



**Swansea Environment Forum Executive Committee Meeting
Thursday 21st May 2020
at the Main Hall, The Environment Centre, Swansea**

PRESENT

Name	Role	Representing	Abbrev.
Deb Hill	Chair	Swansea Council (Nature Conservation)	DH
Hamish Osborn	Vice Chair	Natural Resources Wales	HO
Alyx Baharie	Treasurer	Swansea CVS	AB
Philip McDonnell	Secretary	SEF Coordinator	PM
John Childs		Swansea Friends of the Earth	JC
Heidi Smith		Swansea University	HS
Chris Lindley		Swansea Council (AONB)	CL
Peter Anderson		VocalEyes	PA
John Sayce		Wheelrights	JS
Steve Bolchover		The Environment Centre	SB
Rhian Corcoran		The Environment Centre	RC

APOLOGIES

Name	Role	Representing	Abbrev.
Ruth Williams		RISW	RW
Jill Goddard		Swansea Council (Housing)	
Andrew Davies		individual	AD
Howard Stevens		SBUHB	HS
Ciaran O'Brien		Penllergare Trust	CO

Item No		Action by
1.	<p>Intros, Apologies and Conflicts of Interest Apologies were listed.</p> <p>No conflicts of interest were declared.</p> <p>DH introduced RC to the group.</p> <p>Condolences were expressed to Ruth.</p>	

<p>2.</p>	<p>Minutes of last meeting held on 16/01/20: These were accepted as a true record and each of the listed actions were reported on, in turn, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HS to resend feedback from visit to Bristol so PM can share - Climate Brief draft to be circulated again for comment - Martin Nichols (Swansea Council) is being kept up to date, will arrange Teams meeting once brief agreed - Finances – on agenda - Carwyn Davies of Hacer Developments agreed to come and talk to the Exec at this meeting, but this has been deferred to a later meeting as this is the first online meeting - No other suggestions for speakers has been received - WWN – on agenda - HS – Swansea University climate change event on hold but not sure if it will happen - RW had circulated RISW events programme 	<p>HS/PM to send link</p> <p>PM to rearrange speaker</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Climate Action Task Groups & discussion The task group (DH, RW, PM and PA) met a few times earlier in the year to work on the climate and nature recovery programme brief – the latest draft was circulated to the Exec. in February. It had been planned to discuss this and at the March meeting but updates and proposals were given in PM’s April report.</p> <p>DH reported on the recruitment for the research project, which was delayed but then carried out successfully ‘virtually’. DH thanked PA and PM for their work on this. Two appointments have been made – David Thorpe (DT) and Bethan John (BJ), who are starting this week.</p> <p>PA provided an explanation of the project including a key point being to improve SEF’s capacity to help with collaboration, consolidate best practice / knowledge and expertise to develop a resource that allows good ideas and projects to be adapted and replicated – DT focusing on research and BJ on comms. The work is funded by SEF and is a precursor to the Big Lottery Fund bid on a Participatory County being submitted by VocalEyes. The aim is to document around 50 projects. There’s a potential for linking with the university (for research or capacity to support implementation).</p> <p>DH said that the key is the participation and the development of a stakeholder list. A platform needs to be set up, but what to call it? Need to create an online resource.</p> <p>PM discussed the budget allocation and how it was amended to reflect the Covid19 situation i.e. dropped some of the organiser elements of the work to make best use of the current work/expertise.</p>	

<p>DH mentioned the need for a steering group to help coordinate this project. HS would try her best to be involved.</p> <p>PA said the project is in the planning stage, choosing branding / tech solutions, etc. Next steps are collaborating with the SEF Exec to identify the different projects out there, requires practical involvement from everyone</p> <p>DH asked – do we prioritise topics for projects? Group discussion agreed to see what comes up and then focus from there. PA was expecting a lot of crossovers between projects. DH suggested Environment Centre involvement also as a key central facility. The working group need not meet often but would provide practical hands on support.</p> <p>VocalEyes has been contracted to manage the project so the £6,000 budget has been split 3 ways.</p> <p>PMD sent an update in March covering the 4 work streams in the brief: Solutions for All – project in partnership with VocalEyes (above) Healthy Travel Charter – with Tom Porter, Public Health Wales. Delaying progress until Autumn as they are currently focusing on Covid19.</p> <p>Work on cycling ideas and routes ongoing, need to re-establish a transport forum. Project is challenging given current circumstance but still progressing, pausing to rethink.</p> <p>DH said that Martin Nicholls wants SEF help with transport.</p> <p>JS – Swansea are putting in a bid for pop up cycle routes. Put forward 9 proposals. Some could be done quickly, easily and for little cost. Has received no feedback from the council. Suggests working with schools to develop these options, link to tackling air quality concerns. Link with school eco councils, Wheelrights could offer to provide volunteer support.</p> <p>Ben George, Transport Strategy Officer, would not share the proposal for funding and is sceptical about commencing a wider active travel forum – that it is not a priority for him. Also need to involve bus companies.</p> <p>Need to baseline – how staff get to work – which can be replicated annually. PM said that measures would be part of a wider Healthy Travel Charter – aiming for a wider scope and consistency across organisations.</p> <p>SB – potential to take some easy action e.g. around air quality at schools and the issues with idling buses i.e. provide a place in the school for the bus drivers to wait rather than sitting in the bus with the engine on.</p>	<p>PA/PM to organise working group</p>
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	<p>PA – discussions fit well with the research project, need projects that are quick wins but also ones that will be looked at in more detail PM will look at reinstating the travel forum, from the Autumn, and working with other partners such as 4theRegion, could deliver an online conference focussed on transport. Open invite to be part of a transport working group which would focus on 2 ideas – the charter and the conference. Suggest a working group meet in a few weeks’ time. JS and PA both expressed an interest in being part of this.</p> <p>DH – suggested looking at the brief again and sending in comments.</p>	<p>PM to set up transport working group to progress transport workstream</p> <p>PM to resend brief</p>
4.	<p>SEF Finances and Meetings</p> <p>a) Budget 2019/20 update: PMD outlined end of year position with £4k improvement in underlying balance from previous year due to fees from Enterprising Solutions and Renew Wales activities. Will soon be preparing for annual accounts to be done.</p> <p>b) Draft budget for 2020/21 PM explained the need to carry forward some funds due to Covid19. The draft budget does not include unsecured funds except for Renew Wales and LCSB. A key aim has been on building up underlying funds to be able to carry on for some time should there be reduced income e.g. from Swansea Council after March 2021. However, the committee could choose to use underlying funds for a specific project.</p> <p>AB raised a query about the insurance requirements for Renew Wales but PM said this would be covered later on the agenda.</p> <p>c) Confirmation of account signatories and authorised users Discussion held on the signatories and authorised users for the SEF bank account. Due to Covid19 PM raised the suggestion of setting up online banking facility. PM phoned the bank for information but discovered that he is not an authorised user. PM believes that current signatories include DH, HO, AB and Sian Jenkins from the Environment Centre.</p> <p>It was agreed that the signatories should remain as Deb Hill, Hamish Osborn, Alyx Baharie and Sian Jenkins and that Philip McDonnell should be designated as an authorised user. It was also agreed that if either Sarah Kersey or Jenny Edwards, former Environment Centre Managers, are found to still be signatories, they should be removed.</p> <p>d) Funding opportunities NRW funding opportunity through Shared Outcome request. HO pointed</p>	<p>AB to contact bank to clarify who are currently on the system as signatories.</p> <p>PM to arrange bank forms to amend as agreed.</p>

	<p>out that it is not a big pot of funding so need to put in a realistic bid. Important to support NRW Area Statement. PM agreed that we need to look into this asap but not yet sure what exactly to apply for. Needs to link to work streams – perhaps another member of staff? Need to link with the Environment Centre also. Subgroup to work on NRW application and links to Area Statement and Working with Nature.</p> <p>Helen Grey has moved to NRW and will be involved with grants.</p> <p>A funding T&F group will include PM, HO, DH, SB and RC.</p>	<p>PM to arrange funding T&F group</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>SEF Partnerships and Projects Updates PM had sent a detailed update in the April report so gave just quick update on projects.</p> <p>a) Community Green Spaces The working group had discussed activities with Neil to reflect Covid19. This included maintaining the Clydach project. It was agreed that Neil's contract be continued and that the working group could be delegated to do this but there is a need to focus on targets and outcomes.</p> <p>b) LCSB / Renew Wales / Enterprising Solutions PM outlined the upcoming LCSB online sessions.</p> <p>PM explained that Renew Wales now required the host organisation to have both public liability and professional indemnity. PM obtained a quote for SEF of £550. AB queried whether a lower quote could be found. PM suggested that the potential financial benefit in the coming year might be around £900 but was not guaranteed and so there is the potential for SEF to spend more on insurance than is covered by the income. On balance, PM suggested it is not worth SEF being a host and Exec. agreed. Discussed potential for the Environment Centre to be an alternative host. SB agreed this was possible but would need some investigation to see if we meet the host criteria. Host would play an administrative role and receive £90 per day fee surplus. Environment Centre to look into it. Also potential for another organisation to be a host.</p> <p>Enterprising Solutions was due to end in June but has been extended to December, due to Covid19, to allow more time to help current projects through to completion.</p> <p>c) Working with Nature / PSB WWN Task Group hasn't met since January but a virtual meeting is proposed. PM updated on plans for an annual PSB partnership event but said PSB activities and meetings are currently pretty much on hold.</p>	

<p>6.</p>	<p>Stories from Around the Table: Members Networking</p> <p>AB said SCVS are coordinating volunteers in response to Covid19. Any 3rd sector groups that need volunteers to keep going should get in touch. Development Plan consultation to be launched around June and close in September. Important for rural areas – will also share the link regarding the RDF for PM to circulate.</p> <p>SB pointed out that in one year there will be elections to the Senedd and that parties are currently formulating manifestos – offering a prime opportunity to raise concerns and influence policy development. Exec. agreed this was a good opportunity for SEF to promote their agenda.</p> <p>JS suggested SEF could do a manifesto with some key focused points e.g. 2/3 issues to be sent to all political parties – needs to be specific so that the public understand. Detail an action under each heading e.g. air pollution around schools. There is no formal timeframe but circa mid-June would be a good time to comment.</p> <p>DH asked how to take this forward? SB to prepare first draft / small group to approach all parties with agreed ideas i.e. a brief outlining what is the priority, why it is important and why we want to see it in their manifesto.</p> <p>JC referred to bid Swansea Council is submitting re: cycling routes (raised by JS earlier) but doesn't know what is in it. JC also suggested divestment is getting more interesting – challenging times for pensions. FOE nationally are doing a webinar for councillors.</p> <p>PM referred to a Westminster online committee meeting about air quality being chaired by Geraint Davies MP – he will circulate the invitation Exec. to join or send a question in advance.</p> <p>JS suggested we need to be looking at how ways of working will change in the future e.g. more online.</p> <p>HO referred to 'No Mow May' and asked why councils are still mowing verges. There are links to the WWN action and this should not be happening yet at this time of year. This is included in corporate objectives, and in Wales, there is some work being done to measure the impact of not mowing. DH agreed that more needed to be done. WWN could pick up on this issue. CL suggested that RCT Council are looking at buying new kit because the current infrastructure cannot cope with longer grass. DH agreed this was a way forward and that Swansea Council had been receiving a lot of emails about not mowing.</p> <p>IPD op work – present at future meeting?</p>	<p>AB to pass on link to development plan for PM to circulate</p> <p>SB to draft letter to political parties re: ideas for manifestos</p> <p>PM to circulate info about event</p> <p>WWN Task Group to discuss further</p>
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<p>7.</p>	<p>AOB Next meeting will probably be virtual again. All agreed for PM to approach Carwyn Davies of Hacer to present. PM to arrange sub group meetings HO mentioned PONT webinar on conservation grazing. DH – to share info around webinars, training, GI links.</p>	<p>PM to invite Carwyn Davies to present PM to organise meetings for transport and funding subgroups DH to share info on GI</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Next SEF Exec. Meetings Thursday 16th July 2020 Thursday 17th September 2020 Thursday 19th November 2020</p>	