

Energy Decent Plan Visioning Meeting 4th October 2010-10-06

Present: Wendy, Grant, Richard, Maggie, Tommy, Teen (left early) Vanessa, Martin, Penny

General Discussion

Penny introduced the meeting and ran through her brief paper (that has been put on the Forum) introducing the subject.

There was a wide ranging discussion with the following key points made:

- Whose vision is it – it is not just a TBI vision, it needs to be a community vision
- It needs to add up – to be internally consistent. Examples of this are Zero Carbon Britain and David McKay's Sustainable Development without the Hot Air
- In addition to Totnes, Forest Row and Lewes (both Sussex) have done EDP's. It would be worth learning from their experiences
- The process must promote a quantum leap in thinking – it can't just involve doing 'a bit' from where we are.
- There was discussion about the need for rigour in terms of analysis and fact finding. On one hand a rigorous approach would underpin our vision. On the other hand, perhaps it is easier to make the 'leap' in vision without getting snarled up in the issues of how we get from 'here' to 'there'. Perhaps a phased approach is needed. It may be possible to apply rigour in making sure the vision is coherent without spending time analysing the present position.
- Transition needs to be fun
- The focus should be on community resilience – the Totnes Indicators of Resilience were discussed
- A zero carbon game was discussed – passing a zero carbon baton around – when you hold it you can't use any fossil energy
- In developing an EDAP we would need to engage with different sectors (business, farming, transport etc), and the wider community. We could also have a linked cultural and creative programme involving schools, youth groups and others
- It was suggested that the EDAP would be more contained and more acceptable if its core objective was to meet the existing and recognised government targets of 80% carbon emissions reduction by 2050. The central question would be – what would this look like on the Black Isle.
- There was discussion about the need for more information. The main gap identified was farming which is a key carbon emitter locally. It would be possible to commission a paper from a suitable consultant to review the situation and report to TBI to inform the process
- It was suggested that we might hold an 'inquiry', taking evidence from key witnesses as part of the process

All were agreed that it was important to take this process forward, but had different ideas about the process and the priority compared with other activities. At this point it was decided to go round the table to get each person's views on how we should take this forward:

Richard – Not keen on the word ‘plan’. Supports a strategic process involving people that brings everything together. It should be done slowly.

Wendy – Concerned about timescale and capacity. It mustn’t jeopardise the rest of the year.

Grant – The broad parameters of Transition have already been defined elsewhere and we need to link these to the Black Isle. The focus should be on PR

Tommy – The question is pace. It essential that we define how we run what we’ve got already first.

Maggie – We need a dream and we need the community behind us. Suggest we wait until next April and then do a visioning exercise with lots of people at the event. Move forwards from there

Martin – Lots of people sympathetic but we need to inject sense of scale and urgency – so it can’t be too open-ended. Parameters need to be imposed and just doing this would be useful. We could prepare by inviting people to come in to give talks leading us into the process. It could be a series of lectures with an underlying theme. The Alex Hill lecture could be seen to be the first of these.

Vanessa – Doesn’t have big picture of what we are aiming for and therefore doesn’t know if our existing priorities are right. Would like to look at individual sectors to get background information. Noted that community development is hard to do well.

Penny – Strongly feels we are lacking a narrative of what peak oil and climate change mean for us on the Black Isle and how our projects fit into this. The process would help us see the big picture and take others with us – and develop our programmes more effectively. Thinks we should edge forwards at a pace we can manage.

Funding

Tommy has reviewed some funding sources and provided links on-line. Richard will review these including the Sainsbury funds which might be sympathetic

Conclusion

It seems that everyone present felt that we should continue to develop our thinking on an EDAP and doing some visioning. However, it is essential that we also review our existing commitments and also consider other development options that groups wish to put forward.

The conclusions of this meeting will be put to the full meeting for further discussion.

Penny
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