

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION UK

SUBJECT - Minutes of the Meeting of the Noise Committee held the offices of the Corporation of London, Wallbrook Wharf, London.

Date - April 10th, 2013

The following attended the meeting :-

Alan Bratt - Environmental Protection UK and Chair of Committee
John Dinsdale - Environmental Protection UK - North West Division
Secretary and also acting as secretary to this meeting.
Stuart Dryden
Tony Clayton - Environment Agency
Howard Price - CIEH
Jaclyn Williams - Devolved Welsh Government
Colin Grimwood
Tania Plahay - DEFRA
Colette Clarke - DEFRA

Apologies for absence were received from :-

Geoff Corker - Environmental Protection UK - North West Division
Richard Stait
Nigel Tranmer - Environmental Protection UK East Midlands
Division
John Grant - Environmental Protection UK East Midlands Division
Greg Watts - Bradford University
Lisa Lavia - Noise Abatement Society
Max Dixon
Martin McVey - Devolved Welsh Government
Stephen Turner - DEFRA
Gareth Hooper - Environmental Protection UK
Anna Mahoney - SASIG

(Minute items as referred to on the Agenda)

- 1.0 The Chair welcomed those attending the meeting, thanked the Corporation of London for their hospitality, indicated that this was the first meeting of the Environmental Protection UK Noise Committee for around 18 months and recorded the apologies received.
- 2.0 There were no minutes available from the date of the last meeting which was held on November 3rd 2011. This was due to the substantial and strategic changes that had taken place since

which Environmental Protection UK had now evolved into a "volunteer only" led organisation.

3.0 In relation to EPUK and Committee issues and structures, the chair aided by the Secretary gave a brief and concise summary of the developments which had occurred with the charity since the date of the last Noise Committee Meeting. The Chair added that the charity had however retained its unique character which reflected consensus member stakeholder views from across the whole of the Environmental Protection Sector, had retained considerable strengths and competences from within all ten Divisions and where Members had indicated strongly, that despite the resource and budget driven changes which had had to take place in the last 18 month period, that there was still a strong willingness to further the aims and core values of the charity. The chair added that the charity retained its strong links with Vice Presidents, Divisions operated such that ordinary members could have a voice to shape "Future Focus" Policy, in particular serving the wishes of Local Authorities and other Regulators in a unique way and where a "unique selling point" existed, in comparison with other Local Government Environmental Groupings and Environmental Pressure Groups, in that there was a clear speedy and effective communication route between the ordinary member and getting "a voice heard" at Member State and European Government level. He also qualified this by indicating details of budgetary shortfalls arising in 2011 which had required the Board of Trustees to make difficult and unpleasant decisions in relation to staffing, which had resulted in the now volunteer led status. The Chair and Secretary confirmed that the charity in its new format did not have the same capability to lobby and deliver training as its used to do. The Secretary divulged that the Charity's viability was being reviewed by the Board of Trustees around every three months currently, reminded the meeting that the Charity had functioned since 1898 had for many decades previously been a "volunteer led" organisation and members views were that currently it would be wrong with respect to the charities predecessors, not to attempt to continue with the work of the charity where contemporary environmental protection work still needed to be done. A useful discussion ensued about what the charity could still achieve, how it could still interact with Government and what did Environmental Protection UK have, different to other Pressure Groups, that gave it an environmental role for the future. The Secretary indicated that at times the charity would have to concede that so long as relevant stakeholder views emerged and were voiced, it would have to accept that at times these may be progressed through the work of partner organisations with whom the charity had long and valued relationships. The Secretary indicated when questioned, current membership levels and the situation relating to the website which

was recognised as being crucial to the success of work of Environmental Protection UK. Discussion continued about the way that Regional Pollution Groups operated and were constrained, the regrettable impacts relating to the Cabinet style of Local Government and how duplicating effort between environmental organisations should be avoided. The meeting agreed that there was still a real need for those shaping policy in Government to have an effective dialogue with Local Authority Councillors. The work of the CIEH Knowledge Hubs was recognised and praised in these discussions. In relation to the work of the Noise Committee, the considerable achievements by Mary Stevens were acknowledged in the way she had engaged effectively through use of social media.

4.0 In relation to Transport (noise) issues Colette Clarke updated the meeting by reporting that Noise Action Plans were due to be updated this year, and it is expected that they will be consulted on over the "summer". The agglomeration Action Plans will include information about Quiet Areas. The example of good practice being developed by Brighton and Hove Council was recognised as being helpful. The Secretary referred to the achievements demonstrated by Greg Watts through the work of Bradford University and again the meeting recognised that Local Green Space could be designated because of tranquility. Updates were given in relation to Noise Mapping where Important Areas had not all been decided.

An update was given about the status of the Draft Aviation Policy Framework and the work of the Davies Committee on Airport Capacity. Colin Grimwood asked that in view of a response having been made by EPUK on this subject that responses in future be circulated to Committee Members, the Chair agreed this.

In relation to Night Flying at Heathrow, the Chair conceded that in relation to the consultation deadline of April 22nd it was not possible for EPUK to offer a response. The skills of Rob Gibson at Hounslow were recognised in this area.

In relation to activity within Wales the meeting was advised that the Government were preparing to consult on Noise Action Plans, there had been a delay in relation to the END because of the change of the Welsh Cabinet Member, Noise Action Plans in Wales included references to Neighbourhood Noise, progress was being achieved in relation to Quiet Areas where the 3rd Tranche was being consulted upon, 29 areas were about to be designated, a second year grant scheme existed to promote tranquil green spaces, the second round of Noise Mapping had been published on

5.0 In relation to Planning the chair conceded that although there had been considerable interest in issues in the South West and in Yorkshire, the charity had not made a response to the Taylor Review. Discussion occurred on the recommendations made about PPG 24 where it required to be revised and where the meeting felt that the new version needed to be more succinct. It was noted that PPG 24 had been withdrawn as Policy from March 31st 2013 and currently a vacuum existed. The meeting concluded that there was always going to be a need for those with experience such as the members of the Noise Committee to be able to contribute to complex planning and noise issues especially when the economy improved and applications were more plentiful in the future.

In relation to the "quieter deliveries" initiative, this had been well aired at the Defra Stakeholder meeting. The Chair requested that this be repeated as a possible agenda item by Lisa at Defra with DfT and DoH involvement as well. Colin Grimwood suggested that a short presentation should be built in to every future Noise EPUK Meeting, which the Chair agreed to.

6.0 John Dinsdale spoke briefly about the revisions to BS 8233:1999 using his notes from attending the recent IOA North West Branch Meeting addressed by Phil Dunbavin whose in depth knowledge on the subject was accepted to be authoritative. The Chair asked if there had been any attempt to narrow the scope and was advised not. The timing of the revision of BS 4142 :1997 was referred to where Tony Clayton indicated he was a member of the BS review committee for this standard. Closing discussion in this area, John Dinsdale agreed to circulate the notes of the IOA Meeting he had attended with the minutes. **ACTION - JD** ✓

The presence of a Noise indicator in the Public Health Outcomes Framework was highlighted as important and their context was reviewed where newly constituted L.A. Health and Well Being Boards would be audited on this and other indicators from April 1st 2013 onwards. The noise indicator is based on both noise mapping data and annual CIEH complaints data over the last 10 years.

In relation to Good Practice, the meeting agreed that Environmental Health Directorates should now ideally be in direct contact with Chairs of Health and Wellbeing Boards, where the meeting agreed that the Secretary should come back to the next meeting with a report on how EPUK could assist in contact co-ordination. **ACTION - JD** ✓

The Secretary discussed L.A. and Community Noise Control information sources, their values and offered his personal view