

**Reading Climate Change Partnership
Board Meeting Minutes
5th April 2019
Councillor Room 1 at Civic Offices.
10.30-12.30 pm**

Attendees:

Chris Beales (CB) (Chair), Environment Agency
Councillor Tony Page (TB), Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning & Transport
Councillor Paul Gittings (PG), Member of Strategic Environment, Planning & Transport Committee and Cycle Forum
Tricia Marcouse (TM), GREN partnership (Waste Saddoes Ltd)
Tracey Rawling Church (TRC), Connect Reading (Independent Sustainability Consultant)
Ben Burfoot (BB), Reading Borough Council – Sustainability Manager
Katie Brett (KB), RCCP Support Officer (Reading Borough Council – sustainability team)
Tim Dixon (TD), University of Reading
Willem Londeman (WL), Bottomline Technologies

Apologies

Paul Harrison, Berkshire NHS
Poppy Harris (PH), Environmental and Community Coordinator, The Oracle Shopping Centre

ITEM	Lead and expected outcomes	time
Minutes from previous meeting (agreed prior to meeting) and matters arising <u>ACTION</u> CB to close/redirect old RCAN websites to the current www.readingcan.org.uk	CB – agree minutes	10
Chair intro, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introductions <p>Paul Harrison, from NHS Berkshire is now the Health representative on the Board and works in the Reading community health sector. There is also a consultant working with The Royal Berkshire Hospital who is keen to work with us.</p>	CB – info/discussion	15

Update since last board meeting and forward look

- **See sides at**

<https://alto.chrisbeales.net/index.php/s/MRdaOrnf7aLA6ch>

The website (www.readingcan.org.uk) has been further updated, and can be used well from a mobile phone.

In February Reading Borough Council declared a Climate Emergency resolution in an unanimous vote at Full Council meeting. See wording at <https://readingcan.org.uk/climate-emergency-for-reading>

In February there was a meeting of all the current RCCP strategy theme leads to update on progress this year and in regards initial thoughts on the new strategy 2020-25.

CB and BB recently presented on RCCP at a Reading 2050 event which was well attended.

CB met with Naomi Emmerson, Coordinator for Extinction Rebellion Reading. They welcomed being able to input into the June event.

CB had a very positive meeting with Ethical Reading, where areas of cross working was discussed.

Action: TRC and CB to finalise the branding and images for the pop up banners – ahead of the launch in June.

CB highlighted that there was a need for better social media presence. Dan Fernbank is happy to continue tweeting for RCCP. There is a need to develop RCAN presence on other social media forums.

Action: All to investigate if they (or a colleague) could help with tweeting, or developing other social media platforms.

RCAN network will develop in association with the development of the new RCCP strategy, when events are arranged.

CB presented the Zero Carbon Reading graph (slide 6). Reading is ahead of the curve on carbon reduction – and in top 20 Councils in the country. Much of the carbon reduction is due to the decarbonisation of grid electricity. The ‘low hanging fruit’ have been picked – and it will be the last bits that are the hardest to address.

Adaptation planning: CB showed UK Climate change projections Nov 2018 graph (slide 7).

Action: CB to take time limited password off ownCloud online file

sharing account for RCCP board members to access going forward.		
<p>RCCP budget update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CB shared the RCCP budget and spend graph. See https://alto.chrisbeales.net/index.php/s/3GW9XtsQAz0sEam. There is only a slight increase in income going forward due to inflation but also solar panel depreciation. The red line highlights that revenue reserves will drop dramatically. However this is not a concern as a contingency has been built into both the adaptation and the new strategy projects; and we have a couple of years before we need to decide how we balance the books. The HDNU project will receive £10k from 2019-20 RCCP budget. - The Adaptation Plan will receive £10k from 2019-20 RCCP budget. The Environment Agency has also contributed £1.6k. Reading Community Energy Society and Connect Reading have also been approached. - £10k has been allocated to support the development of the new strategy. How this is to be spent will be confirmed in Planning meeting in May. <p>A query was raised as to whether RBC should be funding the Adaptation Plan. BB highlighted that the council needs to be informed by evidence first and then it is likely to contribute to a larger more substantive plan for the borough in the future. It should be noted, however that Councils are not statutorily obliged to produce adaptation plans in the way that water companies and other bodies are. CB confirmed that the Adaptation Plan will be a holistic report on the whole of Reading.</p> <p>Cllr Page confirmed that since the Climate Emergency declaration he is working to amend the Terms of Reference of the Council's Committees in order for them to adopt and deliver the relevant parts of RCCS. There is an intention for lead members to all play an active role going forward. This will involve amending the Constitution at next AGM. After the June event any relevant information/actions will be sent to relevant committees for it to be embedded in their work in the next 6 months. It is hoped that this plan will then cascade out into the Private and Voluntary Sectors.</p> <p>CB did note that we will need a substantial increase in future funding for climate change activates in Reading, with potential that the RCCP budget will need to be bigger for activities that we are co-ordinating.</p> <p>BB highlighted that resources are light to do programme work going forward. There is a need for revenue funds. These could potentially be provided by setting up an 'internal climate fund' where revenues</p>	BB/CB – Info / Approval	10

<p>are earned through a renewable energy asset. It was highlighted that perhaps Ethical Reading, with their link to businesses could also contribute funds. There is a need to understand that investments need to go beyond the short term 'low hanging fruit'.</p> <p>There was a discussion as to whether the RCCP Constitution should be reviewed in order that businesses can contribute to its budget. Cllr Page and BB both felt there was no problem accepting funds from businesses. It was suggested also that perhaps a company could sponsor a particular grant application, or a particular project.</p> <p><u>Action</u> – All to consider where we can get more funding from, which businesses? What opportunities?</p> <p>With the recent new Zero Carbon 2030 target work on climate change will increase and accelerate in Reading. There was a discussion around how the Board would like to see RCCP evolve alongside this. What will be RCCPs role in the delivery of programmes and at what point does RCCP work stop and project delivery partners manage the project? Does the RCCP board need to consider paid full time staff.</p>		
<p>Climate Emergency declaration - implications for the RCCP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing expectations and Opportunities <p>CB welcomed Reading Council's Climate Emergency Declaration. It was felt that it is now important to address the more challenging practicalities of mainstreaming the resolution. It was discussed that there needs to be buy in and action from the Council, RCCP, Big businesses in Reading and upwards from National Government. Reading UK CIC and Ethical Reading need to play a role in applying pressure on larger companies to engage on this agenda and show impact - with support in cash or kind.</p> <p>Reading Council has signed up to UK100 (www.uk100.org). This is the only network for UK local authorities focused climate and clean energy policy. They connect local leaders to each other, to business and to national government, enabling them to showcase their achievements, learn from each other and speak collectively to accelerate the transition to clean energy.</p> <p>BB is currently mapping out and modelling for Zero Carbon Reading. Our progress is an achievement – but we need to recognise the scale of the challenge. For example – when addressing the pre 1919 housing stock - retrofitting will cost approx. £500m. This is beyond anyone's single budget. We need to also make the offer attractive to a home</p>	<p>CB – Discussion</p>	<p>15</p>

<p>owner – an investment of £30-40k in their home will give you a return within 30 years. This needs to be incentivised. The Heat Network, Station Hill Development, RBC Housing Strategy, Local Transport Plan – all need to integrate this scale of change. We also need to be aware of what is being constrained by funding and policy. We are also trying to unpack what we need to do to plan for the impacts – via the Mitigation Plan.</p> <p>An important reason to commission the Adaptation Plan is for people to understand the risks specifically to Reading from climate change, and the urgency in responding.</p>		
<p>Plans for the new Climate Change Strategy development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback from the RCCP Theme Leaders Meeting <p>The meeting minutes were shared - https://alto.chrisbeales.net/index.php/s/ZI0fwyinFTBnetl</p> <p>CB has handed over the Water theme to BB for ‘care taking’, whilst he continues to Chair the Partnership. It was agreed that Thames Water needs to be re-engaged.</p> <p>It was recognised that it has been a struggle to keep the strategy on track due to lack of resources and man power. TB was thanked for his support in bring on board a number of University of Reading staff to support themes - to help develop theme ‘groups’ going forward. BB noted that the national context has been tricky – with various policy changes such as The Green Deal failing, and the housing retro fit programme. Seeking match funding for projects is challenging.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are we happy with the 6 proposed themes (+cross-cutting themes)? <p>All board agreed they were broadly happy with the 6 proposed themes for the 2020-25 Strategy (names to be confirmed): Low Carbon Development and Energy, Transport (perhaps renamed to ‘transport and mobility’), Health, Resources and Consumption, Natural environment/green space, Water supply and Flooding. The cross cutting issues along each theme will include Community, Education, Business, Resilience (emergency response and adaptation planning).</p> <p>There is a need for ambitious SMART actions in the forthcoming RCCS3.</p>	<p>CB – Discussion, planning / Approval</p>	<p>30</p>

It was noted that addressing some of the cross themes could be challenging. For example the Community element has failed so far – as this is a very diverse activity. It was suggested that going forward we focus in specific local geographical areas – linking with the businesses and citizens - in schools, residents association, home owners etc – to gain impact. The need to identify hotspot areas in Reading going forward might be of use.

Theme events were discussed. Room hire will be cheap or free as events can be held at Council offices, at University, at RISC (so not owned by anyone), or Ethical Reading or The Oracle can provide the room. There are also opportunities for joint events. The challenge was in getting attendees. It was suggested that event 'issues/subjects' should be determined by RBC staff and Connect Reading staff working on that theme – in order that the event can help them with their work. For example asking staff 'What is it I'd like to know?' – relevance will encourage attendance.

Considering the development of the new strategy it was asked whether we need an Editor for the document, and facilitators for the development of themes or to support the June event.

Action: BB to compose letter (signed by Chair of RCCP and Leader of Council) to Reading businesses/organisations highlighting that a Climate emergency has been declared, the grand scale of change we need to make - and ask that they need to engage and send a senior representative to the June event.

Action: TD to investigate how he run last event (Reading 2050?)– can we learn from this?

It was agreed that there is a need for consistency across the themes. Perhaps an agreed set of key questions for the themes to address could help with this, alongside a thought through methodology on gathering ideas during group discussions.

Action: TD to assist RCCP in developing a consistent approach to theme development.

Action: CB and BB to send out questions on themes to board to inform discussions during May. • **Public event on 13th June**

It was agreed to invite the Mayor to give a welcoming address to the event.

Action: KB to investigate the Mayor's availability for the June event

The plan for the day will be discussed in more detail at our May

<p>planning meeting. Suggestions for presentation format included a presentation on the new Local Plan (20 mins), Zero carbon planning, and an introduction presentation from the RCCP Chair</p> <p>There will be breakout tables for theme discussions</p> <p><u>Action:</u> TCH and KB to design and print a pamphlet advertising June event - to share at diff events. All to advertise widely.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcomes expected for our July board meeting <p>Feedback from the public event will be presented at the July Board meeting. CB noted that this is an opportunity for the RCCP to ratify any decisions made at the event. Otherwise, no further outcomes were stipulated at this stage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget / partnership resource availability for this financial year <p>CB noted that we have £10k set aside for developing the strategy. This can be used to assist with arranging events, and potentially to help with the editing process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note Reading 2050 breakfast event on 11th June <p>The Reading 2050 event was noted: it is in the same week but this should improve the profile of both events.</p>		
<p>Projects update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Adaptation Plan <p>CB noted that an Adaptation Plan can get very complicated very quickly. Therefore he will be working closely with Mott MacDonald (who are being commissioned to write our first plan) to make sure they deliver something that is useful for Reading. The plan will be broad brush and focussed on communicating what adaptation planning is all about. The Oracle might help with funding, and its an opportunity to work with the University. It will cover – risks: heat waves 40oc, extreme rain fall events, river flooding, very dry soils, ... photochemical smog, new disease vectors, food.</p> <p>See more detail here: https://alto.chrisbeales.net/index.php/s/fjAZbspt75y5CZH</p> <p>The aim is for the Plan to be substantially completed by September</p>	BB	10

<p>2019 so it can feed into theme planning mid-point meeting.</p> <p>Detailed financial modelling will not be covered in this first plan. The document needs to be useful and communicable – to inspire the town to have a second plan – with much more funding.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> CB to ask Lisa (from Mott Macdonald) to include in the plan high-level financial implications for Reading, its economy, insurance implications etc. include best practice – such as climate bonds – Stockholm, J'burg.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zero Carbon Reading 2030 <p>BB spoke with Phil Coker at University of Reading – ‘you need to get rid of gas’. He went on to explain that it is not as simple as this, but gas as fossil fuel cannot continue to be our primary heat source. A programme around heat pumps, electrification of heat and vehicles is the core of the energy model going forwards. It was agreed that we need SSE and LEP onside.</p> <p>It is hoped to run a ‘Getting to Zero Carbon’ event in Reading in May to bring together Councils (incl. Bristol and Nottingham), and industry to discuss and debate plans (BB to check). Looking at the ‘City leap Programme’ in Bristol as a model to galvanise the Reading market.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> BB to feed into the consultation of the Thames Valley Industrial Strategy as there is very little mention on adaptation, carbon emissions and the impact of climate change (deadline June).</p>		
<p>Completing the Board membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communities reps <p>It was agreed it would be good to fill these two vacant posts by July Board meeting. Suitable representatives from the religious community’s in Reading, ethnic minorities and youth will be considered. It was important to ensure that the board is only increased in size if members add value to our purpose.</p> <p>CB is presenting at the next Reading Schools Parent Governors meeting. <u>Action:</u> CB to investigate the possibility of Richard Stainthorp (head of Reading Parent Governors) becoming a ‘community’ board member.</p> <p>TM has links with Acre (http://www.acre-reading.org). Acre promotes community cohesion and equality through engagement, empowerment, and integration of the diverse communities in the</p>	<p>CB/All – Discussion / action</p>	<p>10</p>

<p>Reading and greater Reading area.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> TM to investigate potential of Victoria Hunter from Acre being a suitable 'community' board member.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> TM - to scope faith forums.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> KB and BB to investigate Reading Youth Council.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> All to propose community members for the Board.</p>		
<p>Grant applications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New process for Grant approval <p>CB proposed to the Board that Grant applications should only be considered every 6 months going forward, with £5k allocated each time. Considering the new climate emergency declaration, the relevance of many of the applications was questioned, and also the time taken to consider them fairly. Perhaps these funds could be better spent elsewhere - such as on direct climate change programmes or large communications campaign. It could be useful for applicants to submit a short overview first and those shortlisted would go on and complete a larger application form or brought in for a face to face meeting to discuss their idea.</p> <p>It was agreed that a Moratorium will be declared going forward, with a review in the Sept board meeting. <u>Action:</u> KB update website to state that there is now a Moratorium on new grant applications whilst we develop our new strategy. However we welcome discussion from future applicants at a later date.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> KB - to update the grant guidelines to include 'what is the proven impact of your project? How will you measure its impact? How many people will it effect?'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lavender Place <p>The Board discussed the additional information provided on the previous Lavender Place submission. The more detailed budget and Raspberry Pii information was considered. Questions were raised about the current footfall in the garden, and whether there were alternatives for technological information sharing - such as QR codes. It was agreed that we would part fund £800 of the application - to include the development of the display boards. However the Raspberry Pii application was no viable on this occasion. RCCP would</p>	<p>CB - Intro / approval</p> <p>BB/KB - Discussion and approval</p>	<p>20</p>

<p>request co ownership on the educational aspects of the project- for use in our website as appropriate. RCCP QR code to go on all display boards.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> KB to contact Dave and confirm part funding, with co ownership of educational aspects.</p>		
<p>AOB</p> <p>TRC highlighted John Hogget resignation notice on GREN facebook page. It was the same text as on the email we had received.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> CB and BB to review and make appropriate response</p> <p>There is an IEMA networking event on 24th April in Reading.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> WL to circulate June event leaflet to attendees.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> TRC to circulate June event leaflet to attendees at 'planning for a low carbon economy conference' on April 24th</p> <p>Date for the next meeting - Tues 9 July, 10am-1pm Civic Centre</p>	ALL	10