

CAN Executive Meeting Minutes

16 July 2015 @ 10:30 am
London Borough of Camden Town Hall

Present:

Darsh Chauhan	(DCh)	CAN National Secretariat & Vice Chair, East Midlands CAN
Hazel Hill	(HH)	Vice Chair of South East CAN
Paul Hinsley	(PH)	Chair, HECA East
John Kolm-Murray (Chair)	(JKM)	National CAN Chair
Karen Lond	(KL)	Chair of East Midlands CAN
Rachel Jones	(RJ)	Chair of West Midlands CAN
Carol White	(CW)	Chair of South East CAN
David Colbourne	(DCo)	Chair of North West CAN
Aidan Davis	(AD)	CAN National Secretariat

Guests, arriving at lunch:

Joanne Straw	(JS)	Local Government Association
Pedro Guertler	(PG)	Association for the Conservation of Energy

Apologies:

Rob Leeson	(RL)	CAN National Secretariat
Neil Short		Chair of SW CAN
Emma Quest		Vice Chair of South West CAN
Leanne Jones		Vice Chair CAN Cymru Housing
Craig Anderson		Warm Wales

1. Welcome and Introductions

JKM welcomed the group and introductions were made.

2. Minutes from previous meeting and matters arising

1.1 There were no amendments suggested for the previous Executive and AGM meeting minutes.

Matters arising from previous minutes (16 April 2015):

- 1.2 (Item 1.9) CAN probably won't return to being called HECA, but the issue still needs revisiting and will be added to agenda for October.
- 1.3 (Item 5.2) Peter Smith from NEA was not invited as we already had three guests; He will be considered as a guest for the October Exec meeting.
- 1.4 Certain Local Authorities were invited to apply for Warmth-on-Prescription funding. The LAs receiving funding are:
East Riding of Yorkshire Council, Blackburn with Darwen Council, Derbyshire Local Authority Energy Partnership, Derby City Council, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council, Wigan Council, Preston City Council, Blackpool Council, Amber Valley Borough Council, London Borough of Islington.
- 1.5 There is a feeling that non-core cities are being ignored by central government in devolution issues; favouritism is being displayed towards the biggest cities.

3. (Re) Election of Deputy Chair and Director

- 2.1 JKM Chaired the elections process
- 2.2 DCo was nominated for the role of Vice Chair, and was elected unopposed.

- 2.3 RJ was nominated for the role of Director
- 2.4 DCh confirmed that there were no issues with her eligibility due to her not being employed directly by a Local Authority.
- 2.5 RJ was elected unopposed as Director.

4. Dates and venues of 2015/16 Executive meetings and AGM

- 4.1 Dates have been confirmed for the next year's CAN Executive meetings and rooms booked as follows:
 - Thursday, 15 October 2015 - N.B to be held at 5 Pancras Square
 - Thursday, 14 January 2016
 - Thursday, 14 April 2016 (AGM)
 - Thursday, 14 July 2016All meetings rooms have been booked between 10:00 (for a 10:30 start) to 14:00 and will be held at Camden Town Hall, except for 15 October 2015, which will be held at 5 Pancras Square, London N1C 4AG.

5. Memorandum and Articles of Association

- 5.1 DCh stated that CAN is looking at updating its Memorandum of Association; there are a mixture of minor changes and corrections, and bigger issues were also discussed such as rebranding and membership criteria.

Actions

- **RL to add re-branding to the agenda for October meeting**
- **RL to add Chair's Update as regular agenda item**

6. Secretariat update - DCh

- 6.1 CAN has continued to operate without sponsorship over the last three months, using its reserves. The Secretariat have been chasing the bad debts owed, and from 2014 CAN is now only owed £424, having collected nearly £8,000, so it been successful. eRAD still owe around £300 but they seem to have gone bust and are uncontactable. DC suggested we chase them up one last time, and then wipe out their debt if it is still uncollected. The same applies with Ian Dakin and Anna Crosby.
- 6.2 The latest e-bulletin has gone out and the news magazine will go out in August. The most that has been offered for sponsorship is £700, which would not cover printing costs. A package including a workshop could be negotiated, but without more sponsorship, the magazine will not be printed. CAN is also looking for conference sponsorship and is considering offering different packages and levels of support.
- 6.3 The next conference will be on 2 September in Islington. DC will be paying for it out of his funds, as it is important to keep the events going. We will look for sponsors to help with the cost. RL will count exhibitor and delegate fees towards income for national CAN. William Baker is confirmed as a speaker and DECC have been contacted, although they are being elusive. Brenda Boardman and Amber Rudd have also been contacted, and members are asked to suggest speakers and workshops.
- 6.4 The CAN awards will be held and nominations have been sent out. A lifetime achievement award may also be given. The awards will go ahead with or without a sponsor.
- 6.5 There will be a second event in November in the north. British Gas were in discussions about sponsorship but do not want to give any money. DCh has asked if they could instead provide conferencing facilities and food free of charge, as they have facilities in Newcastle and Leeds. It would be good to have an event in the north to reinforce the network there.

- 6.6 HH asked if it would be the same as the September conference. DC said that the policy based items should be the same, but other sections and speakers could differ. JKM suggested a Scottish government speaker as an option, possibly an MP/MSP.
- 6.7 DCh asked if a member's survey should be carried out this year, as a survey was already done for the letter to parties earlier in the year. It was agreed that as the government has changed it would be useful, but that we should wait to see the government's new policies and autumn budget first. DCo suggested relating it to measuring performance of HECA officers, showing their usefulness and the resources they bring in, but there may be issues with how this would be done, and how the results would be interpreted. It was agreed that it would be best to carry out the survey at the end of the year, ready for the February training day.
- 6.8 DCh has sent out a Mark Group proposals and asked for comments via email. Some concerns were expressed about the work between Mark Group and LAs.
- 6.9 CW said that SSE sponsors SE CAN, and will pass their contact details to DCh.
- 6.10 A follow-up letter is to be sent to the new government, raising concerns about their environmental policies. The letter to Amber Rudd will ask about funding, and who is now responsible for HECA and FP. Members are to come up with topics of concern and email them to DCh
- 6.11 ACTIONS**
- **DCh to chase bad debts for the last time, then right them off if necessary**
 - **ALL to suggest speakers for conferences**
 - **RL to put Member's Survey on Agenda for October Executive meeting**
 - **ALL to send comments about Mark Group proposals to DCh**
 - **ALL to email topics for follow up letter to government to DCh**

7. Chairs Report - JKM

Engaging with the Public Health Agenda

- 7.1 JKM attended a British Gas workshop on GP engagement with cold homes issues with GP Tim Ballard, who is looking at two-click GP referral systems.
- 7.2 Seven areas have been given a share of £1 million to both target energy efficiency improvements and carry out evaluation of programmes.
- 7.3 Following on from the successful Fuel Poverty workshops in London and Leicester JKM has been asked to do another in Durham in November, sponsored by Keepmoat, which will be a morning seminar.

Local Delivery and Community Energy

- 7.4 Citizens Advice would like a joint conference on local delivery with CAN in October in Islington.
- 7.5 DECC will be getting a big funding cut to everything but nuclear decommissioning. The Green Deal may be scrapped, and has been called a disaster by Policy Exchange. It's not known what will happen with ECO.
- 7.6 DCLG are interested in local delivery, but DECC has concerns about the value for money local authorities provide. CAN needs to put in a response. A meeting with Gareth Baynhem-Hughes, DECC deputy director on FP, is needed to discuss what DECCs issues are. It was agreed that it should be made clear that it is not the fault of local authorities that programmes have failed due to them following central government rules and problems with funding. CAN also has concerns about charities and private businesses ability to deliver programmes to a high enough quality and take the place of local authorities
- 7.7 JKM will be meeting the head of the Energy Managers Association, and would like CAN to improve its links with other organisations in general.

Branding

- 7.8 RJ suggested that if a name change is made it should be as soon as possible to cut down on confusion.
- 7.9 JKM said that the name CAN does not describe what the network does, and it should be changed in order to be more descriptive and focus more on representing local energy officers. It was suggested the words Local, Energy and Officers should be included in a new name to reflect this, as well as looking at the acronym and other potential issues.
- 7.10 All members were asked to come up with ideas and pass these on to JKM. It was also agreed that all CAN members need a chance to give their input.
- 7.11 Changing the networks legal name would be more difficult, so it may be easier just to change the trading name again.

8. Representation, Consultations and Policy

Off Gas Grid meetings

- 8.1 June meeting was cancelled, possibly due to government changes. There have been issues with network mapping information and the legalities of sharing it.
- 8.2 Another issue is that the group is also a spin-off of FPAG, which is not currently running and it is not known who is on it. We need to find out who the new FPAG members are, in order to be able to lobby them. There was also concern about some of the organisations who are running it.

Other business

- 8.3 JKM put in a bid to the Eaga Charitable Trust for the online health repository, but it was rejected, although they said it was a strong and interesting bid. JKM is now talking to Ashton about it.
- 8.4 DCo mentioned the private rented sector and issues with the new rules on EPCs and the right to ask landlords for them. Unfortunately Trading Standards do not treat it as a priority.

Craig Anderson's Flint FP Energy Hub Invitation

- 8.5 JKM asked if anyone was close enough to attend the Warm Wales Event, DCo said he would check his diary, and make sure someone from the North West can attend.

8.6 ACTIONS

- **ALL need to come up with ideas for re-branding and pass on to JKM**
- **Need to find out who the new members of FPAG are**
- **Dco to find someone from NW CAN to attend meeting in Flint**

9. Regional Updates

9.1 Emailed update from Neil Short, SW CAN Chair

Details of any meetings held and/or forthcoming:

- 9.2 SW CAN Forum meeting held in Taunton on 2 June 2015.
- 9.3 Issues discussed included Renewable Heat Incentive and biomass opportunities, Fuel Poverty Strategy, the NEA 'Redressing the Balance' Fund and Bristol City Council Energy Service/EU Green Capital 2015.

9.4 Emailed update from Karen Lond, EM CAN Chair

Details of any meetings held and/or forthcoming:

- 9.5 The next EMCAN meeting is on 20 July at Ashfield District Council; lunch is sponsored by the Starfish Group and the venue has been supplied free by Ashfield District Council.
- 9.6 Speakers include Peter Smith from NEA giving us a policy update; Stuart Aldridge from PHE around air quality issues in the East Midlands and a Chairs briefing. Our hosts and meeting sponsors will be presenting on delivering government and energy company supported energy efficiency schemes which will include a site visit after lunch.
- 9.7 The following meeting is scheduled for the last week in September 2015.
- 9.8 EMCAN is continuing to try to secure sponsorship

Details of any other events held and/or forthcoming:

- 9.9 17 April - Health, Planning and Environment Learning Forum for the East Midlands at Leicester City Hall, Leicester – possibility of making links to CAN – passed on contact details for West Midlands – awaiting further progress.
- 9.10 13 May – Securing Health Services Funding to address cold homes at British Gas Conference Centre, Aylestone Road, Leicester – delegates found meeting very useful and it was well attended.
- 9.11 NEA East Midlands Fuel Poverty Forum was held on Thursday 25th June at Ellipse Energy Limited (their new sponsors), Leicester – it is understood that all future forums will be held in Leicester.

9.12 Emailed update from Rachel Jones, WM CAN Chair

Details of any meetings held and/or forthcoming:

- 9.13 Last meeting held on 16 April, hosted by Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council and sponsored by Matilida's Blanket. The Meeting focused on New IWI product, gas connections, NICE Guidance, FP Strategy and funding options, e.g. CHF, WarmZones etc.

9.14 Sub regional Local Authority and housing association meeting 30 July will be held at Ettington Chase conference centre, near Stratford on Avon. The initial part of the meeting will be an update on current Local Authorities and housing projects and how we can work closer in partnership. The second part of the session will be speakers from Western Power Distribution to look at their social obligations and Eon to discuss Smart Meters and Affinity Deals for social housing. Eon are offering trials for PPM Smart Meter roll out and have developed a tariff stream the same as any other householder would be able to access.

Details of any current projects:

9.15 Following on from the meeting in April, where we discussed working together on bids, I arranged a series of follow up meetings to look at a joint bid for the CHF. The final application led to a bid value of £6.6million of which was a combination of DECC funding from the CHF pot and Warm Zones. The bid area was made up of 20 Local Authorities across the West Midlands. We are still awaiting the outcome of this bid.

9.16 At least five authorities have also put bids in to NEA's fund a couple of which are joint bids and a number of partnerships have put substantial bids together for BG's fund.

Any other comments, e.g. issues or barriers:

9.17 Delivering the Green Deal Communities bid is still challenging, trying to work with DECC to extend timescales of sign-ups past the September deadline as completion of works deadline is not until end of March.

9.18 Still health barriers to accessing funding, challenges around two tier structure and public health sitting in higher tier. Need to raise the importance of NICE etc. Interesting structures around social subscribing using local volunteer centre and funding from CCG to deliver outcomes, earlier indications are positive, fuel poverty agenda just being added to training of the specialist volunteers for them to refer.

9.19 Emailed update from David Colbourne, NW CAN Chair

9.20 Details of any meetings held and/or forthcoming:

No meetings held

9.21 Details of any other events held and/or forthcoming:

None, possibility of a quarterly meeting in September/ October

9.22 Details of any current projects:

None

9.23 Any other comments, e.g. issues or barriers:

NWCAN had agreed a sponsorship agreement that included a secretariat. Unfortunately, the potential sponsor has withdrawn both. As a result NWCAN is seeking a new sponsor, which limits activity in the short term. Also, Stuart Pye (Vice Chair) has taken over basic secretariat roles

Emailed update from Carol White, SE CAN Chair

9.24 Details of any meetings held and/or forthcoming:

Our last meeting was held on 19th May 2015 at Rushmore Borough Council. The meeting was a Bid Writing Workshop held by IDOX training services. This is the 3rd year SE CAN has been able to offer a free workshop to members. This was an excellent course and was well received by members. The feedback was all positive with the exception of a few comments that it was not long enough.

Due to the time constraints we did not have a formal meeting and therefore no regional updates were provided.

9.25 Details of any other events held and/or forthcoming:

Our next meeting will be held on 8th September at Aylesbury Vale District Council

9.26 Details of any current projects:

Most of our network is working on the GDCF projects
Completing Greenhouse Gas Reports
Completing/completed HECA reports

Full update will be provided after our next meeting

9.27 Any other comments, e.g. issues or barriers:

Most members would like clarity from central government regarding fuel poverty and also the next round of ECO 2

Jo Straw, Local Government Association

- 8.1 The LGA have been looking into innovation in energy efficiency and renewable and low carbon energy generation to help achieve income and savings across Local Authorities, and have been expanding their scope on the issue.
- 8.2 They have produced a report with Verco looking into finance, savings and energy efficiency, in order to give councils the tools to understand the benefits of energy efficiency and help to generate political will to tackle the problem. The report includes various tools and graphs to illustrate possible savings
- 8.3 Q – This will go out of date very fast; new tariff rules will be set by the time the report is released.
- 8.4 A – The LGA will try to keep it dynamic, and have considered the legal and political framework. Part of the report will be kept electronic so it can easily be updated.
- 8.5 Q – This research has been done under Carbon Management previously, focussing on quick wins, is this a repeat?
- 8.6 A – That information has been incorporated; this report focusses more on building the spend-to-save business case.
- 8.7 Q – Have you linked carbon with money savings? Some local authorities have targets on Carbon, so in some cases it is more likely to be a motivator and it helps to have it to show to councillors.
- 8.8 A – The LGA is aware of the link. A lot of the information on carbon is already available, unlike the information on monetary savings. Given the funding gap many councils are facing, the LGA wanted to produce something that evidences the savings/income potential so councils are aware of this different type of benefit. Energy efficiency or energy generation programmes could act as future-proofing, in case new locally binding targets for carbon are set. LGA is trying to keep the report succinct.
- 8.9 Q – Carbon does influence many local authorities; we need to point out how it will affect them.
- 8.10 A – Those Local Authorities open to information about carbon are already aware of environmental savings, but less likely to be aware of money savings.
- 8.11 Q – What did you look at in the report?
- 8.12 A – A balance of cost, payback, efficiency potential etc. All sorts of measures. The risk appetite of local authorities and different tiers of council.
- 8.13 Q – Are suggested measures based on a short / medium / long term outlook?
- 8.14 A – Yes, and they are colour coded to clearly show this and to allow Local Authorities to rank them.
- 8.15 Q – The biggest barriers are politician's perception of public opinion due to vocal minorities. Have you included evidence to show the true scale of public support?
- 8.16 A – The LGA are aware of this, although sometimes there is big public opposition. It is included, and they have worked with Whitehall in Industry Group (WIG) on this. The LGA and WIG are jointly hosting events looking at stakeholder engagement both internal and external to the council and building the financial business case. The events are free for council officers working on energy efficiency or energy generation to attend.
- 8.17 Q – Essex produced a similar report on their estate, would it be worth sending over.
- 8.18 A – Yes, it is worth having a conversation
- 8.19 Q – Does the report include case studies?
- 8.20 A – Yes, Verco have sought to identify new case studies.

Pedro Guertler – Association for the Conservation of Energy

- 8.21 Current energy efficiency programmes haven't worked well and there are no links between local services and fuel poverty. ACE have reviewed the literature, surveyed local authorities, conducted interviews and held workshops looking at home energy and the gap between programmes and need to produce recommendations.
- 8.22 ACE are recommending that local authorities in England are given responsibility for domestic energy and related programmes, for example changing ECO to a levy and distributing funds nationally, with 80% allocation by need and 20% to be bid for. The funding should not be

- prescriptive. They are also recommending a national body is made responsible for supporting those in fuel poverty, to provide guidance to local authorities.
- 8.23 There is currently uncertainty due to government change, and there are questions about ECO, the smart meter rollout and DECC and central governments priorities.
- 8.24 ACE are keen for a five-year pilot with mixed local authorities with high need, and guaranteed funding to sustain it. There could also be issues with variable delivery across authorities and procurement, but a longer-term programme should help with these.
- 8.25 Q – DECC haven't done five-year programmes before, will that stop them supporting this?
- 8.26 A – Its true that nothing is set, but the government have said they are willing to think radically, so they may consider it. What else can we do, we know that current models don't work, so we should be ready if they do ask for long-term proposals.
- 8.27 DCo stated that regular programmes would be cheaper, more efficient and allow training and learning on procurement and implementation without relying on big companies. PH said that DECC need to be aware of local authorities' procedure and provide guidance. KL suggested that a block state aid exemption would be useful, to avoid local authorities being blamed for breaking rules. RJ said that government procurement rules were overly complex, which could be a barrier.
- 8.28 Q – DECC will raise objections about local authorities not being good enough, despite their rules often being the issue, and variability in delivery, so it would be good for smaller districts to group together. We need to find out DECCs objections, why they prefer private and charity groups and make sure there is a lead officer for all areas.
- 8.29 A – There needs to be a legal requirement for this, and we need to look into allocations and grouping to ensure it works. DECC learned the wrong lessons from GDC and this could help change their minds.
- 8.30 JKM asked if we needed a pilot, this is how Scotland operates and it's working and is DECC aware of this? DCo suggested there should be an obligation for good local authorities to mentor others. PG said that this is why a support network is needed. DCo suggested failing local authorities could have their programmes taken over by others.
- 8.31 Q – Will recommendations change due to the change in government from when the report was being written?
- 8.32 A – They are mostly the same, the emphasis on certain aspects may change but the proposals are budget agnostic and don't make overly specific recommendations.

11. AOB

- 9.1 PG also asked for views on business rate retention for efficient companies, based on DECCs business energy efficiency landscape review and rates exemptions for fracking. It was suggested that it would favour cities unfairly and be hard to work out, as well as being outside CANs remit to respond to.

12. Date of next meeting

- 10.1 The next meeting will be held on 15 October 2015 at 5 Pancras Square London N1C 4AG.