# Route to Zero (R20) Taskforce

**26th August 2020, 4pm to 6pm**

**Virtual meeting**

**Key discussion points and actions:**

**Attendance:**

Amit Bratch (BCC),

Cllr Julien Pritchard,

Cllr Peter Fowler,

Cllr Roger Harmer,

Cllr Sharon Thompson,

Cllr Waseem Zaffar,

Dan Gamson (CWG),

Eleanor Crook (BCC),

Ian Macleod (BCC),

Maria Dunn (BCC),

Michael Addison (EcoBirmingham),

Rose Horsfall (BCC),

Tim Miller (Aston Uni),

Martin Freer (UoB),

Chris Martin (Footsteps),

David Horsfall (TEP),

David Bownass (WSP),

Jules Todd (CANWM)

Jamie Ounan

**Apologies**

Phillipa Hentsch (NHS)

Polly Billington (UK100),

Tim Pile (GBSLEP),

Paul Faulkner (BCOC),

Varun Sitaram (BCC),

Rishi Shori (BCC),

Eleri Roberts (BCC), Aaron Smith (YS4C),

Andrew Scattergood (TUC),

Andrew Page (TFWM),

Deborah Phelpstead (BCU),

Joanna Birch (BCU),

Jonathan Tew (BCC),

Carol Herity (NHS),

Carol Herity (NHS),

Cllr John O’Shea,

Cheryl Hiles (Energy Capital)

Emily Prestwood (BEI),

Cllr Liz Clements,

Cllr Olly Armstrong,

Jackie Homan (WMCA),

Ioanna Moscholidou (BCC),

Cllr Lisa Trickett

1. **Introduction (Cllr Zaffar)**

* There are many apologies due to the time of the year.
* This will be the last TF meeting before full council on 15 September.

1. **Progress Update (Ian Macleod and Maria Dunn)**

* MD – since the last meeting the majority of work has been on the Anthesis recommendations and moving those into the full council report on the 15th September. Also working on the covering council report.
* IM – we have a comprehensive set of recommendations from Anthesis, it is a significant programme of work, and we need to work with partners to drive this forward.

1. **Discussion around recommendations**

* Comments from TF that recommendations seem weak and some of them will require lot of finances to be delivered. There are lots of acronyms used. There is no impact or priority placed on the actions. How is the Cabinet going to agree to the recommendations when the information is so limited in relation to carbon impact and costs?
* Cllr Zaffar – The document will be reviewed **ACTION: DOC TO BE REVIEWED TO SIMPLIFY LANGUAGE** Recommendations have come from the 2 workshops. There will be a Council report accompanying the recommendations and after the September Council each recommendation will be costed and resources will be identified to deliver them.
* Cllr Pritchard enquired when the action plan will be written (this will be after full council) and expressed disappointment with the timing and resource column as there is nothing to suggest how the resource will be allocated to deliver a particular recommendation.
* Cllr Zaffar agreed we need to look at costs associated with delivering these recommendations. Cllr Thompson added that we need to be clear that these are recommendations and there is going to be times when we will be competing with other priorities, so it won’t be as straight forward as having a fixed action plan e.g. what has happened with covid.
* Cllr Fowler –Where is the cross party working in the agenda? Cllr Zaffar - lib dems have no portfolio responsibility, this will be addressed in governance.
* David Bownass – Lots of the recommendations are dependent on funding to be delivered. Also even if we take forward all the recommendations put forward we still won’t be able to meet 2030 target and this has been made clear in the Anthesis report.
* MD – full council report does make this clear, that it won’t meet 2030.
* Jules Todd –There needs to be clear distinction between the council’s own resources and ones to be sourced from different partners. Cllr Zaffar – we hope the action plan will be catalyst for funding.
* Michael Addison - Was timing etc. not in the brief for Anthesis? I am concerned that we don't have a robust action plan to go to council given we are aiming for 2030
* Ian Macleod – the council needs to put more resource into this. Cllr Thompson is right; it is about balancing competing priorities.
* Anthesis report states that even with recommendations, the city as a whole would not meet 2030 without offsetting. Recommendation is to change to 2041 for city, 2030 for council excluding council stock and procurement – as these areas are the hardest and the time is longer. **N.B.: the challenge of achieving the 2030 net zero carbon date for the City as a whole has been acknowledge but we are committed to the Council to working with partners and neighbouring local authorities to become the first City Region to become Carbon neutral. The Council’s ambition remains to achieve a net zero carbon outcome as soon as possible and a revised date will not be set until these discussions have taken place.**
* Jules Todd – dates – believe setting arbitrary target dates is skewing the process; we need the fastest possible reduction in carbon reductions across the city. Emphasis should be on scale and pace of change rather than target dates. Cllr Zaffar – our pace does need to increase, the action plan and timescales set within this action plan will be crucial.
* Chris Martin - We need to have a serious review of finance in the widest sense - the global investment community understands risks associated with climate change and the impact and responsible investment communities - and pension funds are looking for ways to invest in the new greener economy.
* Cllr Julien Pritchard – agree with Jules Todd, needs to be done as fast as possible. We need to bear in mind that the Anthesis method is not the only way to look at things. Anthesis never said 2030 wasn’t achievable but we would need to go beyond the report or use carbon offsetting, so it is not totally impossible, just hard. Ian Macleod – the reason for using Anthesis was that they had the SCATTER model that had been used by government and other core cities. Agree we don’t need to get caught up on dates, we now have practical recommendations and the important thing is to drive these to delivery.

**Domestic Properties**

* MD - Domestic properties have number of actions. Council has got little control on retrofit of private properties. Recommendations on planning need to be considered alongside planning legislation and policy.

**Transport**

* Cllr Roger Harmer – can’t see car clubs on this section? It was there before. **ACTION – MD TO READD CAR CLUBS BACK IN TO REPORT**

**Waste**

* Chris Martin – there needs to be indication that the incineration is one of the largest carbon emitters in Birmingham. Ian Macleod – it does flag the opportunity that the incinerator provides.
* Tim Miller - There is a lot of activity from EBRI on low carbon growth innovation with around 50 regional businesses

**Industry**

* Jules Todd - Steamhouse green recovery produced positive ideas to engage businesses, city council, LEP, WMCA who are supportive of green recovery. MD-Comments have picked up wider table of recommendations presented to the Council in February IM - Sandpits came back with good recommendations.
* Chris Martin - Bristol has done some good work on communicating the need for more re-cycling to 'difficult to reach' communities

**Natural Environment**

* Jules Todd – food and farming is a major emission. There should be a stream of work on food security. Could also look at the link to food waste management – this should be included post September **ACTION: MD TO LIASE WITH JT TO INCLUDE FOOD**
* Cllr Zaffar – public health are doing work on food security. **ACTION: MD NEED TO INCLUDE THIS PUBLIC HEALTH RECOMMENDATION IN REPORT**

**Energy supply**

* Michael Addison – centre of sustainable energy Bristol, European funding to work with google data to encourage more PV panels - Project 3D. ACTION: EC TO REACH OUT TO BRISTOL. N.B Bham already submitted expression of interest
* Jules- Had previous conversations acknowledging the role of education and training and needs to be addressed. If this is not addressed it could be a huge show stopper. Can we include education/training and need to do detailed planning with local colleges. Made more detailed comments via chat (appendix 1).
* Chris Martin – made overall position statement for Footsteps in chat (appendix 2).
* Cllr Zaffar- Is that something which falls in the Community Engagement Group’s remit MD-This is dependent on certain shifts. Education or training is not directly mentioned but reference is made to ensure that we have right skills to deliver R20 agenda and there is role for educational institutions. Cross reference with economy work post Covid. Jules Todd – missing section on energy and training. **ACTION: MD TO ADD IN ABOUT EDUCATION AND TRAINING**
* David Bownass – report mentions green homes grants, there is a register for this needs to be discussed. **ACTION MD – PICK UP WITH DB OFFLINE ON**

**GREEN HOMES GRANTS**

1. **Governance**

* MD – recommendation is that TF is a thematic partnership that sits under City Board. There will be a transition period that will likely continue until January. Setting up advisory board (cross party) to ensure there is an internal governance process.
* There were questions around the nature of the City Board
* MD - The City Board is a leaders’ group launched in September 2018. It is chaired by the former Home Secretary, Jacqui Smith. The City Board provides a forum for representatives to discuss the strategic opportunities and challenges in the city and how partners can work together more effectively. The City Board does not hold any statutory powers, its focus is to build relationships, foster a shared level of understanding and identify opportunities and shared objectives. As TF is a partnership group in can sit within the partnership architecture.
* Cllr Zaffar – City Board has evolved into a good platform, particularly since covid. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Deputy Leader held regular teleconferences with partners with attendance from the City Board Chair to share information and updates across the city, recognising the benefits of increased partnership working at this challenging time. Having the TF as subcommittee helps to improve the recognition of the TF within the cities’ structures.
* Jules Todd – City Board is non-transparent and contradicts with the idea of bringing communities together to deliver Just Transition. The meetings are not public and there is no public participation. It’s not an appropriate place for TF as it massively contradicts with the idea of a just transition. **ACTION: CLLR ZAFFAR FIND OUT WHO IS ON CITY BOARD, EC TO CIRCULATE**
* Cllr Peter Fowler – not sure about the suggestion. Need a rundown of where we would sit.
* Michael Addison – understand the benefits of being linked to the City Board. TF is lacking in representation that will help in this way. Need to know who is on the board. **ACTION: CLLR THOMPSON/ZAFFAR TO ASK DEPUTY LEADER ABOUT MAKING CHANGES OT THE TRANSPARENCY OF CB**
* MD – mentioned about the questionnaire that formed a part of 23rd July Governance workshop. 67% participants agreed that TF and R20 work should remain in the Council’s remit. 33% agreed with the statement.
* Cllr Zaffar – once report goes to full council a meeting will be held to decide on a member led group.

1. **Agreeing next steps**

* Cllr Zaffar – full council 15th September. Also to include governance. After this we will reconvene TF meeting to develop action plan.
* Cllr Zaffar agreed to circulate Anthesis brief please. **ACTION: CIRCULATE ANTHESIS TENDER**
* Cllr Fowler – need more businesses on TF, Cllr Zaffar welcomes nominations
* Agree to circulate members list. **ACTION: EC CIRCULATE MEMBERS LIST**

**Appendix 1 - CANWM**

* We welcome:  
  1.    The creation of a multi-stakeholder Task Force as a response to the declaration of climate emergency in June 2019.   
  2.    The emphasis on a \*Just Transition\* to net zero carbon.  
  3.    Support by BCC and others for workshops and working groups to discuss detailed aspects of the climate action plan.  
  4.    Commissioning of a detailed analysis of current carbon emissions and carbon reduction “trajectories”.  
  5.    BCC and partner response to the Covid-19 pandemic, especially the emergency transport plan, which reflects a desire to “build back better” while protecting the health and wellbeing of our citizens.  
  6.    The emerging consensus that the Council, as the elected civic authority, should lead the implementation of the Just Transition action plan via various partnerships and including ongoing, large-scale citizen participation.

We regret:  
1.    The lack of a detailed, robust climate action plan, or a compelling vision of why we must act on climate, despite all the time and money expended to date.  
2.    The lack of ambition in the report by Anthesis, which forecasts a “best-case” reduction in GHGs of only 72% against 2017 levels by 2030. Even this figure is only achieved at the cost of excluding large sources of carbon emissions, including food and farming, aviation and many aspects of consumption-based emissions.  
3.    The extremely limited participation of many stakeholders due to the way the Task Force was set up.  
4.    Heavy reliance on external consultants (Anthesis) and exclusion of valid proposals for climate action by members of the Task Force and others.  
5.    Limited consideration of the wide range of potential co-benefits of climate action, especially in health and well-being, “green jobs”, etc..  
6.    Limited engagement so far of most councillors and local communities.  
7.    Limited engagement of Scrutiny committees so far in ensuring that all Council departments review policies, contracts, operating models and plans in the light of the climate emergency.  
8.    Apparent lack of support for action on the climate emergency among some Council officers and departments, for example the decision to re-tender the Tyseley incinerator contract without due regard to reductions in GHG emissions, other pollutants and waste.  
9.    The absence of any significant plans for increasing community resilience in the face of increased climate risks from e.g. extreme weather, flooding, food supply disruption, job losses in declining economic sectors (e.g. automotive).  
10.    The exclusion so far of any detailed consideration of education and training – for action in schools, FE/HE organisations and the large re-training programme required to support a low-carbon, “circular” economy.  
11.    The silence regarding, and implicit acceptance of, the HS2 project, despite its devastation of ancient woodlands, huge escalating cost and opposition of every local authority along the route, apart from the cities at each end. This money could instead be invested in setting up Fare-Free Public Transport systems for congested and polluted cities such as Birmingham, as a major lever in getting most vehicles off the road.

* CANWM and other climate and environmental campaigners remain fully committed to promoting and supporting urgent action on the climate and ecological emergency and we will support the work of the Council and partners in the Just Transition. We urge Full Council in September to endorse and actively support urgent, practical action in the spirit of "further, faster, together".

**Appendix 2 – Footsteps**

Birmingham’s climate emergency declaration in June 2019 to achieve a net zero city by 2030 or as soon afterward as a just transition permitted was ambitious, visionary and appropriate to the climate and environmental challenges Birmingham and the world faces. Footsteps, the Birmingham faith leaders and over 40 local community faith leaders supported the original motion, especially its ambition and emphasis on a just transition. In April 2020 Birmingham faith leaders wrote to Cllr Zaffar reiterating their support for declaration’s ambition and inclusive approach.

Footsteps welcomed being invited to represent Birmingham faith communities on the R20 Taskforce and has learned much about working in partnership with the City and other stakeholders.

In Footsteps’ view, the final draft Interventions and Recommendations action plan demonstrates how much remains to be done to achieve the ambition of the original climate emergency declaration. The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted on all aspects of the Taskforce’s work, but also provides opportunities to ‘build back better and greener’.

Key areas such as articulating the vision, funding the just transition, communicating and engaging with communities and releasing the energy that can come from partnership working are all also important aspects of a climate emergency action plan that reflect the hopes and aspiration of the June 2019 declaration. These issues need to be discussed urgently by councillors and officers before and during the Council meeting in September and included in the covering report to the action plan the Council.