

**Kingston Environment Forum meeting, 9.00 - 10.40am, Tuesday September 18, 2018**

**Guildhall community room**

**NOTES (actions in red)**

**Present:** Marilyn Mason (TTK, KEF Chair), Stephen James (Environment Trust), John Legate (Kingston Cycling Campaign, Kingston Beekeepers), Andree Frieze (Green Party councillor Richmond, Make Air Safe & Clean)

**1. Apologies:** Cllr Hilary Gander, Marina Pacheco, Peter Watson

**2. Previous meeting minutes** approved, **MM** will post on KEF website

**3. Updates and actions** on KEF/Council issues, currently:

**- Green Zone**, **Kingston Carnival** **- our feedback:** TTK generally happy with turnout and space; MM had found volunteers at set-up and take-down times very helpful; JL thought it had gone better than expected but had issues with the ramp (just one, not very visible and partly hidden by vans parked all day by the church gate), a large and hazardous hole in the church lawn (**MM** would forward JL’s photo to KREC), the bouncy castle being a bit of a distraction, and lack of GZ publicity. MM commented that it had been hard for KREC to publicise the GZ when there was, for a long time, so little take-up of spaces and it could have been a bit pathetic - though in the end there had been enough participants to make it interesting and worthwhile. **MM** would take KEF and other GZ feedback to the KREC Carnival debrief meeting on 26/9 and report back, esp on whether Carnival would happen in 2019 and if so, the date for your diaries (in the hope that member-groups will avoid clashes).

**- Environment Trust update** from Stephen James, who reported on the Kingston Green Infrastructure Energy and Water Programme. “More information on <https://environmenttrust.co.uk/kingston-green-infrastructure>  
 There are five themes: water-friendly interventions e.g. green roofs; water efficiency at home; green infrastructure for biodiversity; air quality; energy - renewables, district energy, home efficiency. The aim is to develop plans for at least four practical projects, excluding energy where there will be more work on policy. There will be a focus on community engagement.  
 Progress: Survey completed. Results on- line:  <https://environmenttrust.co.uk/sites/default/files/files/KGIEW-survey-results-v2-2018-09-19.pdf>. RBK is considering options for street trees & SuDS and the project will help discussion with local groups. There has been positive engagement with seven Friends' groups and networking with environmental groups.  
 Challenges: Elliot Newton is leaving Environment Trust, but will remain involved with various Kingston projects. Low engagement with organisations outside environmental sector, South of Borough and hard-to-reach groups. Capacity of all organisations to develop bids, e.g. Air Quality, Greener City.”  
KEF comments included: that some of these were planning issues and might be covered in the London Plan and the currently-being-revised Kingston Plan (perhaps KEF could encourage inclusion?), and were certainly included in the North Kingston Draft Plan proposals; **MM** would try to organise for SJ to meet with the North Kingston Forum to discuss a street tree flood attenuation scheme for N Kingston, as community engagement and local knowledge were important for funding applications. SJ expressed some disappointment that little action seemed to be happening on Kingston’s air quality, despite the launch of Kingston’ Annual Public Health Report on AQ in June at Kingston University (an example of lack of joined-up thinking? commented MM, as, though it was a well-attended event, not everyone who should have been there was). AF mentioned Mums for Lungs and MM mentioned MASC (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/MakeAirSafeClean/> ) as local community groups campaigning on AQ.

**- Cycle and pedestrian access to Villiers Road Recycling Centre**: MM had taken up lack of access with RBK waste officer on behalf of a resident some time ago, and a couple of other residents had also raised it with their councillors more recently - so on Sunday 16/9 the Council trialled cycle access when big waste lorries would not be using the Centre. KCC and others (including MM and the original complainant, who could not be there) had been invited. This looked like progress and **MM** would find out if RBK’s safety concerns had been resolved and what outcome was likely.

**- KE Centre updates -** no one present to give these (might follow - or see Kingston Environment Centre website/Kingston Environment News).

**4. Other meetings**:   
- MM had attended **The Climate Coalition AGM** on 13/9, and encouraged KEF member-groups to consider joining to help strengthen TCC’s voice and to get regular updates, e g on government action and TCC campaigns - and to consider participating in one or two of the 2019 actions **(see Appendix 1).**

- JL had attended the ***Plastic Ocean*** litter-pick, discussion and film at Raven’s Ait earlier this month - it had attracted some new faces despite being, for some of us, a campaign that has gone on for years with some progress (e g the 5p charge, possibly soon to be doubled). But it had been a very long evening and ran very late!

**- Kingston Green Drinks** is now hosted by TTK at Woody’s riverside bar in Kingston from 7.00pm on the last Tuesday of every month. **All** were invited to come along and bring fliers etc to publicise their activities and events - or just to have a drink with friendly people.

- There had been no reports from other meetings in the past quarter.

**5.** **Upcoming meetings**:

- **Kingston Strategic Partnership (KSP)** on Mon 1 Oct: **MM** would comment where she could, but had little or no influence on the Agenda, which she had not yet received. (Areas of interest to KEF could include RBK proposals on riverside, town centre public realm, 2000 trees - with need for better public education, joined up thinking, proper plans for maintenance…). **See Appendix 2** report on July KSP meeting (circulated earlier).

**6. Future of KEF:**  MM offered to update and circulate for comment **KEF terms of reference** (last revised 2011!) - probably mostly cuts as KSP had changed a lot in 8 years.   
 The utility of KEF was also discussed. On the negative side and tending to make the KEF voice less representative, less democratic and weaker: poor attendance at KEF meetings; apparent failures to read meeting notes or KEF messages (e g, on the Green Zone); lack of volunteers to chair KEF or attend other Kingston stakeholder meetings. Additionally, all member-groups could and did talk anyway to relevant Council officers about the issues that concerned them. AF commented that KEF meetings, though sometimes interesting, were not very relevant to her Richmond portfolio (more useful to KEF than to her?) and she found it hard to justify the time spent.  
 On the more positive side: those who did come to meetings usually learnt or took away something useful; even a weak voice in the KSP might be better than no voice at all; and there was probably more joined-up thinking in KEF than in its member-groups or in the Council. So maybe KEF and MM (who is very much a generalist) should soldier on for a while - but this remained open to review and to new participants and volunteers, and also depended on how KSP developed or responded to KEF input. **MM** would also discuss KEF with Cllr Hilary Gander, who is now lead Kingston councillor on environment and sustainable transport, and who might welcome KEF input and support.

**7. AOB:**- **Sat 22/9 Car-Free Day** - RBK is closing part of St James Road and KCC will be there.

- **All** were requested to **share relevant news from KEF** with their organisations, to share updates and participate in discussions by email if they couldn’t attend KEF meetings, and to sign up and encourage members to sign up to **Kingston Environment News** at <https://us2.campaign-archive.com/home/?u=4da1f647e24d941f61f13281c&id=c8806ad842> - and to contribute news items and upcoming events to K E News.  
  
- AF updated us on **progress in Richmond,** which now had climate change written into its strategy documents, and which is bidding for **Liveable Neighbourhood** funds to develop a proposed safe cycling and walking route from Richmond to the border with Kingston (part of the Ham and Petersham Neighbourhood Plan). They had hoped to work closely with RBK on this so that their route linked with a safe route through N Kingston to the town centre, and had had meetings with the North Kingston Forum and RBK, but unfortunately RBK had not felt ready to make a joint bid for funding.

- AF also mentioned **In the Drink,** a campaign to get pubs to use reusable glasses and ditch the throwaway plastic, something to bring to Kingston pubs and Kingston Carnival debriefing maybe.

**8. Next meeting** - date(s) and topics/guests for next meeting(s) left open, likely to be in 3 months’ time depending on KSP schedule.

***APPENDIX 1: The Climate Coalition updates and upcoming actions***

TCC wants its campaigns to reach beyond the usual suspects: last year’s **Show the Love**’s focus on sport (<https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/show-the-love/>) did that, bringing in some new spokespersons and ideas from the world of sport, and perhaps next year’s theme in February 2019, food and food waste (with Brexit inpacts on the horizon) can do the same. TCC asked member-groups to start thinking about the kinds of event we could hold or support - in schools, in the community, to engage with our MPs… MM can update KEF on events and campaigns member-groups might like to join in.

**Speak Up Week** will be later in the year, aiming to persuade MPs to keep up the pressure for government action towards Net-Zero carbon emissions. 2019 actions could include thanking MPs for the support they are already giving (which helps to demonstrate voter support) or being more persuasive if necessary via letters to and meetings with MPs, which do sometimes work apparently; in 2018 Speak Up - <https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/speakupweek/-> featured 203 events, with 56 MPs as a result adding their signatures to TCC’s letter demanding government action towards net zero emissions by 2050, making the total number of signatories 184. The letter was handed in this month, and you can see if your MP signed at <https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/joint-letter>.

TTC are also asking members to nominate their **Green Heart Heroes** by 3rd December - see <https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/greenhearthero> for the various categories and nominate someone if you can.

***APPENDIX 2: Kingston Strategic Partnership meeting 12/7/18, emailed round, 13/7/18***

I attended this quite well attended meeting for Kingston Environment Forum on 12/7.  Groundwork was there for the first time and there was a new chair, Cllr Liz Green, leader of the Council. The main themes were: updating Liz on what KSP had been up to; and whither the KSP in future: what is it for, can it prioritise is activities, produce more outcomes, less talk… Many of KSP have been through this process before (every time there’s a new chair in fact), and there was some defence of “talk” as a way of sharing cross-cutting issues with a diverse audience, and of networking, with some working groups ( e g, the one on “good growth” which Vicky and I participated in last year whose report seems to have disappeared without trace, and which Liz knew nothing about) and smaller collaborations going on under the radar, as a consequence of meeting at KSP or KSP conferences. I didn’t feel that getting rid of or ignoring KSP altogether was an option, as it sometimes seemed when Kevin Davis was chairing. But neither did I sense that environmental issues would be going to the top of the list, and it was clear that funding would continue to be a general problem (not unique to Kingston Council of course).

Liz had previously asked KSP members to bring along 3 priorities (just 3!) to share - mine were: air quality (as a widely acceptable way of smuggling in many other environmental issues e g transport, energy efficiency, trees and other greenery, 20mph zones…); waste and recycling, incl. pedestrian and cycle access to Villiers Rd site and possibly banning single use plastics; and , as a bigger ask on climate change, divesting Council and other KSP organisations’ pension funds from fossil fuels, something I’ve raised before at KSP and was reminded about at last month’s Green Drinks. Other suggestions from around the table were public health, mental health (umbrellas under which some KEF issues could feature), addressing inequality and the problems of young people, public safety, genuinely affordable housing, employment and job opps, communications… I’m not sure that anything was resolved, and I’m still not sure how Groundwork and KVA relate to each other though they were both there. ***MM***