

Transition Stroud - Council Meeting – Minutes of Meeting

6 May 2009, 7.30pm – 9.30pm

Action

Present

Simon Allen, Business and Government, Co-ordinator Support
John Meadley, Transport
Jackie Rowanly, Connections
Helen Royall, Co-ordinator
Nigel Westaway, Co-ordinator Support (chaired meeting)

Apologies

Dave Cockcroft, Energy
Fiona Eadie, Story Telling
Melissa Roussopoulos, Co-ordinator Support
Helen Nightingale, Food
Jim Quinn, Health and Energy
Molly Scott Cato, Lifestyles and Livelihoods

1. Meeting Dates

Some people had said the first Wednesday of the month clashed with other meetings. The next meeting was set for Thursday 18th June, 7.30. 6 Castle Rise, Stroud GL5 2AW

2. News round

Business and Government – have participated in the Forest of Dean conference and continue to work with local government. At the IDEA conference in Liverpool, Fi and Simon gave a presentation about working with local government. Rob H would like write this up for Transition Blog. **SA / HR**

Transport – focusing on Personal Travel Plans; an officer from GCC is coming to the next meeting. Also encouraging students to work with their parents to find alternative ways of travelling to and from work. Changing Gear; a new website has been launched www.changinggear.org.uk

Story-telling – (report from Fiona) “Transition Tales has just had its first booking and it went very well. We were asked if we could tell a story at the launch of the Green Party European election campaign last Saturday. I did Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. Thank you for helping me to get Transition Tales off the ground and please do let any people organising Transition events know that we are here and willing to tell relevant, engaging and inspiring stories”

Energy – Open Homes going well. 21 homes this year and a showroom specialising in eco-renovation. Exhibitions in the Exchange and Town Hall, refreshments in Exchange and Springhill co-housing. Energy monitors will be available to borrow from libraries. Nigel pleased that the organisation that put PVs on his house is now following up and measuring the energy generated/used.

Textiles – working on The Art of Westley Farming weekend and teaching old skills (rug making, crochet, patchwork etc.).

Film - The Age of Stupid – Helen felt it was negative and we need more inspiring info out there, Jackie found it depressing initially and then felt angry and inspired to take action. This might happen for others watching the film

The Minutes from the March TSC were reviewed and finalised. There was a discussion regarding the appropriate amount of detail to include.

3. Local Food Conference

Proposals are in hand for a Local Food Conference to be held in late June, which it is hoped will lead on to a local food strategy. The organising group is led by Greg Pilley and funding is being sought from the Rural Enterprise Gateway (EU-funded) and from Stroud District Council – both of which have offered their support. In the case of the REG it is necessary to set up a local REG group made up of incorporated businesses or organisations (including Stroud Brewery and Stroud Farmers' Market amongst others). Transition Stroud is not currently able to be a member because it is not yet incorporated.

Council unanimously agreed its support to the group. Furthermore it wished to accept the offer of a grant from Stroud District Council towards the Local Food Conference. Council unanimously agreed to ask Fiona MacMillan and John Meadley to represent the TSC in the development of the conference.

4. Company Registration

Simon to circulate Mem and Arts (memorandum and articles) to Council members

SA

Once agreed they will be put onto the website.

- Council noted that liability of the organisation must be limited. This is currently proposed as a not for profit company limited by guarantee. Molly has suggested a co-operative might be a suitable alternative structure. Simon to discuss with Molly

SA

5. Bank Account

Dave and Ali would like to hand this over to the Council and arrangements will be made to achieve this.

- It was agreed to pay Helen £200 towards her telephone and internet bills for the last 12 months. Simon to organise this with Dave Judd.

SA

6. Stroud Valleys Credit Union

John asked us if we were happy for the following to be posted on Announce – and it was agreed to do so.

STROUD VALLEYS CREDIT UNION

Recent events have highlighted the importance of supporting our local economy. Transition Stroud is responding through a number of initiatives including supporting local farming and food production and the development of the new Stroud “currency” – but we should not forget a small local institution that has already been doing this for the past ten years - STROUD VALLEYS CREDIT UNION.

STROUD VALLEYS CREDIT UNION (SVCU):

- *Is a local organisation that lends to local people, in particular those who might find it difficult to get normal banking services and who might fall prey to loan sharks;*
- *has around 200 local members (who must live in GL5, GL6 or GL10)*
- *has assets of around £75,000 and current loans outstanding of around £15,000 – which are generally for sums of around £50 – 250 and mainly used for the*

- purchase of household goods, holidays, school uniforms, payment of utility bills etc*
- *has weekly openings in Nailsworth, Stroud, Stonehouse and Paganhill with a paying point at Ebley Mill open during normal office hours*
 - *is run entirely by volunteers*
 - *charges 1% per month on its loans on the outstanding balance. The rates are controlled by legislation and reflect the uncertainty associated with unsecured loans.*
 - *is regulated by the FSA*
 - *incurs expenses mainly relating to rent, council tax, FSA fees, insurance and bad debts*
 - *does not pay interest on members' savings – all earnings currently being used to cover basic costs*

In the current economic climate SVCU has an increasingly important role to play in keeping funds circulating within the local economy and in helping those who need relatively modest amounts of money to meet their short term needs. SVCU needs more members and more funds to compensate for the current low Bank of England interest rate and more members to borrow and to pay back with interest. SVCU is an organisation that reflects the TRANSITION spirit and complements the proposed new local "currency". SVCU will be supporting CHANGING GEAR (a Transition Stroud Transport Group initiative that encourages secondary school students to cycle to school) by providing small loans to assist students from disadvantaged economic backgrounds to own a bicycle.

Attached is an information sheet about SVCU as well as an application form. Please think about hard about joining – even if you save only £1 per week. The joining fee is only £3 and you can complete the formalities at any of the opening points (details on the application form). By joining you will be supporting a vital local institution and help to both grow and serve the wider community.

JM / HR

7. Stroud Currency

John M has spoken to the Lifestyles and Livelihoods group about the liability associated with the new "currency". The group is setting up the "currency" as an independent cooperative, hence such liability as may arise will rest with the new cooperative. Helen is still working with the group on its development.

8. Nature Festival

The festival has a website <http://stroudnature.co.uk> Helen has sent out a message on Discuss but no-one has replied with offers of help yet. Helen is not free that weekend. Nigel has offered one hour. Jackie suggested we ask two people to organise it.

Helen to send email to co-ordinators.

HR

9. Open Meeting

For all members of Transition Stroud 26th September. Meeting from 2.00pm – 5.00pm. The primary purpose of the event is to celebrate what has been achieved so far, share information and ideas and to consider options for the future. Then party from 6.00 – 8.00pm. Bring food to share. Helen to ask Smoothee if they could play.

HR

10. Events Sub Group

Jackie mentioned again that an events sub group is still not in existence.

11. EDAP

We reconfirmed the importance of preparing an energy decent action plan. A small group will meet to consider this at noon on Monday 18th May at JM's house. **JM**

12. Next Meeting

Thursday 18th June, 7.30. 6 Castle Rise, Stroud GL5 2AW