

## **ADEPT Climate Change Advisory Panel**

**Proceedings of the Panel's first meeting on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2019  
at the Local Government Association, 18 Smith Square, Westminster, London SW1P 3HZ**

See appendices for:

- Attendees
- Agenda and terms of reference
- Case studies provided.

### **Introduction**

- Nigel Riglar (NR) – Chair's welcome and thanks for coming.
- All – brief introductions.
- Hannah Bartram (HB) – briefly explained what ADEPT does and what its policy priorities are.

### **Context**

NR set the context of many ADEPT members and other councils declaring climate emergencies and now needing to understand the scale of the challenge to plan and take actions that will deliver step changes. How to pick our way through the complex and shifting landscape, 'back the winners' and avoid the 'snake oil'?! We also want to help local government have a strong voice in the lead up to COP26 next year.

This Panel is made up of colleagues from the wider sector and elsewhere who can help and steer our work plan because of their expertise and networks. By bringing some case studies to the table today we can understand what is already out there, identify any gaps, and commission any further case studies if necessary. Some initial comments were that:

- we need to look at both mitigation and adaptation actions (at present there is some sense of over-emphasis on the former at the expense of the latter – this has been commented on by Adaptation Sub-Committee)
- we need to focus on getting something practical and helpful out of this exercise for people to use
- climate emergency declarations have been politically led, there is a danger that the focus will turn too quickly to what Government has not done or a lack of resources
- various organisations are active in the same space at present, we need to work together and avoid duplication.

### **Case studies**

Participants described case studies including the following:

- NR – Avonmouth and Severnside flood defence project to safeguard homes and businesses, unlock economic growth, and create new wetland habitat.
- Mike Childs (MC) – Warwickshire Liftshare scheme in partnership with the bus company, employers, and social enterprise.
- Hilary Tanner (HT) – Norwich eco-friendly social housing development.
- Paul Dunphy (PD) – Camden Citizens Assembly on climate change.

- Peter Newell (PN) – Leeds’ Civic Plan for the climate emergency, Paul Chatterton’s work on building the 1.5 degree socially just city.
- Julie Foley (JF) – Environment Agency flood risk management in York.

Further details of these and other case studies mentioned can be found in the appendices.

## Discussion

NR – where next? how can we work on and orchestrate at the same time actions at various levels

- Individuals and communities (behaviour change)
- The council’s own impact and things that are under its direct control
- The council’s wider influence and convening role for the place as a whole
- Places coming together and speaking with a combined voice to influence national policy, spend and action?

If Place Directors are to do this they need the time, capacity, capability, and forum for combining their voices.

There was discussion around getting businesses including SMEs to think strategically about low carbon opportunities for their future; harnessing the influence of major employers/big businesses; understanding who the ‘legacy investors’ are in a locality – big stakeholders who are there for the long term (e.g. YTL and Badminton Estate in South Glos).

MC – we need a shared local government and civic society voice to speak collectively in the run up to COP26. We need to be able to say ‘these are the best things that councils are doing’. This offers a route map, and also a way of prompting into action those councils that are currently lagging behind in terms of actions on climate change

PD – London Councils are working on key offers and asks. (*Follow up after 11<sup>th</sup> Nov*)

MC – case studies: there is not a standard way of ‘doing it’, can we think about what makes a really useful case study and capture it in a way that gives another council something that is 95% ready to replicate and use locally? And advise on the process for doing it. (*See text box overleaf on case study characteristics*)

PD – the case study approach has limited use, it is not enough to just replicate or reinvent what is happening elsewhere. We need to understand that climate emergency doesn’t just mean carrying on doing the same things but a bit quicker, it requires a longer term strategic and cross-border approach.

HB – some of the things needed are:

- Tools to enable political leadership of climate change – blogs, sharing personal experiences, signposts to resources and case studies
- Developing clear asks of Government that are shared across the sector and with partners
- Quickly learning from the Citizens Assemblies that have operated to date
- Using procurement to influence our suppliers and markets to become carbon neutral (as the EA are proposing).

PN – councils and Place Directors would benefit from live guidance, an evolving online resource that would point to existing case studies, capture the thinking and reflection of key individuals, show where we are now.

The following list of what makes a good (effective) local climate change initiative/case study was generated in discussion – points 1 and 2 were clearly seen as the most important:

1. **Speed:** recognising the urgency of the climate emergency, actions which have a quick impact and support a rapid, accelerated transition to a new normal. The speed at which benefits come on stream and disbenefits reduce.
2. **Scale:** both the scale of the action being taken (e.g. millions of trees planted, hundreds of thousands of homes retrofitted) and the scale of the impact in terms of significant and measurable decarbonisation.
3. Co-benefits for other sectors or issues flowing from action to tackle climate change e.g. improved health outcomes, better social inclusion, community cohesion.
4. Co-benefits within climate change i.e. actions taken primarily to either mitigate/reduce carbon emissions or adapt to existing changes actions being delivered in a way that benefits the other one
5. Actions which can be replicated successfully elsewhere
6. Actions delivered in partnership with other organisations and sectors
7. Political ownership within the council (cross-party)
8. Organisational ownership across the whole council (cross-department) not just the Place/Environment directorate
9. Individual and business behaviour change – social compact – sharing responsibility and achieving buy-in
10. Linked to this, public engagement to help identify what needs to be done locally and again share responsibility and get buy-in
11. Cross-subsidy, a transparent approach to regulating or taxing a polluting activity to directly fund climate positive initiatives (e.g. workplace parking levy raising income to invest in public transport)
12. Honesty about gaps and/or challenges: this isn't about winning awards or getting good media coverage
13. Asks of Government or others, being able to articulate what is needed in terms of policy and funding in order to deliver rapid transition
14. Learning together
15. Legacy investors long term impact with major stakeholders on board.

All – we need to get to a place where we can have the big conversations with Government e.g. national energy strategy and the step change to renewables. We need to be able to articulate our asks of the key national agencies.

## Closing remarks

### NR summary:

- Places need to be able to set out clear offers and asks, good case studies are a helpful part of this
- Case studies should highlight elements of the process – who did you work with? What were the key decisions?
- However, there are various bodies already compiling case studies, we need to add value not just replicate this
- There is something about identifying the best case studies in terms of speed and scale – who is doing things (tree cover, heat pumps, EV charging, carbon sequestration, etc.) at a really big scale and gearing up to do it?
- Can we then turn this into a route map for the different sectors – homes, transport, energy, business, public engagement – focussing on the role of the council on convening at the different levels?
- Look at existing toolkits to help with this. Also look at the example done by the Royal Agricultural University blog for green infrastructure and see if the same approach can be applied to other sectors.
- How can we help Place Directors envisage what they need to do? Provide a logic flow of the right questions to ask.
- How can we help gear up our supply chains?
- NR will set out some initial thoughts about a programme of work to follow on from today's discussion.
- Suggest that we put another couple of dates in the diary for Panel meetings (suggest Feb and May), and we will come up with a proposal about how best to spend the time.

**APPENDIX 1****ADEPT Climate Change Advisory Panel meeting 24<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

## Present:

Nigel Riglar (ADEPT) - Chair  
Hannah Bartram (ADEPT)  
Mike Childs (Friends of the Earth)  
David Dale (ADEPT)  
Paul Dunphy (LEDNet)  
Julie Foley (Environment Agency)  
Peter Newell (Rapid Transition Alliance / University of Sussex)  
Hilary Tanner (LGA)

## Apologies:

Nicky Philpott (UK Health Alliance for Climate Change)

## Draft agenda circulated in advance:

1. Terms of reference for the panel
2. Local case studies recommended by panel members
3. Discussion of evaluation criteria for further case studies
4. Agree next steps in calling for further case studies
5. Agree future dates of panel meetings.

## Draft terms of reference – not directly discussed, but implicit throughout:

- Review some existing local case studies of climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Develop an agreed set of evaluation criteria for identifying effective rapid transition
- Develop a call for further case studies
- Evaluate and publicise best practice
- Consider input to CoP26
- Practicalities: a time-limited advisory panel, meeting 3 or 4 times between Oct 2019 and June 2020

## APPENDIX 2

Case studies presented by members of the Panel 24<sup>th</sup> October 2019

**Nigel Riglar** – case study of Severnside: crossing **Bristol and South Glos** boundary, place specific, no planning permission needed (for historic reasons), and 65% funded from business rates uplift due to Enterprise Area status. See slides on positives and negatives. Questions and comments included:

- What is the carbon impact? Analysis not done for this specific project. A learning point is that this could have been done at an early stage.
- Compensation sites – net gain could be used for carbon offsetting.
- Could the project be replicated/marketed elsewhere? Lack of commercial mindset in local government is a challenge.
- What are the constraints within local authority boundaries? Can offsetting be bought from elsewhere?
- Weaknesses/gaps identification is good.
- Bristol Airport carbon reduction plan gives opportunities and funding for a pipeline of projects.

**Mike Childs** recognised that councils want to play their part in addressing climate change but are constrained by funding cuts. He mentioned a number of different approaches:

- Stroud DC doing well at embedding a ‘whole council’ approach
- Bristol aiming to double the number of trees in the city
- Cambridgeshire innovation re energy efficiency, can be replicated
- Somerset energy storage
- Manchester cycling infrastructure
- York EV charging and electric buses
- Oxfordshire focusing on fuel poverty in the private rented sector
- Warwickshire lift sharing scheme.

He expanded on the last of these as a good example of a council responding to a problem – reduced public transport provision – and looking to find a solution by using its influence beyond areas under its own direct control. Working with partners including the local bus company (Stagecoach), employers, and a social enterprise (Liftshare). 700,000 journeys provided to date. Big co-benefits in terms of inclusivity and community building (many young people don’t drive), these can be stronger than the carbon benefits. Friends of the Earth have looked for case studies that cover all sectors, some were already well-publicised and others emerged through award schemes.

**Hilary Tanner** said that with the LGA’s large number of member councils it is aware of a vast range of case studies but has not tried to evaluate these independently in terms of their quality and impact. Some limited support has been provided through funding and research e.g. behaviour insights programme. Some of the best known examples cover waste reduction, maximising the collection of food waste, and energy generation (solar farms providing a source of revenue). She also mentioned the recent success of **Norwich** council winning an architecture award for its new social housing development built to Passivhaus standards ([here](#)).

**Paul Dunphy** said that many council initiatives pre-date this year’s climate emergency declarations, the challenges now are to make them more strategic, measure their impacts, and capture the co-benefits that will make further actions easier to ‘sell’ and fund. **Camden** is doing many things including play streets, road closures, diesel surcharging, encouraging active travel, EV charging, more trees and green spaces, carbon neutral new housing, and a workplace parking levy. Some actions are

much easier in London where public transport is much better than in many other places. Camden held a Citizens Assembly on climate change ([here](#)), this has generated a lot of momentum and came up with 18 asks around various themes including clean air, biodiversity, and transport strategy. Other councils are convening Citizens Assemblies – Brighton, Oxford, Lancaster. Their success depends partly on retaining an element of challenge, and bringing in external groups and businesses to say what the council should be doing.

**Peter Newell** started with some general observations for councils:

- Manage expectations (Brighton council wary of raising expectations too high)
- Go with the grain of what is already happening and see where value can be added
- Consider social equality and look at issues of access and affordability
- Link creatively to Sustainable Development Goals
- Ensure inclusivity and avoid the agenda being hijacked by any particular group
- Understand what people really need, provide relevant alternatives
- Set clear, bold targets
- Stop doing negative things like investing in fossil fuel companies.

Specific examples included **Leeds'** Civic Plan for the climate emergency – Paul Chatterton's work on building the 1.5 degree socially just city ([here](#)); recent work by the Carbon Trust with their Climate Leadership Framework ([here](#)) helping businesses achieve strategic oversight of their climate change activity and identify the steps towards becoming a net zero organisation; and Hounslow council wanting to use income from a workplace parking levy to extend railway lines and build new stations.

**Julie Foley** described the Environment Agency's target to be zero carbon by 2030 – very ambitious given its current footprint with infrastructure, pumping, etc. (30% of current footprint is from flood pumping). They are looking at carbon banks, and building zero carbon requirements into contracts and their supply chain to influence the markets they operate in. The EA's flood strategy is built on resilient places, resilient infrastructure, and climate change champions. They are looking to build infrastructure that will last 80-100 years. River levels are predicted to continue to rise, the EA needs a clear plan to adapt to this – specific example of **York** flood barrier, buildings, pumping and hub. The solution won't always be more hard engineered protection, we need to glue together the mitigation and adaptation messages, use the full range of tools in the toolkit, and get the messaging right. There is a useful phrase from the language of disaster management – 'build back better' – this means that it often isn't possible or desirable to simply replace buildings and infrastructure exactly as they were before a flood event.