

**CITY AND COUNTY OF CARDIFF
DINAS A SIR CAERDYDD**

ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 22 DECEMBER 1999

LOCAL AGENDA 21: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Background

1.1 Local Authorities have been given the task by central government of developing a Local Agenda 21 Strategy by December 2000 which aims to promote "sustainable development" at a local level. Sustainable development aims to ensure that social, environmental and economic issues are considered inter-dependently to make sure that while we meet the needs of the present, we don't compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs and aspirations. Sustainable development is achieved through balancing:

- social progress which recognises the needs of everyone
- effective protection of the environment
- prudent use of natural resources
- economic growth and employment

1.2 The stimuli for the national and local action on sustainable development have been the United Nations Earth Summits in Rio 1992 and Kyoto in 1997. Agenda 21 is a list of recommendations from the Earth Summit in 1992, which sought to bring about international co-operation on the range of environmental, economic and social issues that determine our quality of life and the sustainability of the way in which we live.

1.3 Governments have developed national Agenda 21 plans for sustainable development, the latest in the UK being "A better quality of life" UK Sustainable Development Strategy (DETR 1999). "Local Voices - Modernising Local Government in Wales (WLGA 1998) has also highlighted the development of sustainable communities as a priority for Welsh local authorities. The National Assembly of Wales has sustainable development as a core function. Local government has been given the task since 1992 of entering into "*dialogue with its citizens, local organisations and private enterprises to adopt a "local Agenda 21"*".

2. Progressing Local Agenda 21 in Cardiff

2.1 Cardiff County Council has started a process to develop a Local Agenda 21 Strategy - which has involved the publication of a 'Local Agenda 21: Framework for Action' which sets out a plan for progressing Local Agenda 21 in Cardiff. All members were sent a copy in June 1999 prior to a launch of the document by the Lord Mayor.

The Framework gives some background on the Local Agenda 21 and sustainability and outlines the 13 themes for a Sustainable Cardiff. It sets out existing policies and activities contributing to Local Agenda 21

in Cardiff, and has sections on Awareness Raising and Education, Building Sustainable Communities and Building Partnerships

- 2.2 The Framework document has been sent out for consultation to 600 organisations, individuals and groups, with the following questions -
- what their priorities are for a Sustainable Cardiff
 - how their activity contributes to a Sustainable Cardiff
 - examples of projects and activities which demonstrate sustainability

The results of this consultation are being collated and will inform the development of the Local Agenda 21 Strategy.

- 2.3 A series of workshops were undertaken in October 1999 which were used to identify a set of user friendly sustainability indicators for Cardiff. These will ultimately be used to measure whether we are collectively moving towards or away from sustainability over time. A meeting in January is to take the Sustainability Indicator initiative forward.

- 2.4 The workshops also identified practical projects and activities that demonstrate sustainability across Cardiff. These include existing and potential projects and will be used to raise awareness of sustainability as part of the Local Agenda 21 Strategy.

- 2.5 The cabinet has given the go-ahead for the development of an awareness raising strategy for sustainability. This strategy, also to be drafted in early 2000, will outline activities, events and training which can be focused both within and outside the authority to raise awareness of sustainability issues and make the link between individual actions and global problems.

- 2.6 The authority is also bringing environmental education providers from a range of sectors to undertake activities as part of a Cardiff Environmental Education Network. The authority supports Cardiff schools getting involved in the pan-European Eco-schools Project, provides environmental design advice and provides direct services to schools via Flat Holm Project, Caerphilly Mountain Service and Forest Farm Country Park, and the Community Ranger Service. The Lord Mayor's Civic Awards is a competition run annually which has Local Agenda 21 as a key theme.

- 2.6 Strategic Planning and Neighbourhood Renewal run an Environmental Grants programme which supports pilot LA21 projects, Sustainable Schools projects and provides Small Environmental Grants for community groups. The Cardiff Community Environmental Action Fund also supports environmental projects in the community. This is run with Landfill Tax credits and is co-ordinated by Princes Trust Cymru.

2.7 Sustainability Factsheets are being produced to disseminate good practice across the city and raise awareness of sustainability issues. These include factsheets on enabling *organisations* (e.g. BTCV, Princes Trust, Black Environment Network) *projects* (Fairwater Community Garden, Track 2000 and *issues* (community composting, organic gardening, biodiversity).

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16 December 1999

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL