

## ADEPT – Energy and Clean Working Group Minutes

<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	<b>Thursday 6th February 2025 14:30- 16:00</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	Microsoft Teams Meeting
<b>Chair:</b>	Daire Casey, Energy Services Manager, West Sussex County Council Deputy Chair: Katie Sargent, Greener Futures Group Manager, Surrey County Council
<b>Attendees:</b>	Alaster Sims – Service Manager Climate, Coast & Environment, Isle of Wight Council Allison Dickinson – Project Manager, Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (ADI) Chitra Nadarajah – Head of Service: Climate Change & Environmental Strategy, Hampshire Council (CNA) Daire Casey – Energy Services Manager, West Sussex County Council (DCA) Doug Eltham – Environment and Sustainability Policy Officer, Devon County Council (DEL) Eithne George - Head of Economy & Climate Change, Cambridgeshire County Council Jordan Clydesdale - Wiltshire Council (JCL) Margaret Enstone - Sustainability and Climate Change Lead Officer, Darlington Borough Council Katie Sargent – Greener Futures Group Manager, Surrey County Council (KSA) Kofi Adu-Gyamfi – Climate Change Service Lead, West Berkshire Council (KGY) Kylie Russell – Deputy CEO, ADEPT (KRU) Melania Tarquino – Strategic Energy Lead, Surrey County Council (MTA) Olivia Mortimer – Energy Administrator, West Sussex County Council Patrick Allcorn – Head of Local Energy, Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (PAL) Tamara Cleverley – Energy Analyst, West Sussex County Council Thomas Day – Head of Energy and Low Carbon Programme, Essex County Council (TDA) Vicky Burvill – Senior Climate Officer, Wiltshire Council (VBU)
<b>Guests:</b>	
<b>Note Taker:</b>	Olivia Mortimer, West Sussex County Council
<b>Apologies:</b>	Sheryl French Carolyn McKenzie Marouane Azennoude David Johnson

Item No.	Item
1.	<p><u>Welcome &amp; Introductions</u></p> <p>Daire Casey as new Chair with Katie Sargent as Vice Chair</p> <p>Olivia Mortimer as secretary – with Tamara Cleverley also in attendance for initial support.</p> <p>Agreed future meetings will be recorded to assist in producing minutes - no objections from any members present.</p> <p>Will arrange to have speakers come in for future meetings - however this session will focus on the main priorities within group + updating the terms of reference where appropriate.</p>
2.	<p><u>Agree Terms of Reference</u></p> <p>Terms of reference last agreed in October 2023.</p> <p>Format has been updated slightly + will go through the existing terms of reference and see if anyone has any points they would like to raise.</p> <p>Will then save updated document and use this as the new terms of reference going forward.</p> <p>ADEPT Clean Energy and Working Group:</p> <p><u>Key areas:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Corporate decision making - supporting us to develop policy, strategy and key decisions as we see fit</li> <li>2. Commissioning procurement - engaging consultants and commissioning pieces of work on our collective behalf</li> <li>3. Place based strategic guidance - taking best practice, engaging with people who are doing innovative pieces of work and bringing them to the group + making sure we are all able to benefit</li> </ol> <p><u>Objectives of the group:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Representing local authority energy and clean growth interests at a national level:</u> -engaging with DESNZ and other government departments -could also be where there is a proliferation of national / regional bodies that we want to engage with + give them an opportunity to talk to a number of practitioners in a single space -then representing our needs back to government.</li> <li>2. <u>Engaging with government, national agencies and other bodies to input into the development of policy, guidance and practice:</u> -co creation and making sure our voices are heard -have been doing collective responses to consultation</li> <li>3. <u>Share knowledge, develop and disseminate best practice and promote innovation to support and enhance the effectiveness of delivery:</u></li> <li>4. <u>Support and promote training and education in appropriate skills, tools and techniques, specifically covering green economy and green business case models:</u> - ADEPT run a number of lunchtime sessions and have various other training opportunities which has been extremely useful</li> <li>5. <u>Promoting effective and innovative practice and sustainable development across ADEPT with other partners and within the energy and clean growth agenda:</u> - involves disseminating best practice again</li> <li>6. <u>Provide a coordinated approach to research opportunities:</u></li> </ol>

7. Supporting local authorities in their work on Local Area Energy Planning and grid scale infrastructure investment:
8. Identifying the gaps in local authority evidence bases to improve quality of information, and how this can be used to inform devolved models of collaboration between central and local governments across rural and urban areas with different governance mechanisms:
  - piece of work done previously around IChooser and some of the issues the group were collectively experiencing- bringing this together was particularly valuable.

### Devolution

- Lobbying power / ability to drive change more effective when done as a group rather than individually.
- ADEPT are currently working on how to provide support regarding upcoming devolution and local government reorganisation.
- The Environment Board are currently looking into what they can do around environment and devolution – there may be further information available to working groups coming out of this. White paper raised many points around energy.
- There may be a potential for us to add into the terms of reference a point around the group's role regarding this - preference would be to add it in now and review terms of reference at regular intervals.

### Amendments to Terms of Reference:

1. Adding in the interests of local communities within objective no 1
2. Adding the point that policies, guidance and practice developed by government/national agencies/other bodies should be holistic (with housing as an example) within objective no 2
3. Including "Other ADEPT boards" within the bodies included in objective no 2

**Action: KSA to email OMO with wording of a potential new objective point around managing energy and clean growth - within upcoming Devolution**

Agreement on the new terms of reference by everyone present.

3.

### Identify members' priorities for 25/26

1. Devolution
2. Development of Public Bodies
  - understanding where the landscape is around energy, clean growth + possibly retrofit and how this is changing.
3. Work with NESO
  - their recent work is relevant to those looking at doing local energy planning. They are keen to engage with this working group. Will seek to bring them into the next meeting.
4. Link between Net Zero and Natural Capital
5. Retrofit Credits
  - trialling currently in domestic housing sector where credits are sold, offering a route towards bringing in additional financing through carbon reduction
6. Shared knowledge around Nutrient Neutrality and Unlocking Sustainable Development
  - different authorities are taking different approaches – sharing good practise across authorities would be beneficial

7. Environmental / carbon impacts of AI
8. RESP Policy Framework
9. Draft Strategic Spatial Energy Plan Consultation

**Action: KRU to invite NESO to one of the next Clean Energy and Working Group meetings**

**Action: DCA, KSA and OMO to have a meeting reviewing the list of members priorities and creating thematic areas to work on over the next year + topic related speakers for future sessions**

4.

ADEPT update

- Currently pulling together a response on the Integrated National Transport Strategy
- ADEPT responded recently to the Transport Committee inquiry into the effects of street works on surface, quality and maintenance costs.
- The Treasury have just published it's 10-year infrastructure strategy working paper- which ADEPT will be looking in to. This is outlining government's approach to core economic infrastructure- including transport, energy, water, flood risk management, digital and waste.
- ADEPT produced a co-signed letter with the Association of Directors of Children's Services, Association of Directors of Public health + equivalent body for adult & social services – producing a briefing on local government finances. Currently working on one for the spending review. (One of these is on ADEPT website to view which Kylie will send out the link for.)
- Produced a joint response on the consultation on the NHS 10-year plan.
- Devolution – an offer for ADEPT members is being produced. The next (online) Sustainable Growth Board meeting will be focusing on Devolution and LGR. Kylie can forward on invites to anybody wishing to attend.
- Series of webinars done recently with the Environment Agency – including sessions on rural resilience and a couple on the new flood and coastal erosion risk mapping data. 750 people attended 1<sup>st</sup> webinar -seems to be particular interest to a lot of people.

**Action: KRU to send out link to Environment Agency webinars to members so that those who may be interested can see and / or forward on to anyone else**

- Monday w/c 10<sup>th</sup> Feb KRU, DCA and KSA will have a meeting with Minister Fahnbulleh to talk about concerns around the HUG2 grant + get conversation going around the new warm homes plan which is being developed currently.
- Responded to the call for evidence from the Environment Audit Committee on flood resilience. (Sheryl, who will continue to work with ADEPT, has also helped with writing the response to the Select Committee on Community Energy. Awaiting permission to put this on the website.)
- Gen z campaign will be going live on 24<sup>th</sup> Feb. Campaign to encourage younger people working in local authorities. Will be advertising on Facebook, TikTok, Snapchat etc. Further information will be going on the ADEPT website.
- Live Labs 2 expo coming up soon- around decarbonisation in transport. Natural England webinar coming soon- on nature, towns and cities + how can net zero and climate adaptation goals be met through planning reform. Will be a registration link for this- Blueprint Planning Webinar.
- Spring Conference happening on 22<sup>nd</sup> May – booking now open.

	<p><b>Action: KRU to put latest upcoming events together in an email to send to DCA – to then circulate out to the group</b></p> <p>In discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In meeting with Minister Fahnbulleh – agreed to raise the issue around the able to pay market retrofit – which is a significant gap currently.</li> </ul>
<p>5.</p>	<p><u>DESNZ update</u></p> <p>PAL gave the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awaiting GBE being passed through parliament - hopefully this month or early next month. Once this is set up and funding comes through - 2025/2026 will be a transition year. Once this becomes operational, it will be clearer how this will work with the National Wealth Fund, the Warm Homes Programme, the Heat Networks Programme etc.</li> <li>Have seen appointment of 5 non exec directors- one who used to work in the local net zero hub - so is very involved in community, energy and local government. However, until April 1<sup>st</sup> we will not know who the directors + wider staff are.</li> <li>Announcement from the office for clean energy jobs, looking at the skills challenge for getting to net zero- not just in terms of what skills are needed for the green economy but also how we transition those people whose current employment is not likely to be long term in a net zero world.</li> <li>Some of these regional pilots focusing on areas such as Grangemouth and the Tees-Valley Humber – where more traditional industry jobs are being phased out + aim is to make sure these people don't get left behind in the transition.</li> <li>Work on devolution and national growth strategies continues- especially with the MCAs in the first phase. Working hard to ensure that net zero is embedded in these as much as possible.</li> <li>One response that is being received (mainly from leaders/chief execs) is that the priorities are in <i>other</i> places – not Net Zero. If we want to chose what we want in our Devolution deal + what we're doing for local growth, then it is that net zero is a cross-cutting measure rather than a focus. This makes it hard to justify funding sometimes.</li> <li>26 – 27<sup>th</sup> February is the APSE conference in Birmingham. Available to sign up for those interested- there will be 3 awards for local government. Shortlists for these were announced last week.</li> <li>Community Energy Day within the department in mid-March. Will bring in community groups showing the work they have done + invite different policy teams attend and hear about these projects (e.g. the Solar Team to come and hear about community solar projects. If this is successful, this may lead the way to doing the same with local authority and net zero.)</li> </ul> <p>In discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local government reorganisation posing a potential risk of overlap between roles/responsibilities amongst those in the environment, sustainability, energy sector both at County and District and Borough level</li> <li>Is there any merit in communication to the Office for Clean Energy Jobs regarding this?</li> <li>PAL states that may not be the right course of action – as they focus more on larger community impacts. Ultimately perhaps more work needs to be done (bottom up) with</li> </ul>

	LGA and other political organisations to try and land the corrective narrative with politicians to ensure a holistic, integrated approach is the one that's taken.
6.	<u>A.O.B.</u> No comments
7.	<u>Date of next meeting</u> Thursday 20 <sup>th</sup> March 2025 13:30 – 15:00 via Microsoft Teams