to support landlords with low EPC rated properties to support retrofit and small measures.

The question of whether students qualify for ECO is still unknown but ECO-flex has a wider remit than just benefit entitlement that can widen the scope to include students. This would enable greater focus on the type of properties and their location rather than the residents.

When deciding where to target the loan, the student landlord situation should be considered; if ECO is not available for these landlords then there may be a market for the loan for student landlords. There is also a need to work on information and advice for students.

Discussions with the Robert Owen Bank are positive but we need to consider the scope: Which properties? Which people? Which areas? Will there be a limit on the money a landlord can secure? How will it be promoted? 10% of the loan pot would be required for management but.....we need money for the pot?

Points discussed include:

- Landlords could provide match to the loan to top up on the funding available to resident.
- It is usually the resident who is eligible for grants not the landlord.
- Landlords may see resident eligibility as a barrier. It would need to be the landlord applying for the loan and be based upon the EPC rating of the property.
- In April 2018 landlords cannot rent out F/G EPC rated properties for new contracts. This may be a market driver initially but the need will diminish as landlords sell off this stock.
- Running the Energy Bank concept in tandem would support the pot.
- At local authority level there seems to be no scope for funding the pot.
- H2020 has some scope for this as a small pilot. Fears around the constant force being applied to improve private properties and where that puts landlords in terms of selling properties and creating further homelessness.
- The Matson Regeneration plan gives opportunity to explore support to the private owned and wider community.
- A range of small measures could be provided through the existing health funding for those with health conditions.

Action: Brian Canning to confirm the grant situation for student landlords and how this fits with EcoFlex.

Action: Mike Brain and Pete Wiggins to consider a 0% loan under the Energy Bank.

Action: VB to reorganise Action 7 to split into 3 actions relevant to: Energy Bank; Matson/Oakley and Social landlords.

Action: Rachel Brain to explore additional funding options for the pot.

Action 8: Formal Partnerships with RSLs and Private Landlords

A formal partnership to support RSLs and Private Landlords will be established to increase communication, and weight, in dealing with utilities and public bodies in order to provide equal access to opportunities.

Two separate partnerships will be established: one for RSLs and one for the private sector.

ACTION: Luke Beard will take the RSL Asset Managers group forward and develop this aspect of the action. The aim is to set up a meeting before Christmas (or very early in January).

ACTION: Paul White and VB to arrange an agenda slot at the NLA meeting on 5th December.

ACTION: Paul White to lead on the private landlord's part of this action.

Action 9: University student and student landlord training programme

A proposed project with the University of Gloucestershire is being considered and a meeting will take place on 4th December. The aim is to prepare first year students to be savvy tenants (e.g. being aware of the energy rating, boiler, ventilation etc of the property) and also to manage their energy bills and behaviours. Student landlords would also be involved.

ACTION: VB and Miriam Webb to lead on the development of action 9.

ACTION: VB to invite Miriam Webb to the next meeting.

Action 10: Upskilling contractors

Action 10 will be progressed under three themes:

- (a) Holistic practitioner module: This module would cover fuel poverty, energy efficiency, plus more technical aspects about ventilation, renewables etc. The module would sit alongside the Level 2 Maintenance Course at SGS in the first instance.
- (b) Berkeley Green & Link to Energy wider installer support: This would include a range of workshops for installers.
- (c) Installation support library: A library of instruction cards for installers.

Trade skills in Gloucestershire are likely to be diminished as contractors find work at the Oldbury plant. Strategic action to address this skills shortage needs to be pushed. *Since the meeting, Kate Hull has sourced some material about the skills shortage (attached).*

George Ridd, Berkeley Green, could not attend the meeting but has since met with VB to discuss the progression of the action plan for 10 (a) and (b).

ACTION: George Ridd to lead the planning for Action 10(a).

ACTION: Neil Towler, S.Wye, to lead on Action 10(b) with the support of George Ridd.

ACTION: Richard Jessup to lead on Action 10(c).

ACTION: VB to contact Kathryn Wagstaff to take the skills shortage question forward with the LEP Skills Group.

Action 11: Upskilling property owners

There was no time to discuss Action 11 directly during the meeting but this may be met by the Guide to Procurers under Action 12 (if targeted at homeowners and landlords). Also, further information may come through from Each Home Counts in terms of marketing the new Quality Mark.

ACTION: VB to agree with Howard Thomas the remit of the Procurers Guide.

ACTION: VB to explore EST material and explore Each Home Counts connections.

Action 12: Procurement

Action 12 is considered under three themes:

- (a) SME advice and support.
- (b) Conduct a Procurement Review with a view to developing a Gloucestershire Procurement Charter.
- (c) Procurers Guide (Should the target audience be residents/landlords or larger organisations?)

Action 12(b) aims to conduct a review and form something like a charter; a procurement group did exist and could be revitalised. The need for the group was discussed and recognised. Further conversations are needed with groups such as LEP, FSB and GVCSA for example as representatives of the smaller business.

The LEP are planning an event to help small businesses understand procurement better; if these become regular then they could support this action.

Accessibility to accreditations and quality marks is also part of the challenge SMEs face in competing for tenders.

The FSB's recent report and recommendations on procurement can be found [here](#).

ACTION: VB to discuss SME procurement with the FSB and see where they can fit into the plan.

ACTION: Kate Hull (and the LEP) to develop Action 12(a) – perhaps in consultation with GCC.

ACTION: Barry Wyatt to speak to Sarah Turner (SDC) to see if Stroud District Council can lead Action 12(b) and inform VB.

ACTION: Howard Thomas to lead Action 12(c).

Action 13: Promotion of accreditation and insurance

There was only discussed briefly during the meeting but the action may be met through existing platforms via SGS and Link to Energy/Warm & Well and Target 2020. Also, further information may come through from Each Home Counts in terms of marketing the new Quality Mark.

ACTION: VB to draft a plan for Neil Towler and George Ridd to agree and take forward.

ACTION: VB to explore Each Home Counts connections.

Action 14: Supporting businesses

There was no time to discuss this action during the meeting but Neil Towler is taking writing the Action Plan for Action 12 to support Target 2020.

ACTION: Neil Towler to lead Action 14.

ACTION: VB to invite Neil Towler to attend the next meeting.

Support for Action Plan development

There is funding to support developing action plans for Actions 1, 3, 4, 5, 11 and 12. *Since the meeting the following arrangements have been made:*

ACTION: Helen Garforth to support Neil Penny on Actions 1, 3 and 5(c) for 6 days.

ACTION: Helen Garforth to support all aspects of Action 12 for 3 days.

ACTION: Helen Garforth to support all aspects of Action 5 (Oakley) for 5 days.

ACTION: VB to invite Helen Garforth to attend the next meeting.

Item 3: Bi-lateral & consortium meetings

Sharing good practice is an important part of the project and a number of Skype good practice meetings will be held over the next couple of months. The bi-lateral meeting to learn about procurement, quality, engagement, financial instruments for large scale retrofit will be held on 16-17th January.

Action leads will be contacted about Skype meetings to see if they would like to join the meeting. Stakeholders are also invited to join the meeting in Lithuania – travel and accommodation will be paid.

Key stakeholders will also be needed to attend the consortium meeting in Slovenia on 13-14th March.

ACTION: VB to contact the Lead Partner to find out which stakeholders are needed for the Slovenian consortium meeting.

ACTION: All – contact VB urgently if you would like to learn from the Lithuanian partners.

The next meeting will be held on **28th February 2018** from **10am – 1pm**. All action plans will need to be submitted to VB by **Wednesday 21st February 2018**.