

Reading Climate Change Partnership
Board Meeting Minutes, 18th April 2024
MS TEAMS meeting online, 10 AM - 12 PM
 Minutes prepared by: Ben Burfoot

Item	Actions
<p style="text-align: center;">1. Welcome, introductions and apologies</p> <p>Apologies: Brian Grady</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">2. Minutes of previous meeting and actions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Board approved minutes of January 2024 meeting.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">3. Board changes and succession planning</p> <p>TRC chairing for final time and made reference to long history of partnership and her involvement in creating and participating in it for the past fifteen years. The board thanked Tracey for her service to the partnership throughout its existence since 2009 and her invaluable contribution to make it the success it is today.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">4. Election of co-chair vote (5 min)</p> <p>Tracey announced that Heather Marshall had been nominated as Co-Chair.</p> <p>Heather left the room and the Board voted in HM unanimously.</p> <p>Heather has been a very active member of the board since taking over the water resources team and she brings with her enthusiasm or willingness to participate in a whole range of things outside her theme area.</p> <p>RS supported Heather but posed the question about whether we have sufficient representation of conservation groups and how the board would seek to handle any conflict of interest arising from partners responsibilities to their employers.</p> <p>PM pointed out that Heather no longer works for Thames Water and the board has a history of people including Heather that have been able to manage their responsibilities whilst making valuable contribution to the partnership, including, TRC added the first Chair Sally Coble of the Environment Agency. BB made reference to the boards terms of reference and the board agreed that we would check that declarations of interest are kept up to date accordingly.</p>	

<p>TRC also pointed out that the board needed to act in accordance with the Nolan Principles. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life</p> <p>DP stated that he had every confidence in Heather and the board in that respect and has had a conversation about how they would work together and is positive that they can work together successfully.</p> <p>SW commented on the importance of enthusiasm and knowledge. He mentioned the fact that Mott McDonald (Heathers employer) work in the oil and gas sector and that we need to be aware of that in terms of our response but Heather doesn't work in that area and therefore not a concern. She has specific skills of value to the partnership.</p> <p>The board unanimously elected Heather as Co-Chair, with Dylan Parkes and replacing Tracey Rawling Church.</p> <p>Heather (returns to meeting) thanked the board for electing her as co-chair and looked forward to helping the partnership extend its reach and resources.</p>	
<p>5. Reading Climate Festival Update</p> <p>GF presented the item.</p> <p>We have received 23 expressions of interest for Festival events.</p> <p>RCCP is running an additional 6 events, including: Big Lunch; Shaping a Future for Community Energy in Reading; Reading Climate Pledge for Organisations; Reading's Response to the Climate Emergency (this event was voted on by the Board who agreed it should go ahead); What Does Net Zero Mean for Reading; and Campaigns to Change Systems. We are also helping to shape the programme for Youth Mobilisation Day (including incorporating the Dialogue Matters youth visioning workshop for the wider stakeholder engagement process).</p> <p>RCCP also requested events from partners: Fundamentals of Net Zero Reporting and Climate Ambassadors for Schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our aim is to grow the Reading Climate Pledge for Organisations event into a bigger campaign / offering for businesses, with the pledge acting as a unifying concept for businesses in Reading and low-barrier entry point (i.e. an intention to work towards net zero and an intention to support Reading's journey to net zero). RCAN's support for businesses will aim to mirror the Pledge items and to progress the climate action priorities that emerge from the climate strategy review process. • Our aim for the Shaping a Future for Community Energy in Reading event is that it gives rise to new collaborations and new social enterprises. We hope to identify a more strategic role for community energy in helping to address the gap in Reading's emissions reductions. 	<p>All: Feed back ideas on CES event.</p> <p>PM and DP to support/work on event.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Museum will hold a series of talks and exhibitions which will sit under the Festival umbrella. • Five walks are included in the programme. • We have events for all key groupings: business, schools, children, young adults, householders, campaigning groups and citizens, and there are a number of whole-town events. Nature and wellbeing are well represented in the programme and expected to do well as usual. • University College of Estate Management will run an event for Key Stage 3 pupils and Design Nature will run a Clean Air Day workshop for Key Stage 3 pupils. • Smaller children can participate in a Samba Parade and shaker-making workshop during the Big Lunch and in Incredible Edible Reading's 'grow your own' activities. <p>GF is preparing a toolkit for all Board members, event hosts and other outreach partners to provide clear messages, links and images for promoting individual Festival events as well as the Festival as a whole. Partners can also engage with and share RCAN's socials about the Festival.</p>	
<p>6. Climate Strategy Review</p> <p>GF presented the Year of Climate Engagement Project (YoCEP). A slide deck showed the pathway of activities that has led us to this point (since October) 2023, with the Board consulted at every point of the process to shape a brief and appoint a supplier.</p> <p>The contract has been awarded to Dialogue Matters and work has begun (also with the Board's participation) on identifying a 'core deliberative group' which will meet in June, Sept and November to help shape a set of climate action priorities for Reading's next climate emergency strategy. There will also be many opportunities for public participation in this process.</p> <p>Invitation list being finalised. Board members are invited to feed back with ideas for people to invite to CDG.</p> <p>Gudrun shared a presentation in which she had distilled Dialogue Matters' 50-page document into a one-page table of engagement opportunities.</p> <p>These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A youth participation event and open-ended discussion pack for the public right at beginning of the process, both of which will feed into Workshop 1 of the Core Deliberative Group. Reading Climate Festival events will also direct people towards these opportunities. The outputs of Workshop 1 will be presented to the public as a survey to give people the opportunity to express support, disagreement and to help refine proposed climate priorities and identify omissions. This survey will help to shape Workshop 2 of the Core Deliberative Group. 	<p>ALL: Feed back with ideas for people to invite to CDG.</p> <p>GF: Update board members with materials and invitations to events.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An accountability working group will be appointed as part of the process to help monitor and encourage progress towards agreed priorities. • A comms campaign will aim to move people from 'generally interested' to 'actively participating'. <p>Chair thanked Gudrun for a really useful overview of a very comprehensive and cohesive programme.</p>	
<p>7. Theme Update</p> <p>Waste and Resources Theme – Paul Ducker</p> <p>Summary was given at last meeting. Focus on planet friendly diets and sustainable food systems – connection made with Sustainable Food Partnership noting Yasmin is attending meeting.</p> <p>RBC and New Directions College working on phasing out single use plastics. Some low hanging fruit picked but can go further.</p> <p>Audit planned of single use. Replicable for other organisations in partnership who encouraged to also show what they are doing.</p> <p>Reading Circular Economy – Reading Library of things a great building block for this.</p> <p>Myers refillables opened in Woodley (Also in Wokingham)</p> <p>Paul will circulate a note around green events code of practice which is a national initiative that Reading is part of to green event standards as a mechanism for encouraging local events around the country. Led by 'Vision 25' and 'Julia's Bicycle'. Reading involved via Live Nation and Reading Festival supported by RBC on Climate and Sustainability Commitments. Reading identified as one of ten local authorities that are Pioneers. Aligning with national framework. Propose adopt G.COP standards and move away from narrower focus on specific issues for eg festival tents.</p> <p>Festivals are good testbeds for innovation around sustainability.</p> <p>Food partnership is involved in a workshop as part of a pilot as part of Reading International Festival which will be over by Oct but COP will continue.</p> <p>Tricia Marcouse – Nature</p> <p>Focus has been on the nature recovery strategy for Berkshire. There is a meeting next week and there is a map on line for people to put on where there are plants or animals that need protection, or areas where there's opportunities to increase.</p> <p>Beanpole day at Caversham Court taking place this coming Saturday.</p> <p>Heather Marshall – Water</p>	<p>PD to feedback on SUP audit.</p> <p>PD to circulate Green Events COP doc.</p> <p>TM to feedback on Beanpole day.</p>

<p>Note The Greater London Authority are leading a detailed case study review on water in retrofit and new build looking at per capita consumption targets. HM to share details and consider outcome for Reading policy.</p> <p>Quite a lot of resources and project involving SUDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage). Would be interesting to explore public knowledge and perception. There is a big gap in the maintenance - HM to work with RBC on this. Schedule 3 will bring more new developments implementing and this could link to carbon sequestration and biodiversity markets. RBC to consider implications and opportunities.</p> <p>There are many examples of work the Council is doing in this space that could be further publicised alongside links with active travel.</p> <p>HM to work with GF to identify awareness raising approaches for water related actions.</p>	<p>HM to work with GF to identify awareness raising approaches for water related actions.</p>
<p>Chris Maddock – Transport</p>	
<p>Reading West Station and new station building at Oxford Road (Reading West) and Tilehurst Road Entrance and Tilehurst Station including step free access (installation of lifts).</p> <p>New funding for design of a pipeline of new cycle schemes secured. The announcement of funding for EV charging points in residential streets for people without driveways. Also received funding jointly with Reading Transport Ltd for 24 electric buses. They will be first in Reading and will be a two year programme. Further EV buses also being considered.</p> <p>A new bus lane on the A33 and a ticket discount scheme on the Oxford Road. Two new School Street schemes being worked on. Civitas Academy on Gt Knolly St going in shortly.</p> <p>Scheme on Bath Road from Town Centre to Berkley Av Junction with segregated cycle facilities and new pedestrian enhancements due late summer.</p>	
<p>Ben Burfoot - Energy</p>	
<p>Energy Master Plan has evolved into Local Area Energy Plan which is being considered at Berkshire level working closely with SSEN LENZA tool (Local Electricity Net Accelerator tool).</p> <p>Regional System Planning is new level of engagement with energy infrastructure which will be coming and which need consideration as they develop plans to future proof network and bring forward large scale electrification.</p> <p>Zero Carbon planning starting to see schemes coming through planning with potential contributions to be allocated to retrofit schemes although not due until completion which could be some years away. Another relevant policy is</p>	<p>BB to feedback on LENZA and LAEP work.</p> <p>Local Planning Authority to develop new policies. BB to feedback.</p>

<p>connection to heat network and some sites now becoming 'network ready' and implementing heat pumps (electric capacity allowing).</p> <p>Huge transition towards electrified heat and transport will be challenging to implement with network capacity issues.</p> <p>Retrofit projects are happening in Reading utilising government funding in the hundreds per year. This is already challenging given the state of the supply chain eligibility of available funding but considering that we need thousands per year, we are not on track for net zero currently.</p> <p>Renewable energy – solar together scheme has delivered one round of solar installs in the hundreds and another round in preparation currently.</p> <p>Heat Networks – New legislation is coming on heat network zoning which will require connection to a heat network in the denser areas of Reading. The Council will have a role as Zone Coordinator and are currently designing networks funded through the governments Heat Network Delivery Unit. RBC will be bringing Minster Quarter, a new area of regeneration in the town centre into the scheme working with development partner McLaren Living. The project is at Detailed Project Design Stage.</p> <p>The Council has also been working on a project to explore 'open loop' ground source heat pumps to heat the Hexagon theatre and new studio extension. This will also test this approach for utilisation of heat from the aquifer to supply the heat network. This is also being developed at the University to be delivered through their heat network at Whiteknights campus.</p> <p>The Council is also working on a Levelling Up Fund Programme which will decarbonise the Hexagon Theatre and Civic Offices by installing heatpumps and other tech. This will mean all the Councils large corporate buildings are powered by heat pumps with the exception of town hall.</p>	<p>BB to feedback on uptake of phase 2 Solar Together</p> <p>BB to feedback at next board on borehole and Heat Network progress.</p> <p>AF to feedback to July board on Annual report if available and in Oct on new hospital report</p>
<p>Alison Foster - Health</p>	
<p>An update was posted by Alison, who had to leave the meeting.</p> <p>Just agreed the funding for the year and there is a new lead on net zero - Clara Purnell - Head of Procurement (may be a change of RCCP rep). Annual report due June/July so will update then. On new hosp, commissioned the work needed to understand carbon impact of moving site, not due to deliver until september. While the new hospital has good guidance on running a net zero hospital when built, it's the building it/construction that is a significant issue.</p>	
<p>Yasmine Illsley– Food</p>	
<p>Yasmine highlighted three areas of focus; food insecurity, healthy eating and sustainable foods and food growing.</p> <p>Planning first meeting to review climate action plan and look at further opportunities.</p>	

<p>Reading Uni and Whitley Community Development Association are doing some great work on food sequel programmes. Considering existing and potential future funding for food growing and community kitchens.</p> <p>Chair commented on how important food is to the climate conversation and great to have expert representation on the partnership.</p>	
<p>8. BID (Business Improvement District) Programmes and Priority Areas</p> <p>Scott Witchalls</p> <p>There are two BID business plans, the BID Central and Abbey Quarter. Paper provided.</p> <p>BID is a ring fenced area where businesses pay an additional levy on top of their business rates which goes into a separate pot managed and run to improve the area.</p> <p>This is set at +1.4% and pays for things like well-being, recycling and cleaning, flowers, Christmas lights etc. There is a page specifically on sustainability and the environment so cross cut with RCCP.</p> <p>Cardboard and small electrical item recycling and trees for streets for example. And also supporting the climate festival.</p> <p>Other new areas for consideration are bee hives on roofs, waterways and last mile deliveries.</p> <p>There are also useful coms channels such as weekly newsletter etc.</p> <p>Tracey asked about the 'Green BID' and Reading having the first one in the UK. Scott to provide an update once he has discussed with board.</p> <p>BB mentioned possible solar opportunities for rooftops in BID areas. SW to mention to board.</p>	<p>SW to feedback on discussion with REDA Board Green BID and solar opportunities.</p>
<p>9. Budget</p> <p>BB updated that RCCP spent £39,000, spending a bit more on staff and overtime last year and drawing down around £3700 from reserves.</p> <p>There remains £31,218 in the reserve.</p> <p>The Climate Engagement work is funded from the council's climate reserve which is a different budget to the RCCP budget.</p> <p>T-RC commented that it looks fairly comfortable in terms of of having the resources to keep going, but that does only maintain the status quo, so it's really helpful to have the additional funding from the Council for things like the consultation for the development of the new strategy.</p>	<p>BB to circulate budget doc</p>

<p>BB commented that the solar panel maintenance costs may soon go up as we need to fund inverter replacements as they start to fail.</p>	
<p>10. AOB</p> <p>GF asked partners to help identify people to invite into the core deliberative group for the first workshop in June and find substitutes where needed. Personal recommendations sought.</p> <p>PM thanked everyone for their involvement in the Climate Leaders’ Summit raising awareness and commitment from key organisations and partners. Particular thanks to the University for hosting feeding guests and to Gudrun for organising and speakers including Tracey.</p> <p>RS stressed the need to inform participants of process and commitment. GF reassured that this will happen. DP recommending sorting long list in clusters which GF agreed to do.</p> <p>TM signposted some useful leaflets for local events/initiatives. TC suggested also put on website.</p> <p>HM suggested Interview style conversations with businesses and stakeholders as part of engagement work to include co-creation opportunities esp around skills and water efficiency. TC suggested IKEA.</p> <p>BP mentioned SSEN keen on schools engagement for Climate Festival so that young people can understand the role electricity plays.</p> <p>TRC re-visited earlier discussion on whether theme leads wanted a specific event for festival.</p> <p>GF keen to look at existing process and where gaps are for focus in a transparent way. PM agreed transparency rather than accountability which is not with RCCP specifically.</p> <p>TRC commented that showcasing important as there is so much going on. PM and DP agreed to work on event.</p> <p>HM – Just announced water restoration fund, where the Environment Agency take any fines that have been applied to water companies recently and put into a ring fenced pot and can be then used to do environmental restoration and improvement work. HM to pick up re Water and TM Nature</p> <p>TM suggested contact made with Connect Reading re CDG.</p> <p>GF asked that partners let her know of potential funding that might be available for RCCP work.</p>	<p>ALL: suggest members of CDF to GF</p> <p>GF to send details of events and process.</p> <p>GF to arrange diarise events of website.</p> <p>BP to send offer/suggestion for event to GF</p> <p>PM, DP to coordinate CES event</p> <p>HM to notify partnership of fund details.</p> <p>ALL – notify GF of funding opportunities</p>

