

Coventry's Climate Change Board Meeting – 09 February 2022

Attendees		
Margot James, MJ (Chair) - WMG Cllr Jim O'Boyle, JOB (Vice -Chair) - Coventry City Council Ed Green, EG - Warwickshire Wildlife Trust Chris Lovatt, CL - EON Louise Bennett, LB - CW Chamber Martin Reeves, MR - Coventry City Council Russ Hall, RH - WMG Anthony (Tony) Evans, TE - Sarginsons Louise Woollen, LW - West Midlands Police	Sarah Windrum, SW - Coventry Warwickshire LEP Chris Ennew, CE - University of Warwick Matthew Rhodes, MRh - Camirus Lizzie Frost, LF - Severn Trent Water (Virtual) Martin Sutherland, MS - City of Culture (Virtual) Neil Griffiths, NG - West Midlands Fire Service (Virtual) Ian Marshall. IM - Coventry University (Virtual) Sophie Mason, SM - Coventry Building Society (Virtual) Clive Robinson, CR - University Hospital Coventry(Virtual)	Colin Knight, CK - Coventry City Council Annie Truong, AT - Coventry City Council Andy Williams, AW - Coventry City Council Andy Gouldson, AG - Opal Ruaidhri Higgins Lavery, RHL - Opal Hopi Sen, HS – WMG (Virtual) Bret Willers, BW - Coventry City Council (Virtual)
Apologies		
Audrey O'Connor - Canal and Rivers Trust Mariama Ceesay - CU Social Enterprise CIC Mike Lewis - EON Mandy Bygrave - CDA		Anna Livesey- Coventry City Council Matt Dillow- Coventry City Council

Welcome and opening by Margot James (MJ)

This is the second meeting of Coventry's climate change board (CCB). MJ welcomed Andy Gouldson (AG) from the Leeds Climate Change Commission (LCC) and Chair of the National Place Based Climate Action Network (PCAN). A professor of environmental policy, working in the field for over 30 years. Andy was invited to share insights from the LCC (est. 18 months ago) as well as the high-level findings from Coventry's Net Zero Routemap that Coventry City Council (CCC) had commissioned.

Presentation from Andy Gouldson

- The first half of the presentation focused on the LCC. It was set up in 2016 to share climate action and mobilise actors across public private and third sectors in the city. There are now 17 climate commissions across the UK from regional to town level commissions.
- The common features are an area wide partnership with the aim of fostering collaboration, guiding, supporting, tracking climate action in the area. They are set up as independent bodies and produce an annual report. They are not necessarily part of the council however work closely on policy, planning, housing transport etc.
- The role of a climate commission was compared to the Climate Change Committee but at a local level and served as a positive voice for climate action. The Leeds annual report raised concerns around the 2030 target. It required a 11% emissions reduction however only 4% (pre covid) was being achieved; and called for radical action to push the agenda.
- The Leeds roadmap was initially published 10 years ago and updated in 2019. It was developed to review targets, cost, benefits, jobs, links into key areas of housing and transport. The LCC has been replicated and formed the Yorkshire & Humber Commission (Y&HC) involved stakeholder engagement with over 500 people; outlined 50 practicable actions for the region including a green jobs & skills plans, a climate finance platform and an innovation accelerator.

Commission discussion

- MJ commented on how great it was to learn from the LCC experience and be part of the growing national momentum
- SW was interested in inclusivity and how it was incorporated as part of the structure.
 - AG said it was an ongoing challenge however tried to ensure a diverse panel, equal blend of public organisations, private sector and also third sector such as community and pressure groups. They ran a citizen's jury where 25 people were appointed as representatives of the city. Groups represented age/gender/ethnicity, and also attitudes to climate change - supporters to antagonistic populations.
 - Public engagement meetings are held after every commission meeting at the Yorkshire scale and are trying to set up an online citizens forum particularly to be inclusive of the BAME society but requires further funding
- MRh commended engaging communities and commented that the engagement sits within the current existing institutional structures of place and asked if any commissions were seeking further powers for change to implement local infrastructure
 - AG agreed this was a crucial point. The Y&HC is in year one of a three-year programme. There are two years left to complete the action plan. The commission must be delivery orientated and make a tangible difference in order to secure support from the key actors. However, there are no delivery powers as such but are beginning to think about the plan for the end of the programme. The Manchester Climate Change partnership/agency is slightly more formalised as they have more powers and are probably where Y&HC will look to progress to in the next phase.

Route Map for Coventry

- AG presented the **provisional findings** for the Net Zero Route Map for Coventry (commissioned by Coventry City Council). Further areas of work are to be completed shortly. The Energy use and carbon footprint of the city from 2000 - 2050 were presented. Scope 1&2 fell by 53% between 2000-2021. **By 2050 this will grow to 56%**
- In 2021 the breakdown of carbon emissions is as follows; transport 33%, houses 34%, industry 16%, public and commercial buildings 17%. In 2050, most sectors will shrink but **the housing sector will grow to 48%**. Significant areas that contribute to the growth is increased population and housing developments
- The total energy bill (gas, petrol elec. etc) is estimated to be **£412m pa**. In 2030, this will go up to £468m (conservative projection). It's noted that all the money leaves Coventry to pay for the energy bills rather than being kept within Coventry's own economy
- The IPCC budget to remain under 1.5 degrees was discussed. The global budget is divided by population and **Coventry's carbon budget** is calculated to be **15616KT CO2e**. Current annual emissions are 14133KT CO2e. This suggests that **Coventry will use its share in less than 12 years**
- To stay within the limits, Coventry's 53% reduction made between 2000 and 2021 needs to become **63% in 2025, 75% by 2030, 89% by 2040 to be able to reach 100% in 2050**. Most of this work needs to happen in the next decade if we are to stay within the target range.
- Approximately 150 low carbon options were offered (housing, commercial buildings, transport, industry). A macro story for the city was built evaluating the cost to purchase, install, lifetime running costs and the benefits of energy saved. **Top 10 options include; Heat pumps, insulation, active travel**. The full report will cover all 150 options
- The **priority areas** for Coventry are **homes (including new build) and transport**. In terms of cost savings there are also some opportunities still available in **public and commercial buildings**.

- Options were split into categories - Cost effective, Cost neutral and Technically viable. **Cost Effective options close the gap by 25%**. Cost neutral options by 28% and Technically viable 45% (mostly transport). That leaves over half (53%) of 2050 emission to be address via other stretched options.
- To exploit the **cost-effective options, it will cost £60m for ten years**. Cost neutral options required £104m investment for 10 years. Costs escalate very quickly; the **technically viable options require £478m investment** for ten years, however, do also generate over 11k jobs
- Stretch options are activities that may be available in the next few years. E.g., Zero carbon HGVs/ambulance (in the form of hydrogen), electrification in buildings (homes and commercial). These options are more difficult to quantify as the benefits and costs are not fully established as yet. However, these options only close the gap by 76%.
- The remaining emissions could be offset – it would require 100m trees over the next decade and land 2.5x the size of Coventry. **Tree planting is a great option for flood risk and biodiversity but cannot be relied on for carbon saving measures**. New innovations and other options not included in the report may emerge and become viable and get us to **net zero by the target date**, but further progress is needed to help accelerate this.
- Final report is due in March and will be circulated to the group once completed

Net zero road map discussion

- JOB commented some LAs have targets dates of 2030 and is difficult to understand what measures they will undertake to achieve this, given that 2040 will be a challenge for Coventry even if all optimal measures are undertaken. Coventry has been criticised for not setting targets however without the routemap information and the scale of the issue identified here, it's been difficult to see how it could be reached. Whilst CCC has great transport and domestic homes initiatives, we still need to go further and without investment will be unachievable. His question was where is the biggest difference, where do we need to pool resources from to achieve this, what are the levers?
- MJ commented how it raised concerns about the inaccuracies of offsetting when using tree planting, however, was assured by the wealth of expertise across the CCB and that relatively quick wins could be identified for priority action
- RH offered opinions on decarbonising heavy vehicles. The breakpoint for electrification of heavy vehicles is 4.5 tonnes. Above this level it needs to shift to hydrogen. When moving a battery to hydrogen there are challenges with containing the hydrogen in the vehicle as it requires moving the engine (and requires new machinery). The supply of hydrogen is the other challenge. The green hydrogen economy and technology is still emerging and may not be readily available in the next 10 years. Scotland is producing enough renewable energy (c29GW from wind in the next 10 years) which could be used. This is dependent on the capacity of the grid. National government need to make a choice if that capacity will be used to make hydrogen or supply energy to homes.
- Fundamental to circular economy is reusing and recycling (but not necessarily a quick win). Leeds routemap had something on sharing heat and given the city's industry suggested this would be a good idea to pursue.
- AG commented on the significant growth of the area, which made new house building a key focus. The embodied carbon of concrete and steel is one aspect however there is a need to build climate proof ready houses. The Net zero Strategy and Heat and buildings Strategy both stressed points around

'You can get to net zero as long as you choose all of them' Andy Gouldson

new housing that will need to be retrofitted within a few years at significant expense. Activity should focus new builds up to the highest level or net zero standards asap for cost avoidance in the future.

- Active travel or 15-minute neighbourhoods or similar could be a quick win. These do not require a huge capital expense and is a major opportunity for Coventry. BW commented that CCC are a pilot city for the BEIS heat network zoning, looking at opportunities for existing network and the development of new heat networks in the city (ahead of the national consultation for mandating heat network zones). It also links to other work we are undertaking with Arcadis with regards to the Three Cities (Birmingham, Wolves and Coventry). The CCC have recently been awarded 1.1m to work with Citizen Housing as part of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund. Midlands Heart and Orbit also secured funding via WMCA consortium
- JOB asked if policy makers and national drivers understand the consequences and if the Roadmap considered the current CCC projects. He raised concerns around the finance required as this level of funding does not exist in the public sector and could only be achieved with full national support.
 - AG commented that when the Net Zero Strategy was published it didn't really provide the details for delivery or finance. National Government, Local Government and LEP is a key relationship that is still to be resolved
 - Leeds Uni have been working on a BEIS report with PWC et al. which is due to be release on the next few weeks. It makes the case for place-based climate finance platforms which have devolved responsibility (focusing at a local level and cities/city regions) which national government should support. It states this can be delivered at half the cost to do it in a place base way. The UK benefit is c.60bn with direct returns of £110b. the co benefits employment, congestion reduction, clean air, fuel poverty and public health amounts to **£900bn over 30 years.**
 - BEIS will be looking toward much more active support for LAs from treasury to raise funds. The UK Infrastructure bank have both levelling up and the net zero agenda, and will be key to investing in a way that proves new financing arrangements, set new precedents and open up the flow of cash into the options seen today
 - An option that was explored in Leeds is to have a Community led Green Bond. Leeds residents have £2bn set in ISAs. The aim being to divert some investment back into the city as municipal investment in hope of igniting civic pride and reconnecting people and their cities. These types of initiatives could help mobilise money however central government may need to be the investor of the first resort to prove the concept and de-risk investment.
- CL felt reassured on the options. He agreed with RH about hydrogen and thought the initial beneficiaries would be port based coastal towns. Therefore, Coventry's focus should be on the electrification of heat.
 - Part L regs due in 2025 means all new builds will be off gas. There will be requirements for solar, HP plus EV charge points. The challenge is building the supply chain in a viable way in the time provided. EON have worked with housing developers to advise on skills and training needed but the finances to fund this remain an issue
 - Social Housing's main challenge is insulation. The technology is existing and easy to install. Most cavity and loft work has been completed which leaves EWI. The feedback is that cladding is unwanted and there are planning challenges
 - HP are not efficient without insulation. He questioned how to engage with retrofit and the able to pay market. Particularly as 'able to pay' may not mean they can afford £10k for a HP vs a £2k gas boiler

- Central government funding has been available from ECO, LADS but further support is needed. The previous Green Homes Grant was not simple nor trusted. He signposted the £5k government funding toward ASHP from April (c100,000 grants available). He suggested mobilising plans to ensure that citizens of Coventry apply early before the funding runs out – this could be done in phases with targeted customer groups.
- CE asked about other cities and examples potentially across Europe
 - AG highlighted Norwich for social housing. They won an award for design and construction last year. The capital costs were marginal to a traditional build but were at passive house standard. Leeds has a Climate Innovation district. Set up by a company who do wood framed passive houses at affordable rates and also support job creation in the city
 - Nature based solutions need to be considered as part of resilience and used in a joined-up way. There are major flood risk issues in Yorkshire and rather than use concrete defences and energy intensive pumping stations, trees have been planted upstream. Holistic thinking around net zero, nature-based solution and mental health crisis is a fantastic way to support a place. Integrating green infrastructure in new build or regen areas rally's public support – and is therefore usually supported by politicians too.
- MR – Roughly 2/3 of the top 10 options were provided by retrofit and other domestic options. The focus for the board needs to zone in on this area
 - The three cities alliance (Coventry, Birmingham and Wolverhampton) is a fledgling partnership but very powerful. Immediate discussions landed on a retrofit programme across the 3 cities. Early indicators show the scale up business case requires all three cities to make it work. Over 700k existing stock across all tenures of the 3 cities – 165k sit in Registered Provider or City ownership - costing £10bn. This also includes the new builds currently being built that are not up to standards. This programme sets to radically change the 3 cities and stimulate interest at a national level. MR has already presented to the Climate Change Committee on this topic.
 - The current opportunities retrofitting a few hundred houses at a time is not delivering fast enough. This needs to be fully scaled to the private market to make it work and this should absolutely be the priority focus area
- AG's final comment agreed with the focus areas. Breaking this by Social/Council Housing, private rented, owner occupied, and new build could have separate strategies. Or there are opportunities around area-based retrofit as well. Councils could indicate support in one area, requesting landlord/owner to participate with discounted rates
- BW commented that CCC are piloting a neighbourhood approach to decarbonisation, developing zero carbon infrastructure for retrofit (currently bidding for funding), and WMCA will be funding a project in each of the authorities in the West Midlands

Pathway groups

- **Geraldine Tsarakis** will chair the **Equitable and people centred development pathway group** and will include communications
 - Sarah Windrum offered support
- **Chris Lovatt** will chair the **Low Emission development pathway** with **Mike Lewis**
 - Russ Hall and Tony Evans offered support
 - Louise Bennet suggested business representation will be needed across all groups and would join if this was a cross cutting theme rather than a pathway group.
- **Ed Green** will chair the **nature-based development pathway group**

- Chris Ennew and Martin Sutherland offered support
- **Russ Hall** will chair the **Circular economy development pathway group**
 - Matthew Rhodes offered support
- The Resilient development pathway group chair is still TBC
- The pathway groups will develop a work programme between the board meetings
- MJ suggested rolling Low emission and Circular in to one group
- SW was looking to provide cross support as well. Her suggestion was around harnessing other organisations who want support from a PR/CSR/customer perspective
- MJ was keen to undertake a citizen's jury or panel of some kind to ensure engagement from communities and was backed by SW
- SM offered support in this area given the scale of workforce and contact with the public. MJ suggested working with NG in the fire service in this area too. Further support from members not attendance would be sought from MJ
- MRh was keen to support infrastructure given the Routemap findings and asked the board to consider which category this would sit (Low Economy/Circular?)
- MRh also stated that half the options would not be viable unless the infrastructure is required to enable moving the heat/heat networks. This is within the city's control
- MJ noted that a discussion is required about our prioritisation and work programme in supporting the council to drive initiatives with JOB/MR leading what short term support is needed
- JOB suggested all chairs feedback through the group via the CCB (AT/BW) on some key areas that we can build on. The pathway groups will need to focus on action in simple terms and open the discussion out to the group to identify what we need to do to mobilise the pathway projects. Officers from the council will be available to support and get involved
- BW offered to supply some practical initiatives that fit under the headers to the pathway chairs.
- LB stressed the importance of the priority discussion. The option for Business and Industry is either high volume small impact or backing winners of where the technology and innovation is happening.
- The final route map would be available at end of March. The final report will be circulated to members once it was ready, and to be discussed further at the next board meeting in April
- JOB recommended sorting the options according to the pathway leads as a starter for 10
- EG suggested that whilst Tree planting had negligible impact on lower emissions there is value in engaging the public which all agreed on.
- RH mentioned other carbon offsetting routes such as energy reuse (not conversion) e.g if products are moving, they have associated energy which can then be used to generate energy and a cost efficiency for the business.
- Energy audits can highlight opportunities such adding heat exchanger means they don't need water boiler anymore. These are cost effective, big impact on CO2, and saves the company money
- Circular has a much longer-term impact. Currently the economy is linear. Measuring embedded emissions (in steel for example) is less visible than a car exhaust for example and therefore more knowledge is needed to truly have a circular economy
- MJ suggested increasing the next CCB meeting on the 26th April to 2hrs to ensure we have enough time for discussion
- Media opportunity followed for the all the pathway chairs
- MJ provided thanks to the group and the meeting was closed.

Actions

- Consideration of developer/housing provider on the board given the opportunity on housing decarbonisation (MJ/JOB)
- Comms to be moved to the next session when GT will be in attendance (AT)
- Circular/Low emission discussion on if these groups should be combined (MJ/JOB)
- Set up the initial meetings for the pathway groups (Pathway chairs)
- Consideration of a cross cutting theme pathway group or communications (MJ/JOB)
 - Inclusion of comms to rally organisation interested in leveraging PR/CSR/Customer driven activities
- Follow up with additional support for pathway groups to be considered by other members (MJ)
- Discussion on citizen jury / community engagement (MJ/JOB/GT)
- Pathway Chairs to liaise via AT for additional council support (Pathway chairs)
- BW to supply practical examples of initiatives for the pathway chairs (BW)
- Production of the final Routemap (AG)
- Circulation of the final Routemap to all members (AT)
- Sort Routemap options according to the pathway groups. (AT)
- Add final Routemap to the April agenda (AT)
- Increase CCB meeting to 2 hours (AT)