

# READING CLIMATE CHANGE PARTNERSHIP

## Board Meeting MINUTES

Thursday 17 July 2025

MS TEAMS Meeting, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

Chair: Dylan Parkes

*Apologies:* Tracey Rawling Church; John Ennis; Ryan Gordon (replacing Nick West Oram for Get Berkshire Active)

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### 1. Welcome and apologies

- Chair opened the meeting and noted apologies

### 2. Minutes of previous meeting / Actions review

- Previous minutes approved
- Outstanding actions reviewed

### 3. People changes

- Council update: new Assistant Director structure is under review; climate remit may shift but will remain high profile
- Paul stepping down as Resource Team Lead
- Trish confirmed she will step down after the current strategy is complete
- **Action: GF to propose changes to theme lead role and responsibilities to support recruitment of new nature, resources and food roles**
- Paul Ducker proposed as potential ongoing Board member due to his current role in education/skills
- **Action: Dylan to discuss with Paul.**
- Board thanks Paul Ducker for his impactful, enthusiastic and caring contribution.

### 4. Climate Action Fund Lottery Bid(s)

#### 4.1 Place-based grassroots sports bid (Heather Marshall)

- Scope broadened from football to grassroots sports
- Bid (£700k/5 years) includes part-time roles, delivery of carbon literacy training and small-scale infrastructure investments
- Get Berkshire Active has been invited to submit the bid and host the roles; RBC and others also have proposed roles in the bid
- Bid is near final draft; it will be recirculated once roles are confirmed with partner
- **Action: Heather to share draft with Dylan and Board members when bid partners have signed off**

#### 4.2 RCCP bid (Gudrun Freese)

- Parallel bid progressing, linked to enabling delivery of the Reading Climate Emergency Strategy 2025 – 2030, combining some enabling / backbone support for climate action in Reading and some direct delivery, e.g. RCCP-led campaigns, Reading Climate Festival, updates to action plans, etc.
- Likely to be close to £1.5M limit
- Several different local groups are working on a “Net Zero Transition Hub” concept; bid would seek to merge these and raise funds for this, with support from Uni of Reading
- University of Reading is interested in exploring possibility of submitting the bid and/or hosting or co-hosting relevant roles
- Proposed funded roles: Comms & Engagement Lead, Innovation & Facilitation Lead, Head of Climate Strategy & Impact; Reading Climate Pledge for Organisations Lead

- There would also be more support for Theme Leads and volunteers, a budget for digital marketing to improve reach; budget to cover costs associated with Reading Climate Festival, targeted campaigns, innovation challenges; other
- Delivery partners named in the new climate emergency strategy would also receive financial support and central comms, engagement, facilitation and impact assessment support through this bid
- Bid deadline officially Dec 2025, aim to submit in Oct
- Debate over whether roles should be hosted by Council or University. Consensus: explore mixed model.
- **Action: Gudrun to continue designing and drafting the bid proposal and get input from Uni of Reading and others**
- **Action: Dylan to explore addition of academic Board member**

## 5. Climate Strategy Update

- Draft 3 of strategy circulated; stakeholder consultation open until 21 July (likely extended to 27 July)
- 27 responses to date; some negative feedback linked to wider Council consultations (e.g. parking permits)
- Key feedback themes: language on “behaviour change,” integration with heritage buildings, general support for water, waste, nature themes
- Easy-read, public-facing version of strategy to follow final draft, incorporating Reading Climate Pledge for Individuals / Organisations

### **Actions:**

- Tracy to incorporate consultation feedback and prepare final draft by late August
- Ben/Gudrun to provide Board with materials for promoting consultation across networks
- Board members to complete and share consultation survey where possible

## 6. Reading Climate Festival 2025 & 2026 Planning

- 2025 Festival delivered successfully despite low resource (~1,000 attendees, 400+ new mailing list signups)
- Thanks recorded to Tracey and Gudrun for leading delivery
- Issues with “What’s On Reading” listings; need early engagement for 2026
- Arts & Culture team expected to re-join Steering Group for 2026

### **Actions:**

- Dylan/Gudrun to reconvene expanded Steering Group early autumn
- Tracy/Gudrun to liaise with Council Culture Team re 2026 planning and What’s On Reading integration

## 7. Theme Updates

- **Water (Heather Marshall):** Strong partnership session with RBC & Thames Water; agreed actions include CPD training, smarter business audits, pre-planning alignment, joint approaches on SUDs
    - **Action:** Heather to coordinate Thames Water CPD/training session with RBC
    - **Action:** Heather to liaise with RBC Properties (via Ben) and Connect Reading on smarter business audits
  - **Energy (Ben Burfoot):** Heat network project progressing with RBH involvement; NESO planning engagement underway
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