**Minutes of a Sunderland Green & Open Spaces Forum (SGOSF) -meeting Monday March 2nd 2020 at Thompson Park cafe**

**Present:** Kathy Pickering (Friends of Hetton Lyons Country Park & Friends of Roker Park), Ann Huntley(Friends of Herrington Country Park), Becky Vickers (Groundwork NE & Cumbria), Ashley Sutherland (Friends of Mowbray Park & Tunstall Hills Protection Group),Christine Parker (Friends of Princess Anne Park), David Newrick(SGOSF), Graeme Jobes (Space2Grow), Jenny French (FoHCP), Tim Wright (Friends of Barnes Park & Red Machine Allotment Association -chair), Victor Cadaxa (FoHCP), David Banks (Northern Allotment, Leisure Community Gardens)

**Apologies:** Gillan Gibson (Council for the Protection of Rural England), Graeme Anderson (G4M), Alan Rowell

**In attendance:** Clive Greenwood, Senior Planning Policy Officer, SCC

**1.Minutes of previous meeting December 2nd 2019**

Agreed as a true record.

**2. Matters arising**

David reported there had been one response after his request for ideas for new website.

**3. Update on Sunderland Core Strategy and Local Plan, Greenspace Audit and Green Infrastructure Plan – Clive Greenwood, Senior Planning Policy Officer, SCC**

Clive provided an overview of each of the above documents and then went onto to discuss his role in SCC’s low carbon task group.

‘The Core Strategy and Development Plan sets out our long-term plan for development across the city to 2033. It will ensure that the right type of development is focused in the right places to meet the needs oflocal people and businesses.The Core Strategy and Development Plan (2015-2033) was adopted by the Council on 30 January 2020’.

The Core Strategy has three elements:

* The International Advanced Manufacturing Plant
* Strategic Plan
* Allocations

The Plan will be updated every five years.

The city’s Greenspace Audit, Greenspace Report, interactive greenspace map, as well as the Green Infrastructure Strategy (GIS) can be found on the Council webpages: <https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/article/15997/Greenspace-Audit-and-Map>

The Greenspace Audit and Report assess the quantity, quality, value and spatial distribution of the city’s greenspaces.

The Green Infrastructure Delivery and Action Plan is a ‘live’ document and accompanies the GIS. The intentions of the Delivery and Action Plan include setting up a GI stakeholder network to help drive forward GI projects, and this will require local resident and community group input. The Delivery and Action Plan is being updated currently, the 2019 version can be found here: <https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/media/21396/EX1-017-Sunderland-Green-Infrastructure-Delivery-and-Action-Plan/pdf/EX1.017_Sunderland_Green_Infrastructure_-_Delivery_and_Action_Plan.pdf?m=636918745551330000>

In addition, there is a 2018 Playing Pitch Plan document that embraces the city’s sports pitches, including the new Downhill, Ford and Washington sports hubs. This can also be found on the Greenspace web page.

Clive is currently seconded to SCC’s Low Carbon Task group, a group establish to develop tangible actions the Council can adopt in order to address carbon neutral status by 2030. Cllr. Michael Mordey chairs the (external) stakeholder group. The application to the Climate Action Fund was unsuccessful (VONNE had a successful bid).

Questions to Clive:

David stressed the importance of each Council service area having their own targets and education of staff to influence a culture change. Also asked who SCC contact person is for section 106 agreements: Natalie Smithwhite.

Victor mentioned the role of carbon offsetting and the need for positive engagement. Clive responded to say SCC were working proactively with partners such as DWT and Wear Rivers Trust in the Coalfields area, as an example, on enhancing green infrastructure connectivity. Victor highlighted the four parks cycleway discussed over two years ago and whether this was still being considered and, if so, what development had occurred. Clive’s response was that SCC had recently been successful in obtaining £650,000 to upgrade the Hetton to Murton cycle path.

Ann asked what was happening in terms of the Houghton quarry where permission has been granted for a business park. (CG unable to update)

Kathy raised the issue of a stakeholder network and why the Forum is not engaged. Also, the action plan does not have a timetable. Clive’s response was that it is the intention to set up a stakeholder network and whilst this is in its infancy, he envisaged SGOSF being part of this. In relation to Low Carbon, the present level of engagement sits with heads of organisations such as the University, CCG, Hospital Trust, but the emergence of Low Carbon Framework will set out more details.

Graeme asked about task group membership and collaboration specifically in relation to the Urban Tree Challenge where communities will often have ideas where trees are best planted and then are more likely to care for them.

**4.SGOSF update**

Tim provided an update on the Forum’s progress since December 2019 (see attached.

**5.Training & learning events**

Kathy introduced this item by saying the Forum had identified in its Lottery bid an element to set up or support learning or training events responding to group’s needs. The Committee’s initial thoughts were shared and people were then asked to write down their own thoughts. A varied response was collated. One dominant theme came out in the following discussion, re-wilding, bio-diversity, grow wild. This will be followed up and explored as to viability of organising and holding an event during the summer.

**6. Open Forum**

**Friends of Hetton Lyons Country Park**

Kathy reported that the group had been successful with a grant to install outdoor gym equipment in the park, the first park in the city to have it. A number of training sessions are scheduled.

**Friends of Princess Anne Park** Christine said that three notice boards will be put into place during the next couple of weeks.

**Groundwork North East & Cumbria**

Becky mentioned the Wear Estuary project, funded by the Environment Agency. The river is of poor quality. Landowner stakeholder event held in January, feedback being collated and a report to be sent to E.A.

**Friends of Herrington Country Park**

Jenny, Ann & Victor reported:

* Flower planting in miners memorial garden to take place
* City Nature Challenge event 25/4 supported by ERIC.
* Proposed re-wilding initiative still awaiting Ecology Team reply on pilot survey of two small sample areas.
* Another community event planned for 5/9/20 but need to apply for grant funding.

**Friends of Mowbray Park/Tunstall Hills Protection Group**

Ashley reported a number of planned events had been organised by THPG: These included:

* Dawn Chorus walk, 8/5/20, 05.30
* Wildflower walk, June
* Geology walk/fungal foray, September
* Participating in a history fair taking place 6/6/20 at Bede Tower
* Commencing regular monthly clean-ups.

David mentioned that Friends of Mowbray Park are exploring a July event showcasing music performed by the Sunderland Symphony Orchestra.

Victor suggested a future session focus on Tunstall Hills with presentation from Andrew Bewick or colleagues in conjunction with THPG.

**Space2Grow**

Graeme mentioned there will be an Eco-fest in June at Sunderland Minster. All invited to participate.

**David, SGOSF**

Friends of Mowbray Park had a re-launch event on 18/1/20 at Sunderland Museum& Winter Garden. The event was supported by SGOSF. It is understood that four people signed up as new members**.**

**7. Date & time of next meeting**

Monday June 1st 2020, 18.00-20.00, venue yet to be confirmed – A joint presentation on the Durham Heritage Coast featuring Sunderland’s Coastal project, Niall Benson, DHP & Ian Graham, SCC

This meeting has been cancelled and rescheduled for Monday September 7th, 2020, 18.00-20.00, venue to be confirmed.