

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF
THE IGNITE STEERING GROUP
HELD IN ROOM FF07, STELLA HOUSE
THURSDAY 23 OCTOBER 2008 at 9.30am**

Present:

Members

Phil Hughes	Chair
Dr Tony Chapman	
Barry Errington	GONE
Steve Gawthorpe	EP

Officers

Ed Rowley	Acting Director of Regeneration
Kirsteen Thomson	Sustainable Regeneration Manager
James Arkless	Secretariat

ISG/08/30 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Colin Haylock.

ISG/08/31 Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

ISG/08/32 Minutes from meeting on 16 July 2008

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2008 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

ISG/08/33 Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

ISG/08/34 Membership of the Steering Group

The Chairman advised the Group that Professor Barry Clarke had resigned from the Steering Group as he was moving to Leeds. He had sent his good wishes to the Group. The Chairman indicated that he would write a suitable letter of thanks.

The group discussed the possible recruitment of new members. It was felt that a full Nolan recruitment process should wait until the future arrangements for Ignite were finalised. However it was noted that there was a need for a representative of ANEC on the Group, as the only potential funding partner not currently represented. There was also a suggestion that the Group might co-opt an additional person to achieve better representation across the sectors in which Ignite had an interest.

Action: Explore ANEC representative and possible co-optees

PH/KT

ISG/08/35 Key Activities Progress report

Kirsteen Thomson presented paper ISG/JUL/08/01 (Key Activities Progress report) setting out progress on key activities. Members noted the following:

- The methodology from the successful study “Retail Distinctiveness in Market Towns” is now being converted into an e-toolkit which will be placed on the Ignite portal. It can be used by practitioners and the community to assess the potential for their town.
- Regular meetings were taking place with NERIP to encourage sharing of ICT methodology and information.

- The pan-professional MoU was near completion and events were being planned. The focus would be on meeting employer demand for skills.
- A modus operandi was being developed for HCA to work with the Regional Centre of Excellence.

On the issue of reducing funding dependency, Ed Rowley outlined the proposals now being considered. He indicated that it was clear that the sustainable communities agenda had shifted considerably in recent times. The setting up of HCA and the greater emphasis on sustainable design were both significant changes. Members also noted that the new unitary authorities were also to have a much greater responsibility for sustainability.

In this context, rather than making decision in isolation, he advised the Group that there would be a review of the whole sustainable communities agenda. The Agency was currently preparing a brief for a consultant to carry this out. The review would be funded by One North East but carried out in consultation with ANEC, EP/HCA and GONE who would all need to agree priorities. The aim of the review would be to find out what was needed; decide on how it could be achieved; and agree who would fund the work required. Once priorities had been agreed there would be a workshop for professional bodies, local authorities and community groups to seek buy-in from all of them.

In terms of the structure of the delivery body, the Group noted that EP was currently unable to core fund Ignite because it was wholly owned by One North East. It was agreed that the Steering Group should look to influence the new arrangements (hence the need for an ANEC representative) and members acknowledged that the current structure would probably have to change.

The Chairman thanked Ed Rowley for the clarity given by his comments.

Resolved:

- i) That the Steering Group note and endorse the progress made towards agreed goals; and***
- ii) That this report may be published in the public records of the Agency.***

ISG/08/36 IGNITE – future development

Kirsteen Thomson presented paper ISG/OCT/08/02 which was a further discussion paper on actions to progress the IGNITE Plan.

Members noted that the proposed 4*4 events were planned for April or May, and provided that the Design Review Service was in place by then, one of these events could be dedicated to the launch of the service.

It was noted that the future funding of the Our Place 2020 project could not be clarified until the future structure and funding of the Regional Centre was secure.

There was a lengthy discussion about the Design Review Panel. It was agreed that the Panel should be selected by the key partners including ANEC, but some members felt that independent advice from the private sector might also be valuable. The procurement process was at the shortlisting stage and a number of viable bidders had emerged.

Due to the wide-ranging brief of the sustainable communities review, there was a view that the Design Review Service should be branded as 'Regional Design Review Service North East' rather than carrying the Ignite brand. Members were disappointed by this but accepted that, in order to secure the support (financial and otherwise) of all key interested parties, it may be necessary to detach the branding of the service from the Ignite brand, at least initially. The management structure would still report to the Agency through the Steering Group, and it would be possible to include 'managed by IGNITE' on the marketing materials. This would enhance the independence of the service and was seen as a good compromise in the current financial and political landscape

Members agreed that the existence of an independent panel which had to examine all projects would improve the capacity for taking design issues into account in the planning process. It was also hoped that local authorities, the housing growth points and the private sector would become more involved, without creating duplication.

Resolved:

- i) That the Design Review should be branded as Regional Design Review Service North East, and that the management structure reports to One North East through the Ignite Steering Group;***
- ii) That the Design Review Panel should be selected by a panel made up of ONE/IGNITE, CABE, EP/HCA and an appropriate Local Authority representative appointed by ANEC, supported by independent private sector advice;***
- iii) That the Group support the continued development of a funding stream for the higher level skills activity and endorse the proposal to allocate funds to the 4*4 events to support the pan-professional MoU;***
- iv) That IGNITE should continue to support and build public sector ownership of the Centre and its funded activity and co-opt a representative from ANEC; and***
- v) That this report may be published in the public records of the Agency, except for Annex 1 which should not be published for reasons of commercial confidentiality.***

ISG/08/37 Any other business

There was no other business.

ISG/08/38 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be on 20 January 2009 at 9.30am.

ISG/08/39 The meeting closed at 11.05am

I confirm that these are a true record of the meeting to which they relate:

Signed: **Date:**

Phil Hughes

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