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| **Coventry Independent Climate Change Board** | |  | |
| **Minutes:** |  | |
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| Time and Date: Thursday 5th October 2023. 13:00 – 15:00 | |
| Location: 1.3 / 1.4 1st Floor, One Friargate, Coventry City Council | |

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| **Board members present** | |  | **MS Teams** |
| Margot James (MJ) – Chair  Cllr Jim O’Boyle (JO’B) -Vice Chair, Coventry City Council (CCC)  Julie Nugent (JN) – CEO CCC Emma Flynn (EF) - Provost, University of Warwick – NEW BOARD MEMBER Samantha Taylor (ST) - Ecologist, Canal & Rivers Trust Suzanne Ward (SW) - Area Environment Manager, Environment Agency  Helen Wheatley (HW) - Director of Film and Television Studies, University of Warwick Chris Lovatt (CL) - Chief Operating Officer, E.ON Russ Hall (RH) - Senior Research Fellow, WMG Paul Smith (PS) - Area Director, Lloyds Bank Corin Crane (CC) - Chief Exec., C&W Chamber of Commerce  Ngoni Mupandawa (NM) - Environmental Manager, Galliford Try  Lisa Hofen (LH) – Director of Estates & Facilities, Coventry University Karl Curtis (KC) – Warwickshire Wildlife Trust |  |  | Sophie Mason (SM) - Energy & Sustainability Lead, Coventry Building Society  Clive Robinson (CR) - Sustainable Development Manager, UHCW  Charlotte Heeney - Finance Business Partner: Net Zero/Sustainability, Severn Trent Water |
| **Non-Board members present** | |  | **Non-Board members on MS Teams** |
| Rhian Palmer (RP) - Strategic Lead for Green Futures, CCC  Chris Norbury (CN) - CEO, E.ON  Anna Livesey (AL) – SEP Programme Lead, CCC  Manjit Bath (MB) - Business Development Manager, CCC  Darren O’Shaughnessy (DS) - Comms Manager, CCC Colin Knight (CK) - Dir Transportation, Highways & Sustainability, CCC Andy Williams (AW) - Dir. Business, Investment & Culture, CCC Bret Willers (BW) - Head of Sustainability & Climate Change CCC Richard Hodge – Minutes, CCC |  |  | Anna Smith (AS) - Sustainability Engagement Manager, Coventry Building Society  Chris Styles (CS) - Head of Planning, Policy & Environment, CCC  Zain Javed (ZJ) - WM Police |
| **Apologies** | | | |
| Jemma Hodgson – Head of Estates Mgt, WM Police  Audrey O’Connor - Heritage & Environment Manager, Canal & Rivers Trust  Nicola Edgar – Avon Catchment Co-Ordinator, WM Environment Programme Team Duncan Healey – Highways Environmental Lead, Galliford Try Matthew Rhodes – Director, Camirus  Ed Green – Warwickshire Wildlife Trust  Clare Wightman (CW) - CEO, Grapevine  Kevin Rodgers (KR) - CEO, Citizen Housing |  |  |  |

1. **Apologies, Welcome & Introductions:**

MJ – Round the table introductions

1. **Report of progress from the Pathway Chairs Workshops:**
2. Ways of working in the future. (Bret Willers, CCC Head of Climate Change & Sustainability: 13:05 – 13:10)   
   BW gave a brief report of the key findings from a series of three Pathway Chair workshops which conducted a SWOT analysis and a number of issues to be addressed were identified such as attendance, continuity of representation, the level of seniority and persons with the ability to make decisions regarding commitments on behalf of the organisations they represent. The sessions were chaired by MJ with the chairs of the Pathway Groups and were facilitated by BW and Becky Sellers (WMG).

There are a number of clear actions that have come out of the workshops which are being addressed for the effective future running of the Board and Pathway Groups.

1. Collaborative projects in progress for the coming year (10 minutes for each Pathway Group Chair: 13:10 – 14:00)

**Fairer Green Futures Pathway Group – Helen Wheatley & Clare Wightman**

HW - Verbal update on slides focusing on a Food Growing Summit to engage lots of community groups alongside the Food Growing Network to identify what can be done to grow more food locally addressing food poverty.

RP – gave an outline of project that involves identifying areas of underutilised land for community growing projects. This includes providing sites owned by the City Council, there is also interest from Housing Associations in setting aside areas of their land for this purpose also.

LH advised a meeting with RP would be useful to discuss opportunities to work collaboratively with Coventry University.

BW - Coventry has sustainable food places status thanks to a collective effort with the City’s Food Network. The city is bidding for bronze status which will help the city to demonstrate its commitment to potential funding bodies such as the National Lottery.

CN – Community growth, what support are you looking for and can E.ON help?  
MJ – How many sites will it cover?   
RP – up to 20 sites around the city of various sizes have been initially identified. The project is seeking corporate sponsorship to get it going for tools, plants etc.  
HW – outlined the Group’s need to carry out research on the development of a ‘Just Transition’ approach and methodology to ensure that all activities to address sustainability and Climate Change do not disadvantage others in the community.

**ACTION:** **HW to share the research brief with Members of the Board, ALL to note that ‘Just Transition’ will apply to the Board and All of the Pathway Groups.**

HW - There will be an update at the next meeting on the research being conducted on Fair Transition where there is a certain level of experience in this area in Scotland and some local authorities are addressing this in England i.e., Leeds and Bristol. The aim is to learn from others and build upon this.

HW – Grapevine have launched a partnership with Larger Us to have meaningful conversations at grass roots level.  
CC – How do the conversations actually work?  
HW – It is a challenging pilot project trying out a new methodology focused on creating opportunities for conversation listening to what people have to say about the issues including using forms of storytelling. Grapevine is in fact the smallest organisation involved in this national pilot, organisations like Unison are also involved. It is a new methodology in its early stages which interestingly is trying to accommodate the differences in views and values which exist across the city and encourage participation using everyday language and less technical jargon.

**Nature Based Pathway Group (KC and ST)**  
Pathway Group have provided a detailed response to the draft Climate Change Strategy. CCC are looking at the suitability of sites for local nature recovery projects within Coventry, including identifying sites for Biodiversity Net Gain. Work is ongoing to look options for rewilding of Brandon Woods Golf Course, through creation of habitat bank.   
KC – work continues on transformational £3m River Sherbourne Project, currently looking at recruiting more staff into project.

**ACTION: Manjit Bath to contact Board Members with dates if they are interested in attending the site visit to the Brandon Woods Golf Course.**

AW – Advised that the Council are continuing to work through options that are being worked on about the future of the golf course.   
MJ – highlighted the significant potential to ameliorate carbon impacts by enhancing biodiversity and green spaces across the city.   
JO’B – Further understanding is needed of biodiversity net gain policy going forward. Coventry’s Local Plan Review consultation is underway, biodiversity net gain and potential large scale rewilding projects will need to feed into that. It’s important to the city that green spaces are accessible for residents and benefits of biodiversity net gain are delivered within the city.   
RP – Work is ongoing to look at targeting areas of green deprivation and trying to improve biodiversity within urban areas.   
MJ – Will you need to market the sites for investment in the city early on?  
RP – Register of sites being developed ahead of the credit scheme being introduced in January.   
LH – Comment to RP – separate conversation about the project you’re working on and can Coventry University engage the students working on campus areas around the city.

**ACTION: Coventry University to meet up with the Council’s Climate Change Team to see how sites owned by the University can be incorporated into the list of sites identified for enhancing biodiversity.**

CK – All the major water companies have submitted their latest business plans to Ofwat. Severn Trent are proposing major investment in Coventry for 2025- 2030, for approximately£70m funding into sustainable drainage and creating green catchment areas across the city. Decision expecting on business case May 2024.

RH – Carbon capture technology won’t be needed if the above discussions come to light. RH would encourage plans like this, so it means less reliance on yet to be developed green tech in the future.

SW – Highlighted the fact that the Local Nature Recovery Strategy will be coming onboard shortly, which places further emphasis on creation of more green space and enhancing biodiversity.

**Resilience & Adaptation Pathway Group**

SW – working with BW and Coventry City Council to support the production of a climate change resilience and adaptation plan for the city. Links into the Local Plan Review. EG joined the group to ensure links are made with the Nature Based Pathway Group. The intention is to hold further workshops to feed into the development draft.

As part of the exercise there is a requirement to identify data sets for Coventry.

CN – Health vulnerability – what is it?   
SW – Heat sinks are particularly prevalent in cities due to the urban heat island impact, which can lead to overheating and adverse health impacts, green spaces can help to counteract this. Need to consider what policy steps can be taken to support this to influence future developments.

HW – offer of help from their Fairer Green Futures Pathway Group as it relates to the Just Transition agenda  
SW – people most at risk are in poorer neighbourhoods  
MJ – what data are you going to use?  
SW – Sustainability West Midlands have produced an Adaptation & Resilience Strategy for the West Midlands; therefore data is more Midlands based, we require more localised data to understand trends and impacts in Coventry.

**Circular Economy Pathway Group – Russ Hall**

RH –there has been a great couple of months progress. RH is the mouthpiece for a lot of hard work going on behind the scenes. The Digital Recycling Project in association with Coventry Connects has been progressing well. 10% of Coventry don’t have access to the internet and30% only have access through mobile devices. The project is having a positive social impact through providing better internet access and training to assist with tackling digital inequalities. This will also provide more people with access to tools such as comparison sites to help reduce bills and get the best tariffs.   
The project has taken on 2 FTE ICT engineers. Looking at putting an EOI through Hubbub for further funding.  
Will provide an update on figures at next Board.

Great to work on something tangible and real.

RH – Aspiration remains to develop project using locally recycled plastics for things like solar panels. Has been in contact with a firm who are working on innovative solutions derived from recycling plastic. Great to see Galliford Try joining the Board and would be keen to look at construction waste with them.

RH advised that in order to develop recommendations we need to collectively agree

What is the ambition of the city? Do we want a Net Zero city? There is the opportunity to develop / grow jobs. Does the city want to lead the UK in terms of recycling electrical waste for instance? Open question to the Board for a future meeting.  
MJ – recycling / reuse of batteries within WMG  
RH – Battery materials in NHS unused equipment could be reused. Greenpeace are currently looking at the fact that 5m vape batteries are discarded a day, and the battery materials could feed into the automotive industry.

SW – Some projects have started but then stopped – why is this and does RH know why? The process to recover materials isn’t easy – is this why?

RH – Thanks to Manjit for organising his Pathway Group meetings.

LH – Coventry University to touch base with RH to share best practice.

PS – Fantastic work that has been done to date. Strands of excellent work going on – “Mobilize the Masses”. What can a resident / business owner of Coventry do to support this? RH’s work is just one strand to feed into this. Education has a massive part to play in this – influencing parents and students. Jump on the ambition quickly.  
MJ – Wide variety of stakeholders within the group who can assist.

JO’B – Item 3 would be a living, breathing document going forward. The presentation on the Recycling Facility should be on the forward plan for future Board meetings.

**ACTION: ALL to note invites have gone out for the visit to the new Materials Recycling Facility from 12:30 to 2:30 on Thurs 26th October and let Manjit know if they are able to attend.**

**ACTION: LH and colleagues at Coventry University to link up with RH to share best practice.**

MJ – How are you going to systemize the equipment?

RH – Wiping the hard drives of NHS laptops of their patient data is the hard bit. Looking at wiping hard drives of NHS so it is being proved it can be done. Could this be done for E.ON?

CL – Their laptops are from leased from IT companies so it’s not E.ON’s gift to give

CN – how can we assist?  
RH – Advised that other electrical equipment is sought by the project, including big screens, projectors etc which could be used by community centers. RH and CN to tie up offline.

RH – Circular Economy is about reducing energy consumption.

JN – This is a really good comms story which should be marketed and promoted.

**Lowering Emissions Pathway Group**

CL – Verbal update on the slides on the screen. The council has secured over £2mHome Upgrade grant which E.ON will be taken forward to delivery to retrofit approx. 150 off gas homes.

CL Provision of green financing products continued to be explored – looking to Lloyds (PS)  
JN – can put into direct contact with Economic Development Service

CL – highlighted major challenge that 75% people aren’t eligible for funding and unable to pay, this is where green finance products could help.

SME Exemplar Update:

CL advised that they took Severn Trent out to Malmo over the summer, where E.ON are using waste heat recovery in an innovative way

CL – Consideration needs to be given to E.ON’s role in Low Emissions Pathway Group going forwards now that they have been appointed the Council’s Strategic Energy Partner to avoid duplication of roles, terms of reference to be reviewed.

SW – SEP potentially has big crossover with resilience pathway   
CL – Happy to involve SW going forward

**ACTION – Look at Terms of Reference (E.ON) (BW / AL)**

RH – Carbon Accounting Programme update – offer to go through this at the next Board Meeting. Example of a foundry having to build new facilities to meet emission reduction carbon targets.

CL – Need two exemplars rather than one. Looking at bakeries etc  
RH – Focus efforts on businesses like foundry’s rather than restaurants and cafes as one foundry is equivalent to 17,000 restaurants in terms of energy use.

CC – is there a lobbying piece that can assist here to access funding

RH – Focus on selling the fact that this will reduce their energy bill rather than any other approach. Electrify UK – electrify first, carbon emissions second

**ACTION – RH to provide presentation at next Board Meeting on Carbon Accounting**

1. **Developments towards making recommendations for the Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan:**

MJ – Revisited the Terms of Reference as a precursor to this meeting, which as a reminder sets an approach of:

* Multi-agency strategy by collaborative action.
* Secure commitments to deliver specific initiative.
* Delivering initiatives as part of an Action Plan.

The next steps are taking the updates reported at Board forwards and exploring opportunities for collaborations to bring together for an Action Plan.

MJ – Would welcome thoughts as to how to marry up the parts into a comprehensive whole.

RP – The Climate Change Strategy is being revised based on feedback received through consultation process, alongside the development of an Action Plan which sets out how we intend to achieve the objectives of the Climate Change Strategy, with clear outputs and outcomes. Professor Andy Gouldson’s Zero Carbon Route Map for Coventry will form the basis for the Low Carbon Emissions part of the Action Plan.

HW – Just Transition research can be used to test and audit the Action Plan being proposed. Timings on the research are to be confirmed.

LH – Coventry University is doing a piece of work on the journey to Net Zero and there will be a number of initiatives that can be made public and would fit in with what is being proposed by the various Pathway Groups. Have discussions with RP offline

MJ – How can we, as a Board, offer to help the Council in developing the Action Plan?

JN – The Council has been very public with its financial struggles. It is undertaking an aggressive lobbying campaign to government, because without intervention in two years we will have spent our reserves. In spite of this, the Council is very much behind various projects to tackle Climate Change and projects could help CCC’s financial position e.g. digitisation.

JO’B – The Board’s existence is to being together wide range of stakeholders to deliver on the Terms of Reference. The Board was set up to meet up for an indeterminate amount of time. How do we bring it all together in a timely manner? Can this be done by the end of the year? This is where the SEP comes to the fore of what is being discussed. How are the projects going to be delivered. The Board’s recommendations need to come from the best minds / people of the city to help prioritise what is delivered.

RH – Net Zero Policy has 3 basic strands. Pathway Recommendations become the backbone of the city’s Net Zero response.

MJ – Can the Pathway Leads make recommendations that flesh out the proposals.

HW- How do the Pathway Groups talk to each other and not work in silos? Better mechanism, the suggestion was to have a visioning document setting this out.

RP – Document being produced that would capture all the work being done to date and be used to link projects to support collaboration across Pathway Groups.

MJ – Board meetings are one way in which this occurs to allow cross fertilisation.

BW – There is an action planning template going out to all Pathways Groups to measure what is being done and how.

MJ – Template would help as a starter.

**ACTION (BW) - To circulate a template for Pathway Groups to add ideas into the**  **Action Plan**

LH –Specific roadmap being produced by Cov Uni and could make a substantial contribution locally and nationally.

MJ – Is LH in a Pathway Group? LH to speak offline to MJ as well as PS as to which Pathway Group to join.

JO’B – Recommendations can be ambitious and aspirational, don’t need a detailed pathway in how it will be achieved but they do need to be reasonable.

RH – agree that we need to try even if not all recommendations are taken on board.

CC – Could be better at comms considering how ground-breaking a lot of things occurring are. Smaller individual to larger group projects should be promoted far better. Deliberately shout loud about this.

**ACTION (DS) – to support development of Comms Strategy for Climate Change Board, Pathway Groups and Climate Change Strategy, working with RP, BW and MB**.

1. **Key findings from Coventry’s Climate Change Strategy consultation & next steps**

RP – Gave verbal update on the slides displayed. Provided an update on final consultation survey results. The survey showed an under representation of ethnic minorities and young people and that a future engagement plan would be addressing these issues.

RP outlined key themes and issues that were raised during the consultation process. Some of the key themes call for the Strategy to be more ambitious and set out how this will be achieved. Consultation report to be published on the Council’s website and shared.

MJ – Questions to be directed directly to RP / BW offline

**Coventry’s Strategic Energy Partnership (SEP)**  
  
CN –Expressed delight that E.ON were awarded the contract for the Council’s Strategic Energy Partner last month. The SEP will support the city’s transition to a low carbon economy, which can create benefits for the community, including jobs, reduced bills for businesses, better insulation for homes. E.ON already has a track record for delivering this successfully in other cities, with Malmo is an example of how this is being delivered outside of the UK, as well as Berlin. Coventry has a strong aspiration for regeneration which E.ON want to match as Coventry is E.ON’s home city.

AL – Verbal update based on the slides displayed, setting out the journey so far and objectives of the partnership.

CL – Talked through 5 anchor projects: Ground mounted solar, public sector buildings decarbonisation, solar for school buildings, council fleet and depot decarbonisation, energy security. These 5 projects have quickly become 11: home upgrade grant retrofit programme, electricity supply, EV workplace charging, LEVI project, building decarbonisation part 2 for instance and bidding to make our sports centres more energy efficient.

The team are focussing on development of the Strategic Business Plan, alongside delivery of some quick wins early on so the comms can be put out to show the success and added value of the SEP. Looking to demonstrate the effectiveness of the team working between E.ON and the Council.

MJ – Coventry is the first Council in the UK to have entered such a Joint Venture  
CN – the only other example of this is Bristol, which is structured very differently.

Local Plan Review Consultation Update.

CS – Gave verbal update on the slides displayed on the screen.

BW – Is there any feedback on what is being accepted or not as part of consultation process.  
CS – Chris will present feedback once the Planning team have had an opportunity to review responses received. Please conf  
CS – Welcome the opportunity to go back to Resilience Pathway Group to feedback and obtain further input.

**AOB**

**DONM: Thursday 23rd November 12:30pm-2:30pm Venue: WMG NAIC Boardroom**