

WM HECA Forum Steering Group

Minutes – 15th September 2004

Present: Angie Madden, Wolverhampton
Chris Winter, Borough of Telford & Wrekin
Ellie Cooper, LASP
Graham Jones, South Shropshire (Chair)
Keith Bennett, Hestia (Secretary)
Les Craggs, Oswestry
Neil Morton
Steve Winmill, Herefordshire (on behalf Stuart Davies)

1) **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Stuart Davies, Tracy Dexter, Phil Brundrett and Mandy Findlay. Also Bill Johnson, Coventry City Council was unable to make the meeting to discuss the 10th Conference.

2) **Minutes of last meeting**

No funding has been given to the regional HECA Forums, only for the UK Secretariat. Following a tender process for UK Secretariat, the contract was awarded once again to Leicester.

SG queries whether minutes still needed to be sent to UK Forum as there is no formal contract this financial year? **Action: EC**

Accepted as an accurate record.

3) **Financial position and budget**

There is no funding/budget for this financial year.

10th HECA Conference:

Total cost estimated as £3500

- Coventry have suggested they can contribute £1000 from next years budget
- Energy supplier sponsor approached for £1000-1500
- Potentially £1000 short of the total cost

The Steering Group would be keen to see that Coventry are committed to underwriting the cost of the conference (excepting any sponsorship support). The benefits of hosting a conference are significant and it is hoped would support this commitment.

Hestia is a significant contributor to the conferences through event management services and is strategically active enough to continue to provide this level of support. However, underwriting the additional conference costs is an additional burden that Hestia would be unwilling to accept without further discussion.

SG suggests that a part-formal proposal needs to be put to the council, establishing the principles of hosting a conference in a local authority area and the financial support needed.

Hestia to contact Bill Johnson (Coventry City Council) with the message that the SG is very keen to host the conference at the motor museum which appears to be an ideal venue. KB to send draft letter to GJ

Action: KB

Hestia hope to gain up to £2,000 from other sponsors, Coventry will also contact local car manufacturers to see if they are interested in linking into the event as it is being held at the Motor Museum. The council also suggested charging exhibitors and this is something that will be followed up in association with Hestia.

An alternative is to charge delegates for attendance. The SG is reluctant to do this for a variety of reasons.

Funding for SG meetings:

There is no funding from EST for meetings and the SG are therefore dependent on the offer of free venues (GOWM) or support from others e.g. Hestia.

It was agreed that due to the fact that EST is no longer funding the regional Forums, there can be no control over the Forum itself and therefore frequency of meetings and agenda can be decided by the SG membership.

Possibilities for funding for Forum:

- From regional agencies? e.g. Regional Assembly (Regional Energy Office?)
- Charging HECA Officers for membership? Problem is then what the members get for their membership and also the ethos of the Forum when set up was that Officers were not charged. It appears unlikely that the Forum could be treated as a commercial venture.

Energy Events Calendar:

KB has asked LASP to look into setting up the energy events calendar GOWM used to produce on a monthly basis. The LASP has already contacted a number of regional agencies and has their support (WMRA, LGA, AWM). This could be a good item to brand under the WM HECA Forum.

The calendar could be set up via a website but this would incur a cost. However, a service offering regular updates, conference information and links to legislative updates and sources of funding could be valued a may be a commercial proposition for Hestia with funding support.

GJ to speak to other Forum Chairs at the next UK meeting and ask what their approach is this year

Action: GJ

4) **Steering Group membership**

There has been no additional interest since the last meeting although SG would welcome additional members is there is any interest.

SG would also like to encourage existing members to send a representative in their place when unable to attend.

5) **Planning issues**

10th HECA Conference:

Theme Future / planning of HECA
 Social issues (fuel poverty) always good topics

General 'futures' topic? Looking forward...HECA, FP, demographics, climate change, changing hearts and minds etc.
Energy efficiency / DHS in the private sector

Need to make sure the title portrays a housing theme as the proposed venue is a motor museum.

Avoid HECA in the title as government may propose to change this later in the year.

Potential speakers key note – RES perspective, as RES will be published by 2005
Key questions How do you involve the householder and sustain involvement?
Local authorities need to be given inspiration to enable them to start working towards targets – do not want to tell HECA Officers the obvious.

Finalised date for 10th HECA Conference: **Wednesday 13 April 2005**

Any further ideas for a theme for the conference can be sent via email to EC.

Note: Subsequent to the meeting it has been proposed that the Conference is along the following lines:

A Glimpse of the Future:

Who is driving sustainable energy development in housing?

6) UK HECA Forum update

UK SG meeting to take place in Birmingham next week at IoDhub

Last meeting in June:

- Energy Advice Handbook (previously known as the heating advice handbook), produced by Energy Inform – WM HECA SG surprised that this hasn't been produced as a web-based resource especially because of the updates needed and cost involved in printing.
- Energy Efficiency Project Integration. UK want regional Forums to use their next meeting as an opportunity to brief members on this piece of work. UK proposes half a day is needed in order to do this and some money will be available to fund the session. Regional forums are to run the session – WM SG suggests Hestia does this at the next SG meeting, 15 December and host it at The Orange Studio. EC to organise with the venue and coordinate with UK secretariat

Action: EC

GJ to resend details of presentations to EC

Action: GJ

Note: This presentation has now been finalised with the UK Secretariat and IoDhub, off Victoria Sq. Birmingham. It will take place on the 15th December, following a morning meeting of the SG. Impetus consultants will be running the session. UK HECA has allocated £300 per regional Forum but has agreed to also cover the additional cost of hiring a venue in the West Midlands.

- UK HECA Conference – reduced cost for delegates resulted in higher attendance this year. UK Fora has rejected Enacts 3-year conference proposal. Next conference to take place in Bournemouth.
- Beacon status – deadline for submissions passed.

- HECA qualifications – SG asked GJ to include this on the UK SG agenda next week. A small group has been set up to carry out further research and any regional HECA Officers can be involved in the group.
- Potential changes to VAT – this is driven by the European agenda and there is little the HECA Fora can do to influence this.
- Next UK SG meeting next week in Birmingham. Last one of the year will take place the week before the next WM SG meeting (week beginning 6 December)

7) **Any other business**

No further business.

8) **Dates of next meetings**

Wednesday 15 December 2004 – full day event with SG meeting in morning and energy efficiency implementation project presentations in the afternoon. Invites will be sent out to all WM HECA Officers shortly.