

EAST MIDLANDS REGIONAL ASSEMBLY
Environment Group Meeting
Friday 5 May 2006
At the Regional Assembly Offices, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire

Summary of key points and actions arising

Attendees:

Members:

John Bull	Chair
Ian Paterson	EN / EM Biodiversity Forum (sub for Richard Leaf and Rick Keymer)
Sharon Palmer	Environment Agency
Alex Bowness	GOEM (sub for Graham Norbury)
Anthony Streeten	EM Heritage Forum/ English Heritage
Cllr Roy Mayhew	Northamptonshire County Council
Anthony Payne	Emda
Richard Woods	EMEO
Hugh Fenton	EMAGE
Neil Robinson	NEMA

Advisers:

Alison Hepworth	EMRA Secretariat
David Slinger	Environment Advisory Group (Chair)

Item	Topic	Action
1.	Apologies Matt Doran, Frank Lucas, Ruth Fish, Sue Buckingham, Austin Brady, Terry Miller	
2.	Notes from the last meeting and matters arising Notes were agreed. Anthony Payne highlighted the fact that emda has reached agreement with RDAs from adjoining regions re the nominations to the River Basin Liaison Panels for the Water Framework Directive. Emda will be shadowing other regions , not nominating for a seat on either the Humber or the Anglian Panels. EMRA, in view of their statutory Planning role and the need for close working with the WFD, are asking for a seat for each Liaison Panel (Humber and Anglian)	
Items for Discussion		
3.	Nottingham East Midlands (Presentation by Neil Robinson, Environment Manager NEMA) A presentation was given by Neil Robinson, The environmental	

	<p>Manager at NEMA on the draft Master Plan currently out to consultation. The general context is set by the Aviation White Paper (2003) which sets the strategic framework for the future of air transport up to 2030, including the idea of a MasterPlan. The Master Plan shows how they intend to deal with the forecast growth in air traffic (doubling expected in the next 10 years). This growth will be subject to stringent environmental controls which build on those applying currently, keeping environmental impacts to a minimum. Closing date of the consultation is 14 May.</p> <p>All proposed development will be contained within the current land holding.</p> <p>In terms of environmental sustainability they are working on reducing the impact of night flights, with wider noise reduction measures and mitigation measures. Local air quality is measured on site. They are looking at ways to further reduce emissions from taxiing and manoeuvring aircraft, as well as continued investment in renewable energy. They have in place energy conservation programmes and promote the use of public transport, with continued emphasis on waste management and recycling.</p> <p>NEMA recognise that they need to help solve the problem of congestion by encouraging more sustainable modes of transport from the centres of surrounding towns to the airport. This is spread to recruitment as well. Skylink buses now run 24 hours a day from Nottingham, with services from Derby and Leicester planned. The dualling of the A453, as well as the Parkway train station will all help. All development except airport related is to take place away from the airport, as stressed in the RSS.</p> <p>Water management measures are in place to deal with the impervious surfaces, controlling flows (SuDs were attempted but don't lend themselves well to the thick underlying clay). De-icing (quarter of a million litres in the winter) can all be controlled within the current discharge consent for the site, however improvements in technology may be required if these amounts increase over time.</p> <p>Projections in aviation growth could change over time.</p> <p>The Group agreed that the EMRA response being developed by the Transport Group (going to the Joint Board on 18 May) could usefully reflect the support for all the environmental measures in place and stress that they are essential to cope with the expansion as planned.</p>	<p>AH</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Proposals for a new Chair of the Environment Group.</p> <p>John Bull announces that unfortunately he will be stepping down as Chair of this Group after the July LGA AGM. Since he is no longer an elected member, he is unfortunately no longer an Assembly</p>	

	<p>member either and feels he should stand down.</p> <p>It is therefore with much regret that the group needs to choose a new chair. There are no strict rules and regulations laid down for this process, however it is felt that a fair and transparent process would be as follows.</p> <p>It is proposed that nominations are invited from any member of the Environment Group, in writing by email to Alison Hepworth by Friday 19 May. It would be really useful if the nomination includes a short statement (no more that 50 words), stating why they think they would make a good chair of the Environment Group.</p> <p>Depending on how many nominations are received, the Group will make a decision at the next Environment Group.</p>	<p>ALL By 19 May</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>RSS Review Update</p> <p>This was a quick verbal update to let members know what is happening in the RSS Review currently.</p> <p>The series of Spring Seminars is currently underway, with Water Management (11 May) and Environmental Infrastructure (31 May) included on the programme.</p> <p>The Environment Advisory Group is also looking at helping update the text of the RSS to take account of new strategies that have emerged, environmental capacity to assist in the SDEA process and helping to suggest wording on a GI policy for inclusion in the revised text.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Regional Economic Strategy</p> <p>Anthony Payne talked about the recent consultation process and SEA, with which the Statutory Agencies were able to make invaluable input. This was found to be beneficial on both sides.</p> <p>A <u>final</u> strategy is now being developed following the consultation process and will go the main emda Board <u>for sign off in May. Following which endorsement from EMRA, GOEM and Central Government will be sought in June. Final publication is expected following emda's July Board.</u></p> <p>Discussion ranged around the environmental hooks now in place in this strategy, mainly around Strategic Priority 6 Environmental Protection under the ensuring sustainability theme.</p> <p>The Implementation Plan will now be developed in June/ July, mapping out what partners can do to support the RES, for approval</p>	<p>Deleted: draft</p> <p>Deleted: the</p> <p>Deleted: , then to EMRA and GOEM in June, for final publication after the July Board.</p>

	<p>by emda's Board in November. This will be reviewed on a yearly basis.</p> <p>The Statutory Agencies welcomed the engagement in the SEA process, with useful lessons learned on both sides. There seems to be less clarity about the Implementation Plan and how this will look. The question was asked as to whether the joint working (which all found so useful) will continue to capture the expertise and understanding needed to make it work. The question was also asked as to how the Implementation Plan relates to emda's Business Plan.</p> <p>Anthony replied that the Corporate Plan sets out spend for the next 3 years, the business plan looks at yearly spend.</p> <p>The Implementation Plan will be a new process, requiring new ways of working on both a formal and an informal basis.</p> <p>Concern was raised about the fact that the SSPs don't phase well with this process and indeed they differ in content. Also there are LAAs now – how can these all be pulled together to avoid confusion?</p> <p>Anthony answered that from the next financial year, SSPs will be moving into sub regional investment plans outlining activities they would be looking to undertake over the next three years. Emda is developing a series of guidance notes for each SSP under each Theme of the RES about the activities that might be appropriate at the SSP level without inflicting a straitjacket approach.</p> <p>As for LAAs we will have to see how relationships between these and other plans develop.</p>	<p>Deleted: the</p> <p>Deleted: Guidance note</p>
7.	<p>Draft Regional Biodiversity Strategy – Putting Wildlife back on the map</p> <p>Ian Paterson reported to the Group that work has been done by the Biodiversity Forum to improve the text of this strategy since it last went to the Advisory Group. The strategy has also been subjected to EMIT and SD and Climate Change information added, along with clearer links to business. It was therefore presented to the Group and was endorsed by the Environment Group to the Policy Board at their next meeting on 11 May, as part of the IRS.</p> <p>The Forum want to launch it and raise the profile of the environment within the Assembly. Action: Alison to do a briefing note to YD for EMRA Management Team and the Assembly Board to put in motion the suggestion that the strategy be distributed at the next Assembly meeting, with a display, in July. This could include an announcement on a new round of SITA funding for biodiversity work around the region.</p>	AH

	<p>Asked how monitoring and reporting on progress of this work will be brought to the Group, Ian Paterson replied that now there is funding for the post of Biodiversity Coordinator, and Warren Priest is working at the Assembly, he will be responsible for this. Action: Warren Priest re: future agenda item to this Group</p> <p>Anthony Payne highlighted the fact that in emda's Business Plan there is a small amount of money for Green Infrastructure work which could be used to deliver the integral biodiversity element of emda's sustainability Policy. Action: Ian P to talk to James Luger at emda.</p>	<p>WP</p> <p>IP/JL</p>
8.	<p>Water Framework Directive</p> <p>Sharon Palmer from the Environment Agency, gave the Group an overview of the Water Framework Directive and its relevance to the Group. The recent round of seminars took place to increase awareness about the formation of Liaison Panels (one for each River Basin District). For the East Midlands, this means the Humber and the Anglian. The different sectors have been invited to submit nominations for a seat on the panels, which will meet two or three times a year to oversee the development of the River Basin Plans by 2009. A draft statement of measures will be produced for each RBD by December this year for consultation.</p> <p>This process aims to add value by putting mechanisms (ie the Programme of Measures) in place, setting objectives and raising awareness of negative human impacts within the River Basin on the water environment.</p> <p>Action: Sharon to forward a copy of the Initial advice to Planning Authorities document to Alison for distribution to the Group</p>	<p>SP</p>
9.	<p>Update report from the various sub groups</p> <p>Alison Hepworth presented the report updating the Group on the ongoing work of the various sub groups on environmental work.</p> <p>Environment Challenge – action: Alison H to talk to James Luger at emda about the possibility of emda funding to help take this forward for this year. NB also talk to John Perry at GOEM about his Business environment awards.</p>	<p>AH/ JL</p>
10.	<p>Draft responses on regional and national rural consultations</p> <p>The draft responses on various rural consultations have been developed by the Environment Advisory Group and were considered by the Group for approval/ additions/ amendments.</p>	

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	<p>Action: Alison H to produce final drafts for circulation and final comment/ amendment by both Groups. These responses will then be agreed by the Chair with the Policy Board Chair prior to submission.</p>	<p>ALL/ AH JB/ JF</p>
11.	<p>World Environment Day 5 June</p> <p>Sharon Palmer announced that the Environment Agency are planning to launch World Environment Day around the region on 5 June. This will include a launch at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens on 2 June, and various event at Garden Centres around the East and West Midlands. There will be ample opportunities to encourage everyone to sign a pledge.</p> <p>Action: All to spread the word and get as many people as possible to sign a pledge for World Environment Day</p> <p>Action: Alison to do a briefing note to YD for EMRA Management Team and the Assembly Board asking for a WED display by EA at the Assembly meeting on 21 July.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>AH</p>
12.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>i) Showcasing regional views in Europe Richard Woods from the East Midlands European Office (EMEO) informed the Group about opportunities to get East Midlands examples of good environmental Practice showcased in Europe. EMEO are chairing the Environment Platform for Regional Officers Group (EPRO) this year. The group is concentrating on 4 key areas of policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality (Leicester City is doing work on this) • Soils (opportunity to get the Soils Review Project more widely known) • Urban environment • Waste <p>Group members were asked to consider sending through relevant examples of East Midlands work on these policy areas to Alison H to pass on to Richard.</p> <p>ii) Green week Richard Woods also mentioned this European conference around biodiversity issues. If anyone is interested Alison can find more details. This is an opportunity to input and it is free to participate.</p> <p>iii) Local Area Agreements (LAAs) This was raised as a possible area for the Group to discuss at a future meeting. Action: Alex Bowness to advise Alison who could attend to discuss this</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>AB/ AH</p>

	<p>iv) Natural England Ian Paterson announced that the new Regional Director for Natural England is due to be appointed in the next month or so, and will be keen to meet the relevant regional players.</p> <p>v) Date of Next Meeting – change of date! Please note the change of date for the next meeting, which will now take place on Monday 17 July (not the 27th) starting at 1400 at the Assembly offices in Melton</p>	<p>ALL to note</p> <p>ALL to note</p>
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