



ZERO CARBON HUB PROGRESS REPORT

2016 Taskforce Meeting
to be held on Wednesday 29 April 2009

1. Purpose

This paper provides a report on progress since then the previous Taskforce meeting held on 27 January.

2. Corporate and People

Key points:

- The Interim Board has met on three occasions since the previous Taskforce meeting. Although meetings have now moved from a monthly to a bimonthly basis, an extraordinary meeting was held in March to discuss the findings and report of the 'Defining zero carbon homes – have your say' events which were held during February (see item 6 below).
- Paul King of UK Green Building Council chairs the Interim Board and members are from CLG, Construction Products Association, Home Builders Federation, Homes and Communities Agency, Local Government Association, National House-Building Council and Robust Details Ltd.
- Revised Memorandum and Articles of Association have been agreed and the process of appointing the Members and Directors of the company will be concluded by the end of April. As agreed at the previous Taskforce meeting, arrangements have been made to extend other interim arrangements (such as appointment of the executive directors and other key staff) until the end of March 2010 and a full strategic review will be carried out in June 2010.
- The Business Plan was approved by the Interim Board in January and has now been accepted by CLG. The Business Plan includes 'Key Milestones' for delivery of targets by the end of March 2009, June 2009 and December 2009.
- The financial year for the Zero Carbon Hub closed on 31 March 2009. Annual accounts are being prepared and a reporting accountant has been appointed in accordance with the funding agreement with CLG. In its first year (which was not a full year), the Hub received approximately £0.8M of funding from private sector organisations and from CLG. Expenditure for the year was in line with forecast and the funding statement showed a positive cashflow carried over to 2009/10. Total funding for this financial year is planned at £1.6M.
- Financial reports have been developed to present budget plans and provide regular reports to the Board.

3. Workstreams

The Zero Carbon Hub has developed five workstreams to provide a focus for industry engagement with the key issues and challenges:

- Energy Efficiency
- Energy Supply
- Examples and Scale Up
- Skills and Training
- Consumer Engagement

Considerable progress is being made, particularly in the priority area of Energy Efficiency:

- The Energy Efficiency workstream receives support from engineers seconded from Fulcrum Consulting and all members of the workstream steering group have access to a 'Wikipedia'-type resource (which is both Extranet and Intranet) which hosts information for the ten key areas of work.
- The Energy Supply workstream steering group has met on two occasions. There is a vacancy for a manager to head up this workstream and recruitment is underway.
- The Examples and Scale Up workstream is also underway and the first examples have been launched, with more to come.
- The first phase of work on Consumer Engagement, which included consumer research, has been delivered in conjunction with the Energy Saving Trust. A workplan has been developed and key areas have been prioritised.
- The Skills and Training workstream steering group is the only one not yet fully up and running, but interim appointments have recently been made and significant progress is planned to be made during May and June.

4. Research

The NHBC Foundation supports the Zero Carbon Hub and has ring-fenced funding for research purposes. To date, in conjunction with the Hub, the Foundation has delivered:

- Funding for the first twenty 'exemplars' being produced by BRE, which are featured on the Hub web-site.
- Zero carbon homes – a housebuilder's guide – this introductory document, produced by the Foundation and the Hub, was available at the 'Have your say' events.
- Zero carbon compendium – a desktop study enabling comparisons across countries and continents of how climate change is being tackled through housing policy. The final draft of this report is currently being reviewed.

Research has also been commissioned to consider how two of the proposed 'Allowable Solutions' (energy efficient appliances and controls and upgrading existing stock) referred to in the CLG consultation document might work in practice. The timelines for both projects include presentations to CLG colleagues at the end of May/beginning of June.

5. Communications and External Affairs

- A communications strategy and plan has been developed and PR support is provided by an independent agency. Two news releases have been issued since the previous Taskforce meeting.
- Hub executive directors have spoken and presented at several industry and other events since the previous meeting, including Ecobuild, HBF Policy Conference, Housing Forum National Conference (where we ran a workshop) and the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Sustainable Housing.
- Meetings have been held with numerous key stakeholder organisations and groups, such as the Zero Carbon Taskforce for Schools, Welsh Assembly Government and the Welsh equivalent of the Zero Carbon Hub.

6. Zero Carbon Hub Events

Defining Zero Carbon Homes – Have Your Say

A separate report will be presented to the Taskforce at the meeting providing feedback on the series of consultation events which were held across England during February. In total, more than 500 delegates attended the events and Zero Carbon Hub staff are very grateful to all Taskforce members and others who provided practical and promotional assistance supporting the events. A full list of acknowledgements is included in the published report.

Ecobuild

The Zero Carbon Hub had a stand and a significant presence at Ecobuild in March, with a continued focus on the definition consultation.

PassivHaus Study Tour

The Hub hosted a study tour to Frankfurt on 4 and 5 February 2009 which was attended by 30 people. Feedback from the tour has been excellent and delegates found it useful to visit the PassivHaus Institute and a number of sites, including housing and a large flatted development built to PassivHaus standards.

Zero Carbon – Milton Keynes Event

More than 50 people attended an event on the morning of 13 February 2009 focussing on zero carbon development in Milton Keynes. Presentations were made by Paul King, John Lewis, Chief Executive of Milton Keynes Partnerships and Martin Davies of Milton Keynes Council. Tadj Oreszczyn from University College London provided an excellent presentation of the legacy of energy efficient housing in Milton Keynes and this event has led to some important new work and contacts.

7. Recommendation

Taskforce members are asked to note this report.

Neil Jefferson
23 April 2009