

CAMBRIDGESHIRE HORIZONS

Agenda Item No: 8c

Renewable Energy awareness raising campaign

To: **Horizons Main Board**

Date: **1st July 2010**

From: **Laura Halstead**

Purpose: **FOR DECISION: (FD)**

Board Members are asked to approve the proposed renewable energy awareness raising campaign.

Recommendation: For Board Members **to approve** the following renewable energy awareness raising campaign, and to decide whether they would like policy issues and retrofitting to be included within the scope of the strategy.

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1.0 Background

1.1 The provision of renewable energy solutions in new developments will become more and more prevalent over the coming years to help meet Government standards on Renewable Energy and reducing carbon emissions as set out in the Code for Sustainable Homes and the emerging code for non-domestic buildings means that community scale renewable energy infrastructure, alongside micro-renewables, will become more available.

1.2 In order to allow local residents to make informed decisions at public consultation events where renewable energy is an element, Cambridgeshire Horizons has worked in partnership with renewable energy specialists Renewables East to create a general education and awareness raising campaign for all types of renewable energy.

1.3 Renewable Energy is a catch all term covering a range of green and efficient source of heating, cooling and/or power. Such energy sources can deliver significant consumer and environmental benefits at a relatively stable price. With a range of major mixed-use and smaller housing only development schemes proposed across the County, the adoption of renewable energy technologies would bring significant economic and environmental benefits to Cambridgeshire.

1.4 A number of development sites are moving forward through the planning process, and there are real opportunities inherent in the growth agenda, including:

- Northstowe has been shortlisted as an eco-town.
- Work is progressing on a potential eco-quarter for St Neots.
- The development of the Hive.

1.5 All of this means this is a good time to raise the profile of renewable energy, and in particular the potential of large-scale solutions such as Combined Cooling Heat and Power (CCHP), and to dispell myths around smaller scale technologies, such as wind power and energy from waste.

2.0 Links to earlier work

2.1 In 2009 we carried out a renewable energy survey, which highlighted a number of keys issues that required further work. In total, 29% of respondents said

they only had an average or poor knowledge of renewable energy, yet 38% said they were interested in renewable energy specifically within new communities.

2.2 Following on from the survey, Cambridgeshire received funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Housing Growth Fund (HGF) which created the Low Carbon Development Initiative (LCDI). Part of the funding agreement was a commitment to raise awareness of renewable energy within the county. Therefore, Renewables East invited us to work with them on an awareness raising campaign that would involve all relevant partners within the county.

2.3 Since first forming this strategy, we have circulated the proposal to the Cambridgeshire Partnership Communications Group and received feedback from some local authorities on the strategy, including further opportunities to work together on specific campaigns. We also circulated a draft version of this strategy to Board members for initial feedback, and will also present the draft strategy to the Climate Change Partnership on Monday 28th June.

3.0 Scope of work

We have not yet included any work relating to individual local authority's policy issues or retrofitting as suggested by some partners, because this could be seen as being beyond the remit of Horizons. However, we would very much welcome the opportunity to work with partners to promote these elements as a part of the overall campaign if Board members thought this appropriate. For example, we could include further information on local authority adopted planning policy and retrofit options within press releases and other communications.

4.0 Key Objectives of the campaign

These objectives have been considered by the Partnership Communications Group, and are provided for Board views:

1. To raise public awareness of different types of renewable energy.
2. To position Cambridgeshire as a leader within the renewable energy sector.
3. To educate young people about the benefits of renewable energy, in the context of new developments, via youth teams and schools.
4. To provide members of the public with the knowledge they require to make informed comments about renewable energy solutions via the appropriate public consultation events.

5. To improve the public perception of large scale renewable energy solutions, such as Combined Cooling, Heat and Power (CCHP) systems and dispel myths relating to smaller scale solutions.
6. To link in with Cambridge Science Week.

5.0 Outline Plan

To raise awareness of renewable energy within new developments across Cambridgeshire we will utilise the following methods:

1. A two-month renewable energy PR campaign for Cambridgeshire
2. A public event and exhibition as a part of Cambridge Science Week
3. Provision of multi-media content for use at the exhibition and online via Horizons, YouTube and partner websites
4. A public relations campaign
5. Promotion of the 2009 Renewable Energy Survey Results
6. A small-scale Renewable Energy Survey to focus on key issues for local people
7. CCHP education pack created for schools, followed by other packs as required
8. Extensive work with partners to integrate other related programmes of work with this overall campaign, including developers
9. Participation in Community Forums as appropriate

5.1 Details on these individual elements can be found in Appendix A.

6.0 Next Steps

6.1 To ensure our place within Cambridge Science Week we need to commence work as soon as possible, therefore swift feedback on the draft Strategy would be most appreciated.

6.2 We will also be working closely with the Cambridgeshire Partnership Communications Group, which comprises officer representatives from the six Local Authorities, HCA, Cambridgeshire Police, Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue, NHS Cambridgeshire and an affordable housing representative.

6.3 We would look to engage with key Parish Councils by offering a renewables energy specialist to attend a forthcoming meeting. Ensuring this fits in with the wider engagement with Parish Councils that is being carried out by the Local Authorities.

7.0 Budget

This campaign will primarily be funded by money allocated to Renewables East to raise awareness and understanding of renewable energy technology. Cambridgeshire Horizons will provide a small amount of funding to cover the costs of creating the animated video, and will support with some staff time.

8.0 Evaluation

We will evaluate the success of the campaign throughout, via the following means:

- Media monitoring and evaluation of PR coverage achieved
- Number of people visiting specific web pages
- Number of people viewing video
- Number of schools utilising the digi-guide/s and/or video
- Obtaining a slot at Science Week
- Number and quality of interview requests received by Horizons and our partners on this topic
- Quantity and quality of re-tweets and new followers on Twitter

9.0 Recommendations

As per the cover sheet.

Appendix A: The Detail

Renewable energy campaign for Cambridgeshire

In partnership with the local authorities and Renewables East we hope to launch an awareness raising programme to position Cambridgeshire as the UK leader in green developments. As part of the project we will seek to raise awareness of the benefits that renewable energy, such as CCHP, wind and energy from waste, can bring as part of new housing schemes. The programme will focus on the benefits to individuals and the community, the environment, and the regional economy.

The programme will be tailored for use in each area, e.g. focussing on the major growth sites in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, on the growth St Neots and eco-housing in Huntingdonshire, and looking more to future career opportunities and cost benefits in Fenland, and utilise case studies where possible.

The campaign will utilise PR, social media (such as Twitter and YouTube), the Horizons website and events to engage with local residents and businesses. This two-month long campaign will be the start of the ongoing PR campaign.

A public event and exhibition as a part of Cambridge Science Week 2011

Every year Cambridge University organises the highly successful Cambridge Science Week, and what better time to raise awareness of the science behind renewable energy? We will liaise with the University to offer a public exhibition explaining the science behind different types of renewable energy, which will be supported by a public exhibition, most likely to be based somewhere in Cambridge. Science Week will take place as the finale to the overall PR and awareness raising campaign.

The public will be able to find out more about renewable energy via the exhibition, and see what a home with renewable energy solutions fitted would really look like. Experts will be on hand to answer any queries people may have, and we will also be capturing local views on renewable energy as a whole.

Provision of multi-media content for use at the exhibition and online

A short animated film will be produced to explain renewable energy technology targeted to a wide audience of all age groups, utilising simple language and graphics to convey this quite complex topic. The film will cover all different types of renewable energy solutions, focussing on CCHP as a main case study example.

The film will be used at the public exhibition, posted online, and also shared with schools as a part of the education pack. Partners will also have full access to the film, and will be able to upload it onto their website as required.

A public relations campaign

An integrated PR campaign will be used to raise awareness of the nine month long campaign (building up to Science Week next year), including regular press releases on a range of topics to promote the public talk and exhibition, and any other related partner activity.

The campaign will primarily be targeted at the Cambridgeshire local media, with trade and national media as a secondary target group. Social media will also be used to further raise awareness of the campaign.

A core group of spokespeople will be identified (who can explain renewable energy options without too much jargon) and put forward for interviews.

Key messages and targeted media lists will be worked up via the Cambridgeshire Partnership Communications Group.

Promotion of the 2009 Renewable Energy Survey Results

In 2009 Cambridgeshire Horizons carried out a survey into public attitudes towards the use of renewable energy within major new developments. The results of this survey will form a large part of the PR campaign, and will also feed into the public exhibition/s and talk/s.

A small-scale Renewable Energy Survey to focus on key issues for local people

New data captured from this awareness raising programme will become an extension of the survey previously undertaken to further enhance the data we have already collected.

CCHP education pack created for schools

Together with the animated video a downloadable digi-guide (available on CD or via the web, and potentially distributed in partnership with the Cambridgeshire Environmental Education Service) will be created. The CCHP guide and accompanying fact sheet will be simple enough for it to be used as an educational

resource by secondary schools, as well as other youth and community groups. We will also look to expand this guide format to other technologies going forward as required.

Extensive work with partners to integrate other related programmes of work with this overall campaign

To maximise the reach of the awareness campaign we are keen to work closely with our partners and developers to help promote more localised plans, strategies and events. For example, the work at the SmartLife Centre and the Hive could be used as case studies for the public exhibition, online and within our PR campaign.