**Coventry’s Climate Change Board Meeting – 11th January 2023**

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| **Board members present** | | **MS Teams** |
| Margot James (MJ) – Chair, WMG  Cllr Jim O’Boyle (JO’B) -Vice -Chair, Coventry City Council  Martin Reeves (MR) – Chief Executive, Coventry City Council  Matthew Rhodes (MRh)– Camirus  Ed Green (EG) - Warwickshire Wildlife Trust  Tony Evans (TE) - Sarginsons Industries Ltd.  Russ Hall (RH) - WMG  Chris Lovatt (CL) – Eon  Corin Crane (CC) – Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce  Lisa Hofen (LH) – Director of Facilities, Coventry University    Becky Sellers (BS) – WMG Graduate Programme |  | Suzanne Ward (SW) – Environment Agency  Josie Bamford (JB) – Commissioning Director, Coventry City of Culture Trust  Communications Officer  Duncan Healey (DH) – Galliford Try  Clive Robinson (CR) – University Hospital Coventry |
| **Non-Board members present** | | **Non-Board members on MS Teams** |
| Andy Williams (AW) - Director of Business, Investment & Culture, Cov CC  Colin Knight (CK) - Director of Transportation & Highways, Cov CC  Bret Willers (BW) – Head of Sustainability & Climate, Cov CC  Manjit Bath – Business Development Manager, Cov CC  Claire Pointon (CP) - WMG | | Darren O’Shaughnessy (DO’S) – Coventry City Council |
| **Apologies** | | |
| Clare Wightman – CEO Grapevine  Hopi Sen (HS) – WMG  Chris Ennew (CE) – University of Warwick  Audrey O’Connor (AO) – Canal and River Trust  Sophie Mason (SM) – Coventry Building Society  Richard Eadie (RE) – Severn Trent Water  Liz Hopkins (LH) - West Midlands Fire Service |  |  |

1. **Welcome & Introductions**

Welcome to Manjit Bath, new Business Development Manager in the Climate Change Team – she is Annie Truong’s replacement and will be supporting the work of the Climate Change Board and the Pathway Groups. Also welcome to Becky Sellers – Becky studied maths and chemistry at postgraduate level and is now on the WMG Graduate Programme looking at battery research. Margot informed the Board that Becky will be conducting a review of the work of the Board and Pathway Groups.

**Actions:** everything has been completed or in progress. One item relating to business data – needs more work. BW reported that Si Chun who presented the information to the Board at the previous meeting has now left the organisation and another person will be assigned to continue with this work once a new Lead is recruited/assigned.

1. **Coventry City Councils Climate Change Strategy - Presentation and Discussion**

Bret reported that he has been working across the City Council on a number of issues relating to climate change and sustainability. He referred to the fact that the City Council has adopted the same approach as recommended to the Board covering the five International Council of Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) Pathways. He added that this joined up approach mirrors the work of the Climate Change Board and the City Council with its Strategy should make it easier for alignment with the Partnership’s initiatives in the future.

The City Council is looking to engage with wider stakeholders and the public. The ‘One Coventry Plan’ has three key strands – climate change being one of these, the others cover equity and also economic development. Bret emphasised the fact that the Climate Change Strategy addresses sustainability in its widest sense which includes equalities and economic development and there contributes to the other two One Coventry Plan themes as well as addressing the Climate Change agenda

The Presentation\* focused on a joined up integrated approach for developing the future city and raised the issue of the future evolution of the City Council’s Strategy into a collective Partnership Strategy for the City as a whole.

*\*See presentation given by BW*

**Low Emissions:**

Lots of projects already in place – Coventry City Council estate, retrofit for households across the city, leading the way in transport projects (e.g. Electric Bus City, VLR). Gigafactory. Energy infrastructure.

Agreed the importance of emphasis on the need for stimulating significant behaviour change – shift to active travel and uptake of retrofit programme offers is needed. How do we encourage the best design and construction standards – planning policy etc. VLR – could have international implications. Solar farms, renewable energy – photo voltaic on rooftops, schools etc.

Coventry currently has a **CDP\*\*** ‘B’ rating, and once a Strategy is approved and work on an Adaptation and Resilience Action Plan is underway the City should be working towards an A Rating next year.

\*\*https://www.cdp.net/en/cities/cities-scores

**Circular Economy:**

The development of a new Materials Recycling Facilities (MRF) for municipal and trade waste; promoting re-use which is supportive of low-income households e.g. Charities like Emmaus supporting the reuse of furniture, Initiatives to promote repair and re-use of tools and other commodities particularly benefiting households on lower incomes. Corporate members looking at this opportunity as well for use of older ICT equipment.

Minimising amount of material in production Promoting waste minimisation and use of waste as raw materials for future new products (e.g. NISP – industrial symbiosis).

Provision of environmental consultancy services for local businesses large and small – e.g. Business Sustain operating at a national level, Coventry & Warwickshire Green Business Programme supporting SME’s with a network of over 1,500 organisations.

**Nature Based Development:**

Establishing projects on the ground which help to enhance biodiversity e.g. £3 million Sherbourne project to open up the River Sherbourne. Also now adding a focus for a similar project for the River Sowe. Also raising awareness and inclusive public participation in wildlife conservation activities – such as the City of Culture Trust’s Green Legacy projects and volunteering in the management of areas of green space e.g. Friends of Parks Groups . The need to dramatically improve data gathering and monitoring of biodiversity across the City and the development of a new Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and contributing to the Regional Nature Recovery Strategy including improving access to areas of green space and creation of wildlife corridors

Finally engagement in habitat creation projects (e.g. sowing pollinator friendly plants on roadside verges) all of which receive considerable public support.

**Adaptation & Resilience:**

Research indicates that the region is and will continue to experience increasingly warmer wetter winters and hotter drier summers? The latter is a particular concern where heat stress is likely to increase mortality in the city during the hotter months.

Overall water supply is going to diminish and currently industries with high water consumption for manufacturing and processing which do not already have abstraction licenses are very unlikely to be granted them in the future. Issues regarding flood risk will need to be identified and preventative actions taken including water management, Sustainable Urban Drainage SuDS design etc. The Local Plan will also need to address these issues with policies encouraging water conservation e.g. use of grey water with duel use systems.

**Equitable Person-Centred Development:**

Essentially recognising that there are some significant inequalities relating to environmental conditions and their impacts upon health and wellbeing resulting in differences in life expectancy. Addressing the wider determinants of health in what is a Marmot City is a significant challenge.

Food poverty – an issue of increasing concern with rising food prices and a predominance of processed food, lack of skills relating to healthy eating and the availability of fresh produce and opportunities for food growing and development of food growing places to make healthy food more accessible and reduce food miles.

Air quality – monitoring of pollutants, early warning systems for people at risk e.g. people with respiratory illnesses like COPD and asthma.

Tackling fuel poverty - how do we get people to take up grants on offer and participate in retrofit measures.

How do we encourage greater levels of community engagement in issues across the whole of the Strategy and to encourage members of the community and special interest groups to participate in projects on the ground or promoting to the public at large.

**Board’s Involvement in the Strategy comments and feedback:**

Bret highlighted the fact that the Council’s work with the Pathway Groups was integrated into the Strategy where appropriate. He asked Members of the Board for comments and feedback and for the Strategy to be discussed in the five Pathway Groups to discuss how the Strategy relates to their current plans and projects and whether there needs to be any changes in the Strategy or their current priorities or the objectives for each of the Pathway Groups. Bret added that the aim in the long term would be for the Board to develop a partnership strategy for the City as a whole and that this document reflects the commitments of the City Council working in partnership with others to deliver change.

It was acknowledged that the Strategy is an aspirational as well as an operational framework for the City Council and its partners to use in the future.

Needs to be an area wide issue – also work around policy etc. to assist the work.

Are any of the Areas of Activity in the Strategy reflected in the Objectives of the relevant Pathway Groups and if not would the relevant Pathway Groups need to give them any consideration with respect to their work ?

There was some discussion about sources of finance and funding – what other sources of funding are available and how can we work in partnership to secure funding from other sources either as matched funding or in-kind contributions?

Corporate actions – scope of Coventry City Council for training and development and whether member organisations have similar needs where such work could be shared in the future e.g.staff training; Data and monitoring. (Insight – data sets).

The Board were asked to consider initiatives like WMCA’s Zero Carbon Neighbourhood – where WMCA are encouraging all Local Authorities in the West Midlands to develop an exemplar neighbourhood to reduce all activities which result in an overall reduction in carbon emissions. Questions arising are: how do we do this? How is an area identified? How do we make it work? How could a test area be upscaled across the City at a later date?

The Strategy has political cabinet approval to engage partner stakeholders and the public and go out to consultation The Sustainability Team is now looking at engagement and awareness raising activities and events across the City during spring with a view to collating responses and making amendments to the Strategy so that a final Climate Change Strategy can be ratified by Cabinet in July In the meantime where possible the City will continue to address identified actions where appropriate.

CL: a lot of retrofit work underway. Also new build exemplar work – can the Board develop this idea?

Part L changes underway and Future Homes Standard but there are significant opportunities that are being missed. New builds will need to be retrofitted.

BW – informed the Board that an important matter to be addressed which is identified in the Strategy is a review of the detailed policies and recommendation in the ‘Local Plan’ particularly those relating to impacts on climate change.

JO’B – agree, it’s always been an issue. Retrofit is also a big issue at the moment; we are building buildings very fast which might not be the best quality or highest fabric efficiency standard with renewables etc. Social housing – tranches of money for social housing providers but in the private residential sector it is harder to access any funding. Could we find a developer that is on board?

Some projects are cost prohibitive but might be the best option in terms of environmental benefits – gas v. Zero Carbon electricity?

**ACTION: Board to develop ideas around improving standards within the new build section? Work collaboratively to develop an exemplar neighbourhood, contribute to the Review of the ‘Local Plan’ and the development of a new Plan update etc. Potentially identify a developer housing provider that we could partner with? Pilot area?**

Duncan from Galliford Try added that work on highways is also a key issue that needs to be addressed and how can we learn quickly and effectively sharing experiences with neighbouring authorities. He asked the Board how we can learn quickly and effectively. How can Cov CC do this – can they collaborate with other councils to share learning?

MJ – indicated how recently we initially learnt from the work of Leeds City Council Climate Commission which is over a year older than Coventry’s Climate Change Board and from whom we may have a lot to learn but agree that this can be taken further. MJ indicated that this will be a part of Becky Seller’s brief.

CK – can we look at modular housing? A lot of wastage on conventional building sites – is this the way forward? Huge opportunity (is there a modular building housing supplier in the area?) BW referred to a company in Stoneleigh Park that has some modular homes on display.

RH - everything is monetary driven. Cost per unit is prohibitive – installation is very expensive. Training is also important.

**ACTION: Can the board have any influence to drive certain technologies going forward? Make them smaller, make them cheaper?**

LO – trying to work through practical issues, what can we do to overcome issues and enable change. Carrot versus stick?

BW – people buying homes don’t receive much information on energy efficiency of the property. Also work from mortgage providers. EWI (external wall insulation) – extremely expensive, always bespoke work – other countries have product price right down, Energiesprong – Netherlands and Belgium the cladding products are much cheaper that in the UK, where everything is being done in a bespoke fashion across the UK. Orbit Housing had some initial meetings with ‘Tin Social’ a social enterprise that was looking to produce these cladding products using employment trainees and apprentices working locally. BW highlighted the possibilities within the 3 Cities Partnership addressing the specific common housing types across Birmingham, Coventry & Wolverhampton – can these be replicated?

CC – local skills improvement plan Coventry and Warwickshire – looking at future housing in this work. How do we create the marketplace in this area? Early days in data collection – businesses know there is an opportunity, but the marketplace isn’t attractive enough at the moment. Can work be put into place to make this more attractive?

Also battery manufacture – synergy between manufacture of battery tech and reuse.

CL can expand on EWI (external wall insulation) price point. Example of terraced housing – much cheaper to do whole street, at bulk, for example.

JO’B – planning issues as well. Different model in Europe.

BW – government funded programme – people don’t want it until they see an example house?

**ACTION: all to look at strategy from perspective of the five pathways. What action points are needed to move the strategy forward – send comments to BW. Strategy to be Approved in July and Action Plan is to be finalised by the end of calendar year and updated on an ongoing basis until 2030 when the Strategy will need to be revised.**

The Strategy will be out for **consultation** after a public launch in Mid-February. It is an evolving strategy.

**ACTION: details of the launch event in February to be sent out by Manjit.**

**ACTION: BW & MJ to hold meeting for pathway chairs to discuss**

1. **Experiences to date, role clarity, objectives, engagement and what needs to be done to improve the effectiveness of the Groups in the future**
2. **the strategy and action points**
3. **Josie Bamford: Creative ideas on engaging with wider public**

City of Culture Trust – what choices people make, how can we influence this? What is the best use of the Equitable Development Pathway group? How can we genuinely involve different voices in the development of the strategy – use work from City of Culture Trust e.g. story telling.

What voices are at the table? How are they heard? JB emphasised that meaningful engagement of different groups does take time and is resource intensive.

‘Critical friend’ to Board – have you thought about this? Are these people being involved / heard?

Arts and Culture has important role in tackling climate change. Story telling – sharing experiences, talking to each other. Shouldn’t be undervalued (as successes from the retrofit example in Foleshill demonstrate).

JB mentioned thatpeople can be scared or even paralysed by the threat of climate change…she said the challenge the Trust recognised was to establish how this fear can be turned around into creating opportunities with stories of hope. Can arts and culture work in partnership to help with these issues.The City of Culture Trust has proven successful in creating encouraging positive messages – co-creating work which bring Joy and hope for the future. JB outlined the work programme with £2m of projects linked to the Green Legacy of the Trust.

*‘Theory of Change’*, Green Futures, 5 Pathways in strategy – overlayed this different work to align them.

*‘Cosy Creative’* – in response to discussions around cost of living crisis. Food is provided, childcare if needed. Legal advice around this issue

*‘Prototype City’* – creative.

*‘Climate relief fund’* – friends / family being affected the most from climate change e.g. Pakistan heritage – communities with heritage links to other areas and parts of the world , severe floods.

*‘Youth Leadership Programme’* – Cov Youth Network 18-25 can be upskilled in activity as well as campaigns. Galvanise this movement – led by them, they will identify the priorities. Could be invited to Board?

*‘Youth projects green response’* – small grants to support different project. Also for individuals – funding for creative project.

*‘Take to the streets’* – roads closed to traffic and used in different ways – arts and culture engagement alongside this. Engaging the community can be key to success demonstrating what traffic free areas near schools could be like.

*‘Hot Brown Honey’* – women of colour a performance to showcase underrepresented voices.

*‘Real shot at tomorrow’* – development of smaller spaces for food growing etc.

*‘Education programme’* – strategic work, working with schools. Identifying examples of good work going on already, city wide look at this.

Other projects in development. Not necessarily directly around the climate crisis – can be interlinked into other issues that are part of the strategy.

RH – ‘How can we help?’ – JB – being advocates for the role that culture can play. If you have ideas, please share with Josie Bamford and Clare Wightman. Capacity and resource within pathway group is limited to deliver projects themselves but the Pathway Group can help to shape work already going on and interlink climate issues etc. Engaging all different groups.

CK – letting rest of UK know about this? How do we tell the story about good practices in sustainability work as well as city of culture work. JB – can the board work on this?

AW – culture is an important aspect of our attractiveness in terms of inward investment. Our narrative should be more rounded – culture, lifestyle etc. as well as more traditional impacts e.g. financial incentives. Need to showcase this. Example of auto sector – not necessarily going into industrial estate, might be going directly into city centres.

EG – ‘hope and joy’ needed. How do we do this and maintain focus on the practical as opposed to the ‘useless and unhopeful’ aspects of climate change?

JB – use arts and culture to achieve practical actions e.g. use of green space. Where there might be resistance. How do we start conversations without ‘preaching’ to people?

JO’B – one of the challenges previously was engaging with the wider public and, in particular, young people. Are there particular events / projects where we can integrate groups in work of the board? Don’t want to put people off.

JB – ‘co-creation model’ – establish them as a group, listen to their views, invite them in. Youth Leadership Programme should address this. Positive Youth Foundation – will recruit 15 young people: ready group of engaged young people.

1. **Strategy Launch Event – Mid February**

Transport Museum Feb 15th.

Hear from Andy Goulson – he does work nationally, will point out work that’s going on. Will be workshops around different pathways where people can give their views. Kick off event – engaging press early on. All board will be invited, also youth groups and community groups.

AW – how we structure the event so people feel like they’re being heard, not preached to. It is an ongoing project.

MR – got to get people’s views, it is a balance of inclusivity versus restricting who is in the room? Action points are more critical than strategy – what is happening on the ground? Who is driving the work forward?

RH ‘starts and ends with communication’. Example of funding projects – have to be precise. You want the people that question everything as it sparks the debate, not restrict the audience too much. The ‘why?’ is very important – how we engage with the wider public, what’s in it for them?

MB – don’t overcomplicate it, communicating at people’s level and very important we listen.

BW – what are the motivating factors? Money is a big driver, not always ethically driven. Thoughts around how we engage with customers and thinking about issues e.g. retrofit.

**Action:** develop the role of pathway groups in the Climate change strategy. Who are the stakeholder groups in your area of expertise? Also share any ideas in engaging the public.

LO – can facilitate outreach events, potentially get student ambassadors.

MB – event date set, comms work underway. At Transport Museum, capacity tbc (100-150?), 2 x workshop spaces. Want it to be interactive.

**ACTION: MB to Circulate information about the Launch to Board Members**

MB - QR code – designing leaflet, simple overview of pathway groups, QR group to sign up for follow up events. We will record the event if we can or at least make the presentation slides available etc.

Interlink work of board 5 x pathway groups – how these work alongside each other and any events.

1. **Pathway Chairs Update**

SW - Resilience update. Developing strategy into practicable action plan to make a difference. A step change, need to challenge the status quo to enable actions to be put into place. Local Plan review – ‘light touch review’ – is this enough? Do we need to challenge this more? Getting resource together for the adaptation & resilience plan.

CL - Low emissions pathway – 3 x focus areas. 1) residential retrofit – free measures, identified Cov areas. Public engagement is difficult.

2) SME – work with Sarginsons in creating a net zero exemplar, good progress but it is challenging. Energy efficiency audits – Natwest tool, can be shared? Focus – waste recovery of heat. Could create another exemplar on an SME in Coventry – different challenges.

3) Active travel – more work within pathway but lots of wider examples within city to learn from.

RH - Circular Development Pathway – MB has assisted in developing membership. WMG Business A Toolkit – Marcel and Chris from SME team have a new programme that is live. 10-20 x companies a month, depending on size. Baseline energy usage, production statistics. E.g. Alucast – 19% saving in emissions already. Need a financial partner to drive this forward.

Air quality summit in June – can potentially provide space for free and can provide refreshments.

Gaming Day in October – 36 teenagers, ‘cityspace’ at e-sport centre. Grew a ‘dirty city’ versus making a green one – recycling, circular economy etc. Did work – thought provoking.

Digital recycling – used IT equipment, getting equipment out into the community. Digital inclusion increases as more people have equipment in deprived areas. Need high level support and more engagement – can companies get involved?

EG – Nature Based Pathway – meetings are scheduled, next one soon – will be discussing strategy work.

1. **Date of Next Meeting**

Next meeting – Original date to be kept: April 20th.