

Minutes of GREN Members' Meeting held on 9th October 2014

1. Welcome, Introductions, and Apologies:

Meeting was quorate with six members present.

GREN Committee members: Peter Chan (PC) (Chair); John Booth (JB) (Secretary); Tony Cowling (AC) (Treasurer); Tricia Marcouse (TM);

GREN members: Ricky Josey; Will Alliston.

Apologies: Tanja Rebel (GREN Committee member); Steve Goodman; Rachel Chilton.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting and Actions:

Minutes: Minutes of last member meeting on 16th June 2014

http://www.gren.org.uk/resources/140616_GREN_Members_Minutes_website.pdf

were agreed with no corrections required and no matters arising.

Actions: JB led a review of progress with selected Actions – (some actions relating to the website are still with the Committee and were not discussed):

- C14.03 – need to make GREN groups aware of RNN Insurance offer - continues.
- C14.09 - Sources of funding for groups:
 - Reading Borough Council could be approached for funds for small specific projects.
 - Reading Neighbourhood Network should be approached for funding to launch Sustainability Centre – Climate Change was one of RNN's Themes for the year.
- C14.11 – GREN Twitter account – PC to investigate
- C14.17 – GREN info at Repair Cafes – next was 18th October
- M14.06 – Action on cycling with others in Forum – other members of the Forum not in favour of a robust approach to the Council so close action.
- M14.12 – Funding from ASDA - ASDA does not provide application forms - need to write to manager.
- M14.19 – Speakers Corner – had failed to find mutually convenient date in summer/autumn 2014 - investigate options for spring 2015 – continues.

3. Updates from GREN Officers and Committee:

- Chair – PC had no matters to report.
- Treasurer – AC
 - Presented a new statement <http://www.gren.org.uk/resources/GREN2013-14postbankstmnt.pdf> showing GREN general fund balance of £184.75 and Reading Sustainability Centre balance of £550.60.
 - No invoices had been received from Loud'n'Clear for website.
- Secretary – JB
 - Constitution had been changed (Action M14.18 complete).
 - GREN was now an Affiliate Member of Reading Neighbourhood Network (RNN) – benefits included:
 - Listing on RVA Directory
 - Discounted training for GREN members via RNN
 - Insurance available through RNN
 - Recycling/Waste meeting 9th October 2014 – funded and supported by RNN.
 - GREN consulted by RNN on railway noise and pollution issue.
 - GREN Membership (website) –
 - Since June +4 individual members, total about 170.

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- Still 26 Groups registered. Discovered that group contacts do not automatically receive 'News' and 'Events' postings or e-mails to membership so doing this manually.
- Fairly frequent 'News' and 'Events' postings but level of Facebook activity suggests more use could be made of it.
- GREN Facebook membership:
 - 156 Members of this group – approximately 30 new since June.
 - Seems to attract a fair few postings, and not all by the 'usual suspects'.

4. Updates from GREN representatives on other bodies:

Cycling Forum – PC

- 20 mph zones were only in a small area around Cemetery Junction
- Some cycle lanes were 'advisory' – so cars can stop or park in them
- Council reluctant to change plans and seems to favour bus traffic
- Suggestion that planners should be asked to cycle – to experience the roads.

Reading Climate Change Partnership – JB

- Held networking meeting on Circular Economy – business focus
- Next meeting in November – community focus
- Made grants to RSC for hydro investigations and to a school for solar
- Launched £2k grant scheme for businesses and community organisations
- Progressing Climate Change Strategy and Actions

Social Value in Commissioning Project – TM

- Attended launch of this government funded project - expected to run to June 2015
- Project looking at commissioning by RBC and the Heath Service – representatives of voluntary sector included Alzheimer's Society, Age Concern, and GREN.
- Any big contracts (approx. > 100k Euro) had to be advertised in the Official Journal of the European Union.
- Want to get social and environmental issues taken into account throughout commissioning process – Invitation to Tender -> Evaluation -> Contractual Conditions.
- Next meeting 4th November – TM wanted examples of good environmental practice to show to other project members. Ricky Josey said Pepsi had worked with charities. AC said he would send some info. to TM. **(Action – AC)**.
- Results of local project could result in improvements nationally.

5. Update on Sustainability Centre – AC

- Working to become a Community Interest Company.
- Would then apply for membership of GREN.
- Seeking funding from RVA and Nature Save, and had applied to DECC for £1.5 million.
- Had had good publicity in GetReading

6. Review of 'Better Recycling and Less Waste' meeting – future initiatives on this topic?

- Thanks to Ricky Josey and RNN for efforts and support for this meeting.
- Need to report outcomes – press release and more detailed report **(Action – JB)**.
- Consider follow-up meeting before 2015 election
- Consider taking results and information out to local groups – Globes and RNN members. **(Action – Committee)**.
- Could seek funding for follow-up activities from RNN

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7. GREN's future activities – what else should we be doing? - how can GREN help you or your organisation?

- No proposals for new activities

8. A.O.B.

- None

9. Date and location of next meeting.

- No decision reached. **(Action – Committee).**