

Reading Climate Change Partnership Board Meeting,
3rd March - Civic Centre, Reading

Present:

Sally Coble (Chair)
Dan Ferbank
Tracey Rawling-Church
Cllr Tony Page
Jenny Allen
Cllr Paul Gittings
Chris Rhodes
Summreen Sheikh
John Booth
Ben Burfoot

Apologies – None

Minutes – No comments received

Monitoring of action plan

Review and monitoring of strategy action plan. 46% of actions green, 15% were red and 13% purple (purple is means we don't have influence over delivery). Red moves to purple if not resourced to deliver. The board went through the monitoring report.

Jill to go back and make changes. How is partnership going to report progress to RBC committee in July? Reporting to the next period, report up to end march on RBC progress against the plan. Would want to see a high level report of rest of action plan, and the RBC progress in more detail. All actions up to March 2015 to be reported in July 2015.

Timetable suggested at the end of Jills papers. People to send suggestions / discussions to Jill and do via email.

Renewable Energy Strategy

Workshop's took place with business, and also non business,. Next step to take work to a consultant to get strategy finalised - Using evidence base and workshop results to inform final draft. To be done quickly without further consultation. Agreed maximum budget £10k. It is a partnership strategy and will go beyond RBC actions to all sectors. Opportunities through planning and refurbishments – lots in Reading, landlord v's tenant relationship is important. The specification to be written by RBC with input from RCCP partners and include some of the points made in the meeting. The scope could be very wide – should be defined up front in the strategy. It would be a top down approach and not include detail of specific solutions.

Action BB – Spec for Consultant report.

The purpose of having such a large increase in renewables is to meet the target in the strategy as part of an energy mix and to boost the local green economy. And for businesses to provide services and social reasons. New businesses may also want fabric efficiency over pv – how will it be presented on the planning side of things – this can be counted towards the BREEAM. We would not advocate renewables over energy saving over generation.

Non business group – John Booth, Reubena Ovuorie (RBC), Summreen Sheikh (RBC), Richard Pike (RBC), Karen Rowland, Kevin Crocker (RBC), Phil Coker (UoR).

Business cmty were engaged through Re-Start Local workshop well with around 30 attendees.

Action SS - Circulate the notes from these sessions.

Dan is happy to help as well on this. Promote this to the RCAN event in May – get themes emerging from reporting. Consultant will ‘cut cloth accordingly’.

Ben to talk to Colin from BFC / Johnny about the Bracknell report done by PBA.

Communication Plan

Consider monitoring through theme lead(s). No coordinator in place.

Comms plan is the RCAN (Reading Climate Action Network) incl. events, twitter, press releases (through sally) use RBC twitter and facebook too.

Action SS to circulate table and comms strat detailing what channels to use

University of Reading (UoR) Student placements

Agreed to firm up relationship with the University and Partnership. Are there things in the action plan that students could work on? We can give guidance on what we can do – pull out purple actions. Could we also help students with their Masters degree projects. Timings are key – **ideas by end Dec**. There is a range of quality, Dan has had MSc doing solar feasibility on campus. All to look on action plan and see what is suitable for academia. Ben to keep talk to Dan on this.

Action – all to consider where MSc projects or other student contributions could help to deliver action plan.

BB and DF to look at action plan and consider re student opportunities.

Solar funds

Solar panels create income, which Board can use to fund projects in line with the original report to LSP which emphasised the outcomes would be fuel poverty and low carbon investments. Board to receive regular account, which are held by the Council. Grants are issued to suitable community projects. So far Hydro scheme received £2k grant and recently won £20k of Urban Community Energy Funding from Dept Energy and Climate Change (DECC) – 1 of 2 in the country. Board agreed to do some comms on this.

Discussed further use of revenue. Agreed that an update would be taken to the LSP on the use of fund, but propose widening the scope to support activities in the climate change strategy.

The partnership also have £50k capital available from the LSP. Thames valley free school did not materialise and therefore seeking another roof to install solar. Need to let LSP know if no projects can be identified.

Hodsol school free school was discussed – community centre is part of proposal– RBC are already looking at a future program to invest on schools. Hodsol community centre building has a north facing, roof unfortunately due to its ‘V’ profile. South reading community centre could be an option. Board agreed to publicise the opportunity.

A question was asked about what was needed to maintain and repair systems. BB pointed out that this element is a budgeted part of the revenue. Renewable energy strat – should we keep some to do some demonstration projects with this. Yes potential. Ground source.

Action BB to prepare a budget.

Can the board set up a ‘hardship’ fund for those in fuel poverty? There are already existing schemes to do this, in particular ‘winter watch’ for fuel poverty. The partnership could make a contribution to this. There is a question as to whether there is the Capacity to deliver these funds. A suggestion was made to consider funding an apprentice to do work with Winter Watch team.

Action BB to make enquiries about apprenticeship scheme.

Consideration of Grants

Reading Food Growing Network – sponsor £2k is a maximum to get visibility at the event. Also request clear advertising of Reading Climate Change Partnership.

Oxford Road Community Garden – Benches made of recycled material – ben to decide – group noted expensive.

Hydro – weir pool survey, Board to ask what does this project want each year. Only one application per scheme per year is proposed.

COP 21 (International Climate Conference 2015 P-Paris)

John Booth proposed that the board organise an MP information session ahead of the Paris Climate Conference (COP21)

Agree it was a cross party issue and event is a good idea, although MPs after May are unknown at this point. Agreed best format is a breakfast briefing with invite to press. An RCAN event is planned for May - could be combined. But want focus on Paris and what the Board want British gov to press on, so agreed a separate briefing could be better. Resources is a challenge if RCCP to organise. Hold it in Reading – could be at University or Forbury Cinema. Aim is to get MP's up to speed on issues so they do the lobbying and Q&A with local expert speakers from UoR and others – quality of speakers is important. Action to get a speaker and organise programme. UoR would be a good to be involved, media build up will be in Nov / Dec and that will be public involvement stage but update for MP needs to be sooner. Short presentations from experts – flooding, etc, keep it fun and fast, invite media, info as well as Q&A with 10 or 12 candidates. Important to get local people fired up that climate change is a local issue that affects them.

BB to take to Lead Cllr (no longer at meeting)

TRC to ask green alliance when a good time is for this

A.O.B

Diversifying funds – Not actioned to date BB to speak to Cllr Page about this – carry forward

Dan – Setting up a community funded solar fund, inviting staff and students, alumni to invest in scheme on campus. Clear overlaps, what will these funds be used for? Intention is to install 1MW of solar panels (approx. 5000 panels). Dan will email about the outcome.