

Route to Zero (R20) Taskforce

24th February 2021, 16:00-17:30

Virtual meeting

Attendance:

Alex Taylor (GBSLEP)	Deborah Phelpstead	Simon Slater
Amit Bratch (BCC),	(BCU),	(EcoBirmingham)
Chris Martin (Footsteps),	Emily Prestwood (UoB,	Tim Miller (Aston Uni)
Cllr Roger Harmer	BEI)	William Hargreaves
Cllr Julien Pritchard,	Jacqueline Homan	(CoC)
Cllr Liz Clements,	(WMCA)	John Nightingale
Cllr Peter Fowler,	Martin Freer (BEI)	(CANWM guest)
Cllr Waseem Zaffar,	Richard Hatcher	Lisa Trickett (PIC)
David Horsfall (TEP),	(CANWM guest)	Mary Crofton
Kasir Ijaz (BCC)	Rose Horsfall (BCC),	Timothy Brown (BCC)
	Mark Baker	Sidat Sabbir

Apologies

Eleanor Crook (BCC), Maria Dunn (BCC), Carol Herity (NHS), Jo Birch (Aston University), Mike Folkard (GBSLEP),

1. Introduction (Cllr Zaffar)

- **Cllr Zaffar** – The Council's Budget meeting confirmed £1.8 m for 2 years to set up climate change team which will be led by Assistant Director. The team will work across the Council to enable the Council to become carbon neutral by 2030 and work with partners across the city. The team will also help with the governance of the climate change which will be discussed later. More information on the team will be provided by early April as the business case is being worked up. Also need to have an update from Ian MacLeod on the action plan, discussion on governance and finance roundtable session led by Lisa. Need to discuss progress on action plan,

2. Update on Action Plan progress- Ian Macleod

- Working on 12 month plan and are taking the update report to Cabinet next month. Looking at BHMT and number of technologies around ground source heat pumps and solar panels. Working with Procurement to put green energy supply which will save around 30,000 tons of carbon. Will bring the plan to next TF. Looking at long term actions to tackle bigger actions in the Plan to deliver change. Also need to consider working with partners and stakeholders to deliver the actions
- **Cllr Pritchard** asked about the finance for the climate team for two years and stated that 2 year funding will not be enough to get the city to zero carbon by 2030. What will happen after 2 years? Need that investment for longer term possible 9-10 years.
- **Ian Macleod**-stated that intention is to have team for longer term and the team will become self-funding and sustaining in the long term as they will be able to generate funding through various work streams.
- **Cllr Fowler** asked if any paper were circulated on the progress on action plan.

- **Ian Macleod**- Lots of work has been undertaken on the action plan and we will bring the updated progress report to next TF

3. Governance discussion- Cllr Zaffar

- **Cllr Zaffar**-The diagram was discussed at previous meeting and lots of comments were received and discussions were held with Advisory Group. Cllr Zaffar went through the diagram and explained how the governance will work. And stated that we need to agree to new Structure. Highlighted that CM-Cabinet Member PM-Project manager in the diagram.
- **Lisa Trickett**-need somebody who owns up to making everything happen. Expert advisor can chair the group. Will come back and clarify any notes provided.
- **Deborah Phelpstead**- circulated the diagram to colleagues and received some feedback. Great to see it is taking shape and is clear. Whether some arrows should be two ways to show 2 way communications, and whether it needs more arrows to show inter-connections. Not sure if this is an external perspective but who is responsible for implementation? More information can be provided alongside the diagram on these issues.
- **Cllr Zaffar**- Once the diagram is agreed a paper will be drafted alongside the diagram to provide commentary on the diagram.
- **Richard Hatcher**-Agree with Deborah on points raised regarding the arrows. Governance needs to be participatory and must involve citizens in more proactive and meaningful way to influence service design and delivery. Raised a point about ward forums. Stated that there is 2 ways of participation one is city wide participation bringing people from cities i.e. faith groups, businesses etc. and other level is sub level and ward forums focusing on residents. Possibility of setting up climate change wards forums whenever citizens want them. Climate should be prominent in those meetings. Ward forums are not about fly tipping etc. but also climate change and need to convince people. Other local institution in every neighbourhood which is schools should be considered. Children can be emotional drivers and need to be involved to spread climate message. We must involve our citizens in a constructive and meaningful way.
- **Liz Clemets**- perhaps we could have constituency wide forums. And all this is connected to localism progress as well, we need to have some devolved local resources if we are going raise residents' expectations about local members' capacity to launch initiatives.
- **Cllr Zaffar**-valuable point around ward forums and need to have dialogue with teams in the Council who support ward forums. Not sure about climate ward forums. Need to have conversation with ward members around finance. Also need to consider how we engage young people in schools as quite a lot of schools are doing excellent work. Next phase need to look at engaging young people.
- **Richard Hatcher**- Climate Action Network West Midlands have put forward the suggestion of commissioning a feasibility study for the introduction of a Fare Free Public Transport system. Whilst BCC does not have the capacity to take the lead on this, it fully supports the commencement of the study. (p48)
- **Liz Clements**- much improved diagram but look and feels flow chart that governance. In 2 dimensions. Needs circle around the diagram which says about Govt finance. Who is responsible when actions are not delivered? Need Cabinet/CA at the accountability. Role of LEP's is important to this climate action plan. Need specific reference to LEP.
- **Lisa Trickett**- Couple of points. Concur with Liz that Govt Plans/priorities should not be at the top. Need Government to work across spatial scales but if we want to own it we need to change. BCC and CA need to own this. Arrows should be 2 ways and everyone needs to learn from each other. Bring different agencies to explore systems. Some processes like collective intelligence and bringing

information have become tangled in governance. Principle point around participation so power is equally distributed. Ward forums are not fit for purpose. Need to secure participation on community terms and not through council structures. How to make ward forums more accessible. Climate ward Forums will not work. We have to respond to what people want and people do not have time to turn up to ward forums. Need to have conversations in cafes, libraries, religious places etc.

- **Cllr Zaffar**-Ward forums need to have community engagement in them. Need dedicated conversation and need to win hearts and minds of people in the city. Need longer discussion. Can revisit the diagram at Advisory Group.
- **Simon Slater**-Greener Birmingham is mostly groups linked to natural environment so most members would contribute to Greener spaces work stream not circular economy
- **Chris Martin**- useful high level diagram. Energy, transport, buildings should be more aligned with advisory and cabinet. Need communication and Engagement group of some kind and needs to be built in the high level diagram. The diagram suggests that the main source of income is Government. Round table session highlighted that lot of stakeholders willing to invest in climate change.
- **Cllr Zaffar**-agree with the suggestion needing a Comms/Engagement group.
- **William Hargreaves**- Diagram is nice and simple. How will it operate? With trade Unions will you have specific criteria and how will you select those groups. How will you measure the effectiveness of the system in terms of performance?
- **Cllr Zaffar**- needs work to be done with business community. What opportunities are there for business community? Work with chamber, small businesses to improve connect with them.
- **Ian MacLeod**-measures are about demonstrating that early pilot's work and then we can scale up.
- **Peter Fowler**- Governance plans/priorities may fit nicely in between CA/Cabinet. Need to ask Govt for input. Trade Unions need to talk to financiers and Chamber and agree about LEP. LEP's are own entity and need to engage with them. Ward Forums- standalone meeting about ward plans. Separate standalone community meetings will be beneficial. Green manufacturing should be part of CA.
- **Martin Freer**- The diagram is helpful. I wonder if there are too many layers to be really effective. Can the some layers be fused
- **Julian Pritchard**- Clearer diagram and Govt plans are more of context than a layer or direct player. Little bit unsure who drives everything forward as is split between 2 organisations. On ward forum if you want people to be more active we need to make things more tangible. If you want people to engage need more money which people can use to tackle climate change.
- **Alex Taylor**- how can LEP feed in and how businesses can be bought in. LEP's work on climate change and leading on Industrial Strategy and low carbon is one of the sectors. This will feed into broad net zero. LEP's own work on how to be net zero and happy to get involved in R20 work.
- **Ian MacLeod**- work at LEP is recognised and they have worked with the authority on retrofit.
- **Cllr Zaffar**-take away the comments and send the revised diagram to TF members. Need to add overall arching accountability in the diagram. Need to send a paper alongside the diagram. Need to get into new structure.

4. Debrief from Finance Roundtable- Lisa Trickett

- **Lisa Trickett**- Circulated the draft paper and need to get final sign off. Read the paper and send any comments and observations. Paper summarises the list of opportunities/challenges. Good spread of people at the roundtable like HSBC/Lloyd's/bankers without boundaries and Indie Johal and KPMG. Also had reps

from all key universities and professional services. Introduction and framing a concept that reflects that there is cross party agreement to build better. Covid has taught us that uncertainty is only certainty. The impact of multiple transitions Brexit/Covid is making supply chains more fragile. Lot of agreement on collective intervention. In terms of financing there is appetite to invest in climate change sphere. However the size of the investment does matter for example not considering investment in schemes of less than £20 million. Felt that there is willingness to invest but don't know what to invest in. Lack of clarity about investments is major hurdle. Full house retrofit takes 30 years to have a pay back. Importance of language as to what we mean by retrofit/ energy systems. Public sector does have role in de-risking private sector risk. Need to be honest as to how we share the risk. The issue was that what was seen in some cities about top down procurement approach picks up easy to do actions rather than challenging .Need to develop pipeline of investable projects. Missing link is resources. How do we fund place based approaches? Concept of bending approaches i.e. retrofit and new development and aggregating from small scale to large scale. We are largest land owner and should harness that asset and what can we do for ourselves. Final thing is it is difficult and we often shoot ourselves in the foot and not good are not good at making attractive places. EV charging is areas where investment can flow if made easier. Need to engage with private sector. Energy underpins everything and we have got capacity and capability. Housing is another massive area and is critical for Birmingham and the Black Country. Need to go back what we have got and where are we looking to regenerate and can add climate interventions.

- **Cllr Pritchard**- The discussion highlighted that there is not much in terms of concrete funds.and mechanism and will happen next.
- **Lisa Trickett**-follow up from green finance and bankers without boundaries. Need to come up with couple of packages neighbourhood model of retrofit. Go back to the sector and how to finance this. Building better is the message and things need to be different post Covid.
- **Chris Martin**- From a Footsteps perspective, the Round Table involved a 'top down', mainstream finance approach. This needs to be complemented by (1) a wide range of different funding approaches that involve citizens and communities (2) an explicit values-driven economic recovery from Covid-19, (3) engaging and communicating with local communities and, finally, (4) developing community based, co-benefit identified, risk profiled, investment ready projects
- **Richard Hatcher**- was investment in the future workforce - ie developing the 'green jobs' knowledge and skills that are needed - part of your discussion? How will it - including the role of FE - be an integral dimension?
- **Lisa Trickett**-key thing was the idea to have clear projects and those who understand finance and what model will work better. If we want to build 2000 modular homes that local institution can put in training. Public sector need to create the market.
- **Richard Hatcher**-take the point about how demand for 'green' workers will be created by the market - but it also needs to be coordinated, bringing together employers, providers (especially FE), and the future workers themselves, including young people leaving school and workers in high-carbon jobs, and only local govt whether at Bham or WM level or both can play that role.
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- **Liz Clements**- Heat pumps quite scary and not suitable. How can we make it possible for people to invest in alternatives? Pension funds to be divested to climate emergency. Need to think how it can be done.
- **Lisa Trickett**- working with colleagues looking at profiling zero carbon as to what can be done in the region. For heat pumps skills are similar to boilers. What are the problems? In areas the option is to share a heat pump and how people buy warmth. Potential interest we can pursue with boiler makers. Pension divestment shares the need to divestment. Need spread of duty and investing in fossil fuels is not good option.
- **Cllr Roger Harmar**- on pension fund BCC asked pension fund to be divested and Walsall has as well but need other LA's need to get involved. Fossil fuels are not better in long term. Heat pumps work best in multi properties and have got lots in city and need to insulate the properties. Would be good to see them on street basis.
- **Lisa Trickett** at members advisory committee need to put fossil fuel divestment on the agenda
- **Liz Clements**- Scrutiny needs to look at the issue of pension divestment as well.
- **Cllr Julian Pritchard**-Held session about this issue in Economy and Skills scrutiny and were told that they cannot divest pension funds to non-fossil fuels.
- **Cllr Zaffar**-thanked Lisa and everyone. Next time we will meet under new circumstances. And confirm new governance.

5. Any Other Business

- There was no other business and the meeting closed at 17:22.