

Greater Reading Environmental Network AGM 29th November 2017 6pm @ Great Expectations

committee present: Tony Cowling, Tricia Marcouse, Pete Chan, Will Alliston

others in attendance: John Booth, Chris Burden (to make a chorus)

late arrivals: Ornella Trevisan, Victoria Rutt, Claire Janes, John Hogget

apologies: Michael Bright, Tanja Rebel, Sharon Fitton, Jackie Oversby, Enrico Petrucco

1. Chairman's report (PC)

“it's been a quiet year... the main issue of tonight is proposed structural changes”

2. Treasurers report (TC).

"we're in the black" document displaying accounts circulated to indicate £11.35 in the kitty.

we have been offered a small donation by 'UNITE' should arrive in the post

we are currently awaiting funding from RCAN **action**: JB to send relevant invoices to RBC

3. Election of Committee

TC to remain as Treasurer

WA to remain as Secretary

PC to step down as Chair

TR, TM and EP to remain on committee

it was then suggested that Enrico might like to be Chair for the year ahead, pending confirmation

Trish offered to assume the role of Chair should Enrico decline

action: emails redirects to be amended accordingly need to tell Chin & Beth

other committee concerns:

JB still holds passwords for Facebook & Twitter **action**: PC will also share this responsibility

Signatories on accounts currently TC & JB **action**: TM & possibly EP to be added as signatories

TM to remain as GREN representative on RCAN

PC & TR to remain as GREN representatives on Reading Cycle Forum

Reading Climate Forum had only 1 meeting this year with topic 'Ground Source Heat Pumps' more planned next year to be co-ordinated by JB

at this point Victoria Rutt and Claire Janes arrive, so the secretary recounts minutes of meeting so far. they are students studying Environmental Management at Reading University

4. How can Greater Reading Environmental Network (GREN) work together with Transition Town Reading (TTR) and The Reading Sustainability Centre (TRSC) ?

it has been suggested we should group together under the banner of 'Sustainable Reading' following this suggestion, questions arise around issues of governance, membership and finances.

GREN was set up in 2008 and is currently an unincorporated association. TRSC is a community interest company (CIC) TTR is a community voluntary organisation co-ordinated by a steering group (I'm not sure of legal status).

Due to the diversity of current activities it may be misleading to refer to a straightforward 'merger' and it was suggested we should be clear on our aims and objectives and how to best fulfil them.

It has been observed that member groups don't want too much involvement in the 'bigger group' this is indicated by response rates and attendance at formal meetings such as this evenings AGM (our membership is over 200 but there were less than a dozen people in attendance).

What GREN has achieved so far (apart from meetings) there's a website and some social media presence - we provide a communication platform, but does it have a 'strong voice' ?

It was suggested that if groups aren't physically getting together, online groups could be formed - although we should not lose sight of the local (Reading) focus of the organisations aims. At present GREN is seen as a fairly effortless way for groups to cross-communicate (events/news etc.).

There was some suggestion that the news section on GRENs website could be 'spiced up' to attract interest in local environmental issues. GREN website is supposed to be a central space for such information to be transmitted and received.

Transition perspective: those present who are part of TTR said they aim to become more resilient. There are some areas which we overlap on and could be currently 'treading on toes' in our actions. A lack of resources (notably people) was identified as the main motivation for a merging our groups.

General agreement on the merits of working together, although it was expressed that another layer of administration would not be beneficial, rather we should attempt to merge the 'best bits' of all. One idea was to have an annual meeting with other groups invited to decide our common objectives and how to share resources for the year ahead.

action: committee members to attend joint xmas social in December and discuss openly how we could collaborate with TTR & TRSC in the coming year. We are willing to work together.

5. Next Meeting

Joint TTR/TRSC/GREN social @ RISC main hall on Wednesday 6th December 7:30pm
we will set a date for next GREN meeting following this discussion with other groups

Minutes: Will Alliston (Secretary)