

infoe



IN THIS ISSUE: Transport, Incineration, Biofuels, Planning, Airport, AGM

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL 'GET SERIOUS'



On 10th November 2009 Bristol City Council unanimously passed the following resolution. In 2010 we will support the creation of a strong action plan.

"Council notes that climate change is a reality and that the city is already committed to a range of carbon reduction targets. Council recognises that it has a responsibility to help prevent dangerous climate change and that doing so will create local jobs, reduce fuel poverty and create local economic benefits.

Council therefore resolves to:

- Support the Friends of the Earth "Get Serious About CO₂" campaign.
- Commit to reducing emissions in its area year-on-year towards a goal of cutting emissions by at least 40 per cent by 2020.

- Produce a carbon reduction action plan for both its own operations and the wider city by Spring 2010, with implementation proceeding as soon as possible.

- Report annually on progress towards the delivery of the 40 per cent target.

Council also, however, recognises the vital role of national government, whatever its political 'colour', in carbon reduction at a local level and that a 40 per cent target in Bristol cannot be achieved without real and rapid successes on electricity production and public transport solutions at a national level.

Council therefore further resolves to support the Friends of the Earth campaign for national action, including assisting local authorities with additional funds and legal powers to make radical changes and for a new duty on councils to act on climate change by 2012."

Councillor Neil Harrison, sustainability lead, had already started working on an action plan as a result of a Select Committee which he chaired the year before. He managed to get this item second

on the agenda on just the second attempt and all party agreement was achieved to allow time for it. Bristol FoE had met with both council officers and councillors Neil Harrison and Jon Rogers in the

STOP BRISTOL AIRPORT EXPANSION



Due to the complexity of the issues, North Somerset council has delayed making a decision on the Airport planning application until February 2010. StopBIA are busy preparing reports to show where the weaknesses in the airport's arguments lie, including tourism, leakage and noise.

StopBIA have recently shown that the consequence of outbound tourism from the South West region is that 44000 jobs have been lost here since 2001, hence expanding BIA will

lose jobs rather than creating them. In addition, expanding BIA will not significantly reduce the number of people from the South West who use Heathrow. These reports can be found on our website www.stopbia.com

The Stop Bristol Airport Expansion campaign will need as much support as possible in February. People interested in helping lobby councillors etc should contact us through the website www.stopbia.com.

email@stopbia.com

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months before the motion. 380 postcards from members and public were sent to their individual councillors as well as the leader of the council, Barbara Janke, and several personal contacts were made. Some key organisations also sent letters and statements of support to the council. Claire Evans, a professional film-maker, volunteered her skills to produce a six minute film available on YouTube (www.youtube.com/watch?v=t0UrSschnfM&hd=1) in a very short timescale with Jeremy Birch and an enthusiastic team of FoE volunteers. Peter Birch then made the video available for distribution on YouTube and www.bristolfoe.org.uk. This was well received by councillors and others and helped increase the profile of the motion.

Mike Birkin from National FoE provided invaluable support and Jane Stevenson spent much time coordinating the FoE campaign locally.

So phase 1 of the Get Serious campaign was drawn to a close with a celebration party before Christmas to which key councillors and local MPs and PPCs were invited.

Next year we move on to the even more challenging task of campaigning on ways to achieve the objectives and raising support of the people and organisations within the city. The '10:10' campaign to kick the action plan off to a good start by attempting to achieve 10% savings and efficiency improvements in 2010 should provide a convenient focus for this work.

[Julian Jones, julian.p.jones@googlemail.com](mailto:julian.p.jones@googlemail.com)

Unsustainable Biofuel Power Station proposed for Bristol

A power station running on damaging imported vegetable oil has been proposed for Avonmouth (within the Bristol council area). The planning application may be considered at the meeting on January 20th 2010.

Ironically this relies very heavily on public subsidy in the form of 'double ROCs' - offered by the UK government for biofuels in response to an EU target on biofuel use! This measure was introduced without proper analysis and regulation, despite a campaign by FoE and others. So we must persuade our MPs and MEPs not to guarantee these into the future, as they are considering and being urged to do by unscrupulous businesses.

The main problem is that vegetable oil production on the scale required to burn in a 50MW power station is just not sustainable. It is one of the main drivers of deforestation and destruction in the tropics today, with consequent loss of unique habitats and serious human rights abuses of indigenous people. The deforestation means this is many times worse

than even coal fired power stations in terms of climate change.

Locally the impacts would be more poisonous NOx and particulate emissions blowing over and being 'rained out' over Bristol and the Severn Estuary, part of which is supposed to be a specially protected site again because of unique habitats. It will also release as much CO2 as thousands of extra cars on the roads.

However the planning authorities should also give weight to the end-to-end climate change impacts of the operation, as required by government planning policies PPS22 and PPS23.

Further information will appear on www.bristolfoe.org.uk



Redland Park Church leads way on Sustainability

This autumn, rev Doug Burnett, the minister at Redland Park United Reformed Church, held a harvest service and local food day with special contributions to raise awareness of the issues around food and how we must remember to look after the planet. Look out for further events at www.redlandparkchurch.co.uk



Solar panels on Redland Park United Reformed Church

AGM Thursday 14 January 2010

FoE welcomes everyone supporting our environmental aims to the annual general meeting on Thursday 14 January 2010, 7:30pm at 35 King Street (2 doors away from The Old Vic theatre).

After the short formal session main topics will be planning our campaigning in the lead-up to the general election and supporting the city's climate change action plan. More details will be advertised at www.bristolfoe.org.uk



Transport Alliance Campaign

Monday 14th Dec sees the launch of Bristol's biggest ever transport campaign. The Transport for Greater Bristol Alliance www.tfgb.org.uk (of which Bristol Foe is a member) will be sending thousands of postcards from members of the public to the four Councillors in charge of transport in each of the Councils in the West of England (S.Gloucestershire, BANES, Bristol and North Somerset) known as the West of England Partnership (WEP). The requests will be:

1. An Integrated Transport Authority (ITA) for the West of England. The four councils should set up a joint Executive of staff to work across the region improving, integrating and developing bus, rail and tram services along with strong policies to encourage cycling and walking. This authority will be funded via council tax from each council and policy and strategy will be decided by local councillors at arm's length from the day to day running.
2. Bring forward to Spring 2010 for programme

entry for Government funding, the scheme to reopen the Portishead rail line instead of building the combined South Bristol Link Road and Bus Rapid Transit which would open up the Greenbelt to development.

TfGB have been campaigning for three years to persuade the West of England Partnership (WEP) to look at the advantages of setting up an ITA over the current working arrangements which the public do not understand and which fail to deliver clear and swift joined up decision making because of the need to constantly go back to

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all four councils and four sets of officers on major decisions. The current WEP is not capable of building up sufficient bus and rail industry expertise or of the taking on new powers of bus control available under the Local Transport Act 2008. Our large travel to work area needs a joint Executive. Integration of ticketing, information provision and special transport deals with operators are unworkable without ITA type joint arrangements proven by the lack of progress to date on these issues.

The public want to see real change and a body that has clout with the Government similar to other ITAs in Birmingham, Manchester and Newcastle who are now looking at how to take on more powers to improve public transport. In July 2007, Bristol councillors voted unanimously to progress discussions on an ITA. However, three Executive members in North Somerset, BANES and South Gloucestershire have voted not to take the next step of undertaking a review of current arrangements.

TfGB have been working with Save our Green Spaces groups that oppose the development of large urban extensions all around Bristol and together we oppose the new road building in the countryside that the South Bristol Link represents. It is a crazy compromise with a road and Bus Rapid Transit system running parallel. The road will undermine the success of the Bus Rapid Transit and encourage more car driving and congestion spreading traffic over both a wider area and into the residential areas of Bishopworth, Withywood and Hartcliffe where no road now exists. It will cut Highridge Common in half. The road is proposed as a single carriageway with wider roads at both ends so likely to lead to even more congestion at both ends.

Back in September 2008, TfGB proposed an ultra light tram option (a British innovation) as an alternative to Bus Rapid Transit for the Ashton Vale to Cabot Circus route. This was rejected by the West of England on grounds of cost and the fact that a tram was not immediately available (it would be built for Bristol) but promised that the bus infrastructure would be cheaper and the bus would run on sustainable bio-fuel. Now in 2009, the cost of

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the BRT has increased from the original estimate in the review of £24-26m to £47.3m plus an extra £5m to run it to the proposed Bristol City Football Club stadium, which will be met locally as the Club are not making a contribution. A suitable bio-fuel long (bendy) bus which is proposed for BRT is not yet available. So we would like the whole issue reviewed.

If you want an ITA to improve the buses and a better rail and tram future for the West of England while protecting the Greenbelt, please contact pip_sheard@hotmail.co.uk for some postcards with our three requests. These need to be signed and sent to the 4 Executive members for Transport by the end of January. Alternatively you can email your local Executive Member for Transport with the requests above. It is particularly important to get cards and emails sent to the three Councils outside Bristol who currently oppose an ITA.

Councillor Jon Rogers, The Council House, College Green, BS1 jon.rogers@bristol.gov.uk (Bristol) He supports an ITA.

Councillor Brian Allinson, Council offices, Castle St, Thornbury BS35 1HF (South Gloucestershire) brian.allinson@southglos.gov.uk

Councillor Charles Gerrish, The Guildhall, High St, Bath, BA1 5AW (Bath and North East Somerset) Charles_gerrish@bathnes.gov.uk

Councillor Elfan Ap Rees, The Town Hall, Walliscote Grove Rd, Weston -Super -Mare, BS23 1UJ (North Somerset) Elfan.ap.rees@n-somerset.gov.uk

Pip Sheard, pip_sheard@hotmail.co.uk

Planning Control in Bristol

Bristol City Council has just launched the publication version of the Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy, available on the Council website at www.bristol.gov.uk/bdf. This marks a major step towards ensuring greater sustainability in Bristol's new building developments and renovations that require planning permission. It will now be submitted to the Secretary of State for formal approval the timetable for formal adoption is late 2010.

Any representations can be made to the Secretary of State until 15 January 2010 using a more formal process explained on the website. However we would hope that there will be no more major debate on this document that could delay adoption and allow more planning applications to 'slip through' under the old and less sustainable rules.

Of more concern may be the introduction by the UK government of an unelected Independent Planning Commission who will have responsibility for certain major infrastructure projects including power stations. There is a duty to consult but the Governments idea is to streamline the process to reduce delays. However unfortunately the procedure only applies for projects over 50MW. This will help nuclear power stations, of which there are two (Hinkley and Oldbury) near Bristol, whilst failing to help most local wind farms (each large turbine is typically 3MW so only farms of around 20 or more turbines would be helped).

It could also help biofuel power stations, which are environmentally disastrous but currently encouraged by government policy. Instigated by an EU government directive setting a target for biofuel use, the UK government currently allocates double incentives for biofuel use (more than twice that received by wind and solar!). However the regulations to ensure sustainable biofuels are currently very weak, so



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that their use is actually causing much more emissions than coal and massive environmental destruction of rainforest.

Bristol FoE is currently involved with other organisations to raise awareness of the issues surrounding an application for a biofuel power station in Avonmouth, likely to be considered at the planning control needing on 20 January 2010. Further details will appear on www.bristolfoe.org.uk shortly. Please get in touch via the website if you can help with this campaign.

helen_pillinger@hotmail.com / julian.p.jones@gmail.com

Incineration back on the agenda already!

No sooner had we seen-off the proposed West of England (WoE) municipal waste incinerator, then another two have come along to take its place.

First, the good news: The Liberal Democrat Executive on Bristol City Council, have promised that so long as they are in power, that there will be no incineration of Bristol's municipal waste. Instead, the West of England authorities (Bristol, Bath & North East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire) have signed a 5-year contract with New Earth Solutions, to process 120,000 tonnes per year of the WoE's waste, via Mechanical Biological Treatment. This is exactly the technology that BFoE were campaigning for, mainly because of its reduced climate-change impacts. When this contract expires in 2016, the WoE authorities have an option to extend it for a further 4 years.

But now the bad news. Viridor have lodged a planning application to build a 500,000 tpa (tonnes per year) waste facility in Avonmouth, including within this site, a 350,000 tpa energy from waste by incineration plant.

Further up the same road in Avonmouth, but just over the border into South Gloucestershire, SITA are consulting on their plans to build a 400,000 tpa energy from waste by incineration plant, to process commercial waste.

The Joint Core Waste Strategy, drawn up by the WoE authorities, has identified what capacity the region needs till 2026, in order to become more self-sufficient in dealing with our own domestic and commercial waste within the region. The Strategy allocates 390,000 tpa of new waste-processing sites to Avonmouth. With a 200,000 tpa new facility for New Earth Solutions already approved, the 2 new incinerators have a potential to deliver a staggering 710,000 tonne over-capacity. This can only mean that waste will be imported into the region in order to keep the incinerators burning.

The Liberal Democrat Executive on Bristol City Council, have promised that so long as they are in power, that there will be no incineration of Bristol's municipal waste.



We are currently working on planning objections for both incinerators. If you would like to register as a supporter of BAMBI – Bristol Against Mass Burn Incineration – please go to: www.bambi-network.org.uk/ and fill out the form. Or contact me as below, and I'll send you more details as they become available. Please let us know if you live in Bristol or South Gloucestershire. Bristol objections need to be lodged before the end of February 2010.

Jane Stevenson, info@bristolfoe.org.uk
Voicemail: 0117 911 4084

About Bristol Friends of the Earth

Bristol Friends of the Earth is an active local group of the international environmental organisation Friends of the Earth. We currently run campaigns on local climate change, Bristol airport expansion, food, waste, local transport and sustainable housing. We hold a monthly group meeting (visit www.bristolfoe.org.uk for details) plus separate campaign meetings.

If you would like to know more about us, to help us by campaigning or raising money, or want to come to a meeting to see what we do then please get in touch. You can help by volunteering and giving your time, or by joining Bristol Friends of the Earth and helping us financially.

How do I join?

Membership of Bristol FoE includes a free subscription to InFoE. To join us, just complete

the form below, and return it to the Membership Secretary. Please pay by standing order if you can – it really helps to cut time spend on admin. Subscription rates are:

- Ordinary £15 Unwaged £5 Joint / Family £25

Contact us

Bristol Friends of the Earth
10–12 Picton Street, Montpelier, Bristol BS6 5QA
email: info@bristolfoe.org.uk
voicemail: 0117 911 4084

To join the Bristol Environment email list, which circulates local news of environmental events and campaigns, please email your name and email address to: bristol_environment@bristolfoe.org.uk

To find out about future events or our next monthly meeting visit www.bristolfoe.org.uk

Yes, I'd like to join my local group

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

I enclose £_____ membership and £_____ donation

TOTAL £_____

cheques payable to Bristol Friends of the Earth. OR:

I'd like to pay by standing order: _____

My bank _____

My bank's address _____

Postcode _____

My account no. _____

Sort code _____

Account name _____

Standing Order Instruction

Please pay the sum of £_____

on _____ / _____ / 20_____

and thereafter the same amount on the same day each month/year*

(*Delete as appropriate. Please make first payment date at least one month from when you fill in this form)

To Co-operative Bank plc, sort code: 08-90-02
Bristol Friends of the Earth, account no: 50296440

Signature _____

Date _____

Please return to: The Membership Secretary,
Bristol Friends of the Earth, 10–12 Picton Street,
Montpelier, Bristol BS6 5QA

Your records will be stored on our computer. If you have any objections to this, please contact us.