

WM HECA Forum Steering Group

Minutes – 19th May 2004

Present: Ellie Cooper, LASP
Graham Jones, South Shropshire (Chair)
Karen Gilliatt, Stafford Borough Council
Keith Bennett, Hestia (Secretary)
Les Craggs, Oswestry Borough Council
Stuart Davies, Herefordshire Council
Tracey Dexter, Warwickshire EEAC

1) **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Robin Dunlevy, Angie Madden, Phil Brundrett, Chris Winter and Neil Morton.

2) **Minutes of last meeting**

Date of meeting incorrect, change to 4 February 2004

EC

Accepted as an accurate record.

3) **Financial position and budget**

No outstanding finance issues from the conference. There was a slight overspend but this was covered by Hestia for the year 2003-4

EST has not confirmed funding for HECA Forums this year although there has been no indication that it will stop. The next UK SG meeting takes place in a couple of weeks and GJ will keep the WM SG informed about any progress.

GJ

NB It has subsequently been indicated that there will not be EST funding for the Secretariat for the period 2004-05. Hestia has provisionally agreed to continue to provide the Secretariat service through its Local Authority Support Unit.

4) **Steering Group membership**

Membership of the SG is adequate despite low attendance today. However, GJ welcomes suggestions for additional members.

5) **Planning issues**

Venue for Steering Group meetings

EC has had some difficulty in contacting GO-WM to book meeting rooms for the SG. No team at GO is claiming to have responsibility for HECA.

Letter to be sent to GO-WM indicating the value of their support to the Forum and asking them to contact the SG as soon as it has been identified who is responsible for HECA. EC/KB to draft and send to GJ for approval

EC

Meetings to be held at Aquinas House in the interim.

10th Conference

KB & EC proposed that the bi-annual conference becomes an annual event due to the resources required to plan and organise the day as well as ensuring that the conference is of a high quality.

The Steering Group accepted this proposal. The 10th conference will therefore take place in either February or April 2005 (March is a particularly busy time of year). EC to ensure date chosen for HECA conference does not clash with any other regional events. **EC**

Theme?

A review of HECA will be taking place later in 2004 as highlighted in the Government's Energy Efficiency: a plan for action. The results of this and the corresponding consultation may be out around the time of the conference and could be a good theme.

Venue/sponsors?

TD has also offered to speak to Warks/Worcs local authorities and see if any are interested. There have also been expressions of interest from Phil Brundrett, Stoke-on-Trent and Walsall MBC. Steering Group agreed to approach Warks/Worcs local authorities first however. If no clear indication from Warks/Worcs by August, will approach the other LAs. **TD**

EEC2 will be starting in March 2005 and therefore will be a good time to approach energy suppliers.

SHOPAR/SHEF event

EC, KB and TD mentioned their discussions about a joint SHOPAR-SHEF RSL event. This would be a good opportunity for local authorities to close the gap between HECA and RSLs. Suggested venues are Aston University (Lakeside Conference Centre) and Millennium Point. EC/TD to keep the SG informed. **EC/TD**

6) UK HECA Forum update

UK Chair

At the last meeting, Don Lack formally handed over UK Chairmanship to Bruce Pittingale.

UK SG venue

UK Steering Group meetings will be being held around the country this year and Birmingham City Council has offered to provide a venue for a meeting on 22 September 2004. KB to attend if possible and GJ also suggested the WM HECA provide a display of the WM HECA brochure, conference visuals, photos, PR etc.). **KB**

Research of HECA Officer views

Response rate from the WM was disappointing – 51% (below national average) The full report will be made available in the near future, but some of the key points raised were:

- HECA reporting should continue through the local authority
- Strong views towards whether LAs will or will not hit the 30% target by 2006
- The approach in Scotland is very different - reporting procedures are much more relaxed.

HECA Officer qualifications

Feedback shows that Officers think this would be valuable. The plans are being taken forward and something should emerge in due course.

7) **Any other business**

EcoBurn – EC mentioned the phone call received from Nick Marlow, EcoBurn Services and his wish to promote their central heating control package to LAs in the West Midlands. SG agreed that more information on the product was needed. EC to request further information when re-contacted by the company. **EC**

Issue raised on how the SG should handle any information on new products and disseminate to the wider membership. SG agreed it should first look at the product and then make a decision as to how the information is passed onto HECA Officers.

Resource 04 conference – EC provided some information on the conference, which is taking place between the 7-10 June.

HECA monitoring – KB provided an overview of Hestia's HECA monitoring proposal. HECs will be sent out with a letter on council headed paper to 5,000 private sector households in each local authority area. Response rate in other council areas has been up to 40%. KB provided sample letter to interested SG members.

Regional Energy Strategy and Housing working group?

Excess winter death figures for the West Midlands (provided by Peter Massey, NEA). Copy to be sent out to working group and HECA Forum Steering Group members.

KB/EC

KB to contact Fran Austins asking her to keep interested working group members in the RES development loop (no further information on the strategy development has been received since Nick Baldwin sent a thank you letter to working group members).

KB

8) **Dates of next meetings**

15th September 2004 – provisionally Aquinas House.

15th December 2004 - tbc