

**Reading Climate Change Partnership
Board Meeting Minutes :: July 2024**

Apologies: Mike Waddelove; Gudrun Freese (annual leave)

ITEM	ACTION	WHO
<p>1. Welcome, introductions, apologies and staff changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clara Purnell will replace Ali Foster on the Board as Health Theme Lead. This is Peter Moore's last Board Meeting as he is leaving Reading Borough Council for Westminster Council. 		
<p>2. Approve minutes of previous meeting</p> <p>Approved</p>		
<p>3. Succession Planning</p>		
<p>4. Reading Climate Festival 2024 (RCF2024)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DP (as RCF2024 steering group chair) thanked GF for her 'above-and-beyond' service wrt festival comms, programming and delivery, seconded by HM and PM; and PM thanked TRC for her copious volunteer time both this year and as festival originator and for her ongoing support. • DP noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The upgraded look & feel of RCF2024 across print and digital media, as well as updated messaging to help people feel 'part of something bigger' / collective impacts. - Prolific social posting to promote festival fortnight as well as each individual event, with highlights including a Big Lunch reel that was viewed 10k+ times, with 96% of these viewers new to RCAN. The reel drove traffic to the Climate Strategy Review landing page, creating a spike in stakeholder engagement. - RCF2024 comms toolkit which enabled each event host to promote their own event under the banner of the festival. - Bigger role for RCCP as curators and event organisers, e.g. community energy event (which generated recommendations for the strategy review), Big Lunch, and kick-off of a pledge campaign for businesses. - Key elements of this annual festival are now in place, many of them at 'prototype' scale. With a bit of additional resource these elements could be shaped for increased impacts. - Additional resource (e.g. resource to mobilise and orchestrate relevant partners) is also needed to reach 'beyond the usual suspects'. - Event registration and attendee numbers as well as a reflection on the quality of the online content backs up a steering group recommendation to consolidate online events into a more curated online programme. This will take additional RCCP project management resource but 	<p>RCF2025 steering group to discuss recommendations and lessons learned to inform the 2025 festival</p> <p>Board Members to invite relevant comms leads at their organisations and other relevant orgs into a RCF2025 Comms Alliance – please intro them to GF via email</p> <p>DP to prepare RCF2025 proposal / strategy for next Board Meeting</p>	<p>DP & RCF2025 steering group</p> <p>All</p> <p>DP</p>

<p>could help us deliver better quality and better attended events which can then be recorded and used as comms assets to achieve additional reach and engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RCF2025 will need to mobilise additional volunteer support and/or funding earlier on if we want to deliver a similar size (or bigger) programme in 2025 - DP appealed to those present to help mobilise their own teams / organisations to host high-quality events during RCF2025 (or co-create them with the programming team) and to offer comms support for the festival, and to do this within requested timelines; it is much more difficult to incorporate ideas after deadlines have passed as it puts pressure on the organising team at a time when they are focused on delivery and it reduces the lead time for effective comms. - In 2025 the festival will coincide with the launch for the new climate emergency strategy for 2025 – 2030 and we are looking forward to aligning the festival with the stakeholder engagement for the new strategy. - DP said he aims to partner with RBC arts & culture team on a headline act for RCF2025. - HM noted that Theme Leads and other board members can build on the momentum and the partnerships created during the festival to help them make progress against climate actions they want to deliver - TM felt we didn't succeed in getting publicity out to people who didn't already know us, and suggested we promote future festivals via screens on Reading Buses. - 		
<p>5. New government</p> <p>PM summarised implications of new government for climate action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emphasis in new govt policy on devolution; recognition that local governments have a big role to play in helping national govt to meet targets including climate targets - Reading won't necessarily receive a devolution deal; this depends on our own plans, proposals and partnerships - It's clear from conversations at Berkshire Prosperity Board that Berkshire is not at the front of the cue atm with regard to devolution deals – there are other coalitions having much more advanced conversations with govt - Manifesto commitments (which may not translate to policy commitments), include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <i>Recognition of climate and nature crisis as greatest long-term global challenge we face</i> o <i>Energy transition as opportunity (vs cost focus)</i> o <i>Strong commitment to clean grid by 2030</i> o <i>No new oil, gas and coal licences and a ban on</i> 	<p>PM to circulate note to Board about implications of new government for RCCP work</p>	<p>PM</p>

<p><i>fracking; reverse bans on wind</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Ambitious plan to grow economy (which MIGHT undermine decarbonisation if not managed)</i> ○ <i>Bill to set up Great British Energy + commitment to support community energy via local power plans</i> ○ <i>Supporting regulations and infrastructure, e.g. investment to upgrade grid</i> ○ <i>Jobs & skills to be allocated more funding</i> ○ <i>Additional £6.6 billion govt investment in housing and retrofit</i> ○ <i>Transport – powers to franchise bus services to be extended to all local authorities, not just London (Reading never got rid of municipal bus company – will others now try to replicate Reading’s successful model?)</i> ○ <i>Support EV transition and phase out of ICE by 2030</i> ○ <i>Make UK green finance capital of the world</i> ○ <i>Resilience needs stronger emphasis as does ecological emergency</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conversation between national and local governments about net zero transition looking more positive - JE: Reading now has 3 local MPs committed to new manifesto and RBC and RCCP should engage with them lest we get lost in the scramble for funds and support 		
<p>6. Climate Strategy Review</p> <p>PM summarised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workshop 1 took place on 28 June 2024, with FULL turnout from those who RSVP’d yes (38 + facilitators) - A big vote of thanks to Coaching Reading for their volunteer support as group facilitators - Business community was underrepresented, despite exhaustive efforts to engage people - Workshop was designed by our partners Dialogue Matters, and worked well - Workshop 1 focused on identifying priority areas and themes - Renewable energy was not sufficiently discussed - Health & wellbeing runs through every conversation but did not emerge as a separate theme, possibly because it was an underrepresented theme in the room - Activities supported systems thinking and responses - Contributions were enriched by range of voices - NEXT STEPS: GF has circulated a comms toolkit via email, with links to a Discussion Pack, Big Letter and Survey. - Press release will go out next week – please share once it hits. 	<p>All – please introduce us to business participants for next workshops</p> <p>All – Please use GF’s comms toolkit to drive engagement in Discussion Pack, Big Letter and Survey 1.</p> <p>All – All board members please respond to survey and share press release</p>	<p>All</p> <p>All</p> <p>All</p>

The Council is doing a lot of work on buses, mostly using government funding, e.g. ongoing ticket discount scheme, new bus services, park and ride, more bus lanes on the A33 and London Road, 24 electric buses, EV charge points.

Active travel projects include 2 new school street schemes taking us up to 6 schemes in 10 schools.

The Shinfield Rd and Bath Rd cycle schemes are progressing and nearly ready to launch and we have funding to develop future cycle schemes.

We are supporting cycle training and Dr Bike sessions .

Meeting with Great Western and Councillor Ennis last week to discuss new projects with the rail industry.

RESOURCES – Paul Ducker

Overall theme goal: By 2025, for Reading to be on track to become a zero-waste town by 2030, actively innovating to find new ways of using resources more efficiently and thereby minimising our contribution to climate change.

- **Domestic waste and recycling (including food waste):** Re3 continues to grow and develop the range of services it offers Reading residents, both at the kerbside and at recycling centres. In 2023/24 (across Reading, Bracknell and Wokingham) re3 achieved a recycling rate of 53.6% with 95.3% of residual waste diverted from landfill. This is an inspiring, but focused, achievement.
- **Commercial waste and recycling (including schools):** The picture is less clear. Fragmented market. Inconsistent recording and reporting. (Local authority targets focus on domestic waste and recycling.) However, there are pockets of good practice. For example, Reading’s BIDS recycling initiatives and Collard’s work with local festivals. Some regulation exists or is in the pipeline (including around electronic waste, single use plastic ban and the ‘right to repair’). The ‘polluter pays’ principle is a powerful one, if implemented. Public opinion and concerns about finite resources (not to mention pollution) also have an important role to play. People’s concerns tend not to be neatly siloed. Anger at polluted rivers, air quality and the wastefulness of single use Vapes are all examples of topics that can easily lead on to wider conversations about corporate – and personal - responsibility.

System level innovation (supporting actions that catalyse change at a system level)

- **Around food:** Great that we’re now connected with Reading Food Partnership.
- **Around circularity;** At the moment the challenge is probably just

to find, signpost and celebrate initiatives as they emerge (for example, Reading Library of Things, retailers introducing return and/or repair services, etc.). Longer term, as with food and festivals, the challenge may become to develop narratives, business models and funding streams that encourage connections.

- **Around festivals:** Green Events Code of Practice pilot is having impacts in Reading that are way beyond our wildest dreams when we got involved. (This is definitely the initiative that is currently exciting me most and which has taken up a lot of my volunteer time this quarter.) A few examples of initiatives it has helped catalyse:
 - East Reading Festival made its green goals (including involvement in the GECOP pilot) a prominent part of promoting the festival.
 - Water Fest partnered with Collards to pilot an events waste and recycling package; Lucy Daniels actively championed waste reduction across the site, including looking for alternatives to the use of disposable cable ties.
 - Readipop Festival worked with Purple Turtle to introduce reusable bar cups across the site's two bars (£1 levy on first drink); Also worked with Jelly to develop a range of initiatives that used waste creatively.
 - Reading Festival participated in a workshop in April to launch Reading's involvement in the GECOP pilot and is committed to participating in a follow-up event in the Autumn to share their own experience, and impact, of being part of the GECOP pilot.
- Beyond the initiatives that have been introduced at festivals, what is particularly exciting is the conversations and experiments that the pilot has catalysed, including where things haven't gone to plan. The importance of supporting infrastructure, especially for smaller community events, has become very clear. The disappointment of plans that don't work out is keenly felt but also provides opportunities for learning. For example, the last-minute discovery that the water supply in Christchurch Meadows was not suitable for use as drinking water necessitating the establishment of a refill point to hand out bottled water (in single use water bottles). RBC's dual role as landowner/licensor and event manager, and openness, creates a fantastic opportunity for discussions about how event spaces might be developed to support sustainable practices.

Looking ahead

- Importance of recognising the cross-cutting nature of some actions in the resources theme (food and circularity being good examples – in getting involved people don't necessarily want to be confined to a single theme, or are only interested in a slither of the theme).
- Impact of working at a system level - relatively small

<p>interventions can have massive impact.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wearing a New Directions hat, a hope that there will be a stronger focus on skills and learning (lifelong) in the next strategy. • Also, that the framing and structure of the next strategy makes it easier for other organisations to reference and align their own efforts, irrespective of whether they are explicitly named in the action plan. The test might be the degree to which the strategy is one that organisations represented around the RCCP table feel able to cite in their own strategies. Hopefully this will be a natural extension of the work currently underway through the 'Year of Engagement'. <p>PM: Labour manifesto talks about a target for half of all food purchased across public sector be locally produced or certified to higher environmental standards. So that's something for the Resources Theme. Consider also the connection to school meals.</p> <p>Those of us who are big enough organisations to have procurement departments could get together to discuss what we could do collectively or learn from each other. Let's make sure we articulate the power of procurement in the new strategy.</p>		
<p>8. Annual Report</p> <p>Peter Moore will circulate an email to all Theme Leads with templates for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme Overview • Theme RAG rated action plans <p>We need these a bit earlier this year so that we can integrate them into Workshop 2 of the Designing a Net Zero Reading core deliberative group.</p>	<p>Please return Theme Overviews and RAG-rated Action Plans to GF by 9 September 2024</p>	<p>Theme Leads</p>
<p>9. RCCP Finances</p> <p>Based on a report from our finance team for the year end and quarter one:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2024 we had an overspend of £1000 against the budget. This can be accounted for by the additional hours worked by the RCCP Co-ordinator. • Our budget relates to our solar scheme income and other grant incomes. If we spend more than these incomes we draw down on our reserves, which have been donated to us by Reading Borough Council. • The last few costs related to Reading Climate Festival are still coming in but so far we have spent 40% of our budget in 	<p>Circulate up-to-date RCCP Finance Report</p>	<p>BB</p>

<p>25% of the year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I will send a complete finance report with this meeting's Minutes.		