

Note of 1st Atmosphere and Local Environment Steering Group 1 July 2013

Attendees: Daniel Instone (Defra) - Chair
[Redacted] (Defra)
[Redacted] (DECC)
[Redacted] (Environment Agency)
[Redacted] (DfT)
[Redacted] (Defra)
[Redacted] Defra)
[Redacted] Defra
[Redacted] Defra
[Redacted] (Defra)

1. Daniel welcomed all to the meeting. He explained that this group was a new Steering Group for the ALE Programme. It is designed to look at Interdepartmental issues which may affect the Programme, as the success of the ALE Programme is highly dependent on the policies of other Government Departments. It will focus on strategic issues rather than Programme Management (PPM).

Agenda Item 2 – Terms of Reference

2. Daniel agreed to give further thought to adding more external bodies to the group including Public Health England and a Local Authority representative to help improve the external challenge. Daniel also agreed to circulate a draft vision for the group.

Action: [Redacted] to give further thought to circulating a vision and to adding external bodies to the group

Agenda Item 3 – Programme update on major issues

3. The paper produced for the Group gave a snapshot of what has been happening on ALE issues over the last year. It concludes that the challenge for the programme is the need to work closely with other Government Depts.. Daniel pointed out that one thing not in the paper was that we were reviewing the boundaries of the ALE Programme and Local Environmental Quality work is expected to go to the Waste Programme (litter having strong links with waste).
4. All agreed that Air Quality issues and concerns have increased recently for example in the Public Health Community. However the profile for issues such as air quality and noise did not seem as high for businesses as issues such as CO₂ and waste.
5. One area that had been identified as a possible opportunity for UK companies was that they would be well placed to supply products and expertise if air pollution became a more important issue in countries such as China and India. There is a horizon scanning expert group on Air Quality which could consider the issue.

Action – [REDACTED] to put the question the next expert group meeting and to discuss with the ALE air quality policy team other means of getting a better handle on related business opportunities.

6. Other issues raised were

- [REDACTED] thought that it was important to link into the work on planning guidance and the red tape challenge on noise abatement zones
- [REDACTED] said that DECC were concerned that Air Quality standards favoured small or medium sized biomass boilers that shutdown/start up quite often

Action : [REDACTED] to send a note to [REDACTED] setting out the issue

Agenda Item 4 - Local Environment, Health, Wellbeing and Economy – Paper and Presentation

7. [REDACTED] gave the attached presentation. Growth was identified as relevant to all steering group members and is a topical issue. The conclusion was that the benefits of action are high and that there is a strong case to take action and better integrate policies.

8. Daniel concluded that there are some gaps in the analysis, with some data being more robust than others, but we have come a long way from the past. We now have a reasonable and compelling narrative which he hoped could be used across Whitehall

Action – [REDACTED] to circulate the presentation

AOB

9. It was agreed that the next meeting would be in 3 months' time. Topics for discussion yet to be decided.

RAS Programme Office Support

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