



Reading Climate Change Partnership
Board Meeting Agenda
Tues 28th January 2020
Councillor Room 1 at Civic Offices.
10.00-12.00 pm

Attendees

Chris Beales (CHAIR), Tim Dixon, Tricia Marcouse, Tracey Rawling Church, Ben Burfoot, Willem Londeman, Poppy Harris, Katie Brett (Support Officer), Peter Moore (guest)

Apologies

Tony Page, Paul Harrison

<p>Welcome - introductions</p>	
<p>Sign-off of minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • actions update document to be circulated after the meeting <p>Decision: October minutes were agreed.</p> <p>Decision: All agreed for the minutes from all the Board meetings - dating back to Jan 2018, will be posted on the website</p> <p><u>Actions:</u> KB to upload these minutes onto the website.</p> <p>BB to ask RBC that the minutes are also added to the council's Strategic Environment Planning & Transport (SEPT) Committee meeting.</p>	<p>KB</p> <p>BB</p>
<p>Chair's intro</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update since last meeting <p>CB provided an overview of current climate news: In 2019 the UK witnessed record temperatures, as well as incidents of widespread drought and flooding (with three flood alerts in the Reading area). The current Australian fires were also highlighted. The UK citizens assembly on climate change has started. Perhaps it is something for Reading in the future?</p>	

Brexit has continued to dominate news space, and the pre-general election (purdah) period in Nov/Dec impacted on CB (chair) activity.

CB noted it's been a busy time for the Partnership and the growing ReadingCAN. Thank you to everyone, including Peter Moore and Tracey Rawling Church for supporting the development and finalisation of the action plans and narrative in such a tight time frame.

CB announced that Environment Agency has declared to be net zero carbon by 2030.

Visits to the ReadingCAN Website have been steady, with an average of 200 hits a week. Note that we still have a very limited social media presence, promoting our activities: we currently only have our Twitter account, with CB and TRC tweeting occasionally. The ReadingCAN website group is not strong yet so there have only been limited posting from the wider network. CB will prioritise support for this over the coming months.

- Review progress of Vision (see '[Vision for ReadingCAN.pdf](#)')

CB stated he was pleased with the increase in the RCCP reputation and awareness since he became Chair. The grants scheme is on hold as funds are focussed on the new strategy development. We have built up ReadingCAN into a powerful active force with a lot of potential. The website needs more active postings. There is a lot of potential for the next phase of growth.

- Timeline / Forward look

The time scale for the finalisation and launch of the new strategy is tight. We are still aiming for a June launch, and the focus of this meeting is to confirm the board are happy to proceed on this basis.

- Plans for hand-over to next Chair

Decision: CBs two-year chairmanship finishes soon. It was agreed that the election of a new chair would happen in April's board meeting. CB will provide a full handover, with Chairmanship handover at the strategy Launch event in June.

Action:

All - who are interested in being considered for Chair, get in touch with CB before next meeting.

All

Adaptation Plan

- See: <https://ReadingCAN.org.uk/readings-first-adaptation-plan>

CB received £1,700 from Environment Agency and £10k from RCCP to commission Mott Macdonald to develop the first adaptation plan for Reading in 2019. The work is now complete and CB is very pleased with it. The focus is on communication, and the document will be very useful to help engagement on this vital issue. It has a light touch approach and is the start of the conversation.

BB noted the document was an important first step and perhaps is more of a 'impact study' than a 'plan'. TD felt it is a summary of the main issues of Reading - but not specific on individual actions. TD asked how the new RCCP strategy, the Local Plan and Reading 2050 fit alongside this document. A diagram is needed to show the linkage, and he felt the title of Adaptation Plan should be changed. TRC felt that we need to communicate the purpose of the document clearly, to ensure it is not unfairly judged.

Action: CB agreed to add a strapline to the title in light of the discussion

CB

On 6 February CB has been invited to present the Adaptation Plan at the opening event for Mott MacDonald's new office in Reading. Board members will all be invited.

- Is complete - we need to digest and consider governance over the next couple of years

CB highlighted that we are yet to determine which agency will be responsible for Readings adaptation planning - Reading 2050, RBC or RCCP? This is something for future discussions.

- Should be referenced in our new strategy

Decision: This was discussed later in the meeting, with an agreement to signpost the Plan in the Strategy narrative.

Evolution of the RCCP

- See 'Evolution of RCCP.docx' (see: <https://alto.chrisbeales.net/index.php/s/LjbpNSITIAHhhA1>)

<p>ReadingCAN is now created, how does the board fit alongside it? Should it be rebranded as the 'ReadingCAN board'? How are the board members elected? With the creation of the new role 'Head of Climate Strategy' at RBC - capacity and space is evolving.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree actions <p>Decision: All agreed that the Board is to consider this document over the next couple of meetings, and actions to be confirmed when the strategy is completed.</p> <p>Action: KB to put onto April board agenda</p> <p>Decision: All agreed that the theme leads will be invited to all board meeting in future - but would not have voting rights.</p> <p>Action: KB to add theme leads to board mailing list</p>	<p>KB</p> <p>KB</p>
<p>Development of the ReadingCAN network / theme groups (capacity)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to expand on the back of the public consultation • Are we ready for growth? (each theme / centrally?) <p>There was a round table update from all themes:</p> <p>Water theme (CB) - Confirmed they felt ready to take forward work in Reading. Thames Water and Environment Agency are fully engaged, with some more work needed to bring RBC on board</p> <p>Energy theme (BB) - They felt they still need commitment from SSE. The group meets regularly and the Energy Futures Policy is currently being developed.</p> <p>Resources theme (TRC) - Confirmed they felt ready to take forward work in Reading. They have a small but very engaged team, which are able to grow. They have volunteers running the projects - so envisage capacity challenges ahead.</p> <p>Nature theme (TM) - over 1000 days have been committed by volunteers to implement their Action Plan.</p>	

Action: TM and CB to discuss the development of more public email addresses - in order to help TM manage communications in her theme.

TM/CB

Transport theme (PM) - the RBC transport team has engagement with the transport operators - and will use this for leverage of the climate strategy. The plan is evolving ok.

Health (cover by TRC, as no health rep present) - Gill Ringland and her colleague Margaret from Ethical Reading were thanked for stepping up and temporarily leading this theme - to start the development of this new action plan from scratch. In December they stepped down and there is now no current lead for this theme. It was unclear who the theme members are remaining.

There are a lot of essential connections still to be made in the plan. The NHS has now signed up to go net zero.

It was discussed, given the circumstance, whether the health theme should be a crosscutting theme going forward or remain a theme in its own right. It was felt that this area is very important, and 'its new and therefore its thin' and is 'an area for development'.

Decision: all agreed that after the consultation - if no lead is found - Health will become a crosscutting theme

A discussion was had on the ability of generalists in Reading to engage with this process going forward. The actions for them need to be clear, gaining traction for community action, perhaps a series of commitments to sign up to. This issue will be addressed in the Communications and Engagement plan - which will be finalised before strategy launch in June/July.

- Showing off an impressive events diary (e.g. active theme workshops) - Chris + Trish note on public events

CB felt there was a need for more events - 'If we look busy we will attract people..'

Decision: All agreed that the website should act as a central hub for climate change activity.

Decision / Action: All non-ReadingCAN events/posts need a standard disclaimer 'The RCCP does not necessarily endorse all that is said at this event'

All

<p><i>Reading Green Market</i> - Sunday 15th March. An event where you can buy sustainable products. TRC agreed to book a stall at this event to highlight the consultation.</p> <p>Decision: After this discussion PH wanted to acknowledge that she will be running a stall there. Others felt this was not a conflict of interest.</p> <p><u>Action</u> - all to help to ensure more events are visible in ReadingCAN diary.</p> <p><i>Beanpole Day</i> - Saturday 18th April 10-3pm at Caversham Court. This is an open air event with limited options for roping down banners etc. All to think about how they will display materials, not just whether they are available to attend. There are three free concrete plinths that could be used for leaflets or exhibits but nowhere to pin up posters at eye level in the main event area, with possible option of doing it at the tea kiosk on a lower level if RBC gives permission for things to be stuck up on its elderly walls! TM will check that out. Major publicity starts end Feb so that is the time to make a decision. Nature theme is definitely going and XR is invited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The website group <p>As discussed in Chair's intro.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to manage the ongoing communications and engagement challenge after the plan goes live • How to project manage the execution of the plan and ensure that we maintain urgency and momentum <p>These items were parked for discussion in the next Board meeting.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Is the new Strategy ready?</p> <p>CB walked the group through the following items to confirm that the board were happy that we are ready for the June launch target.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Round table of themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Current capacity of theme group ◦ Is the action plan ready? ◦ Visions are good - is the theme narrative ready? <p>All theme representatives around the table were asked the above questions. All felt they had capacity in their theme and All themes were happy with their action plans. It was confirmed that where</p>	

RBC was noted as a lead partner - RBC officers had been consulted and so should not bring up issues when getting senior buy in. It was felt that gaining broader ownership by other organisations to some of the plans would be beneficial. It was noted that the theme visions varied in tone and style - and was there support for PM to adjust the visions to be a more consistent style. Most were happy with this.

Action: PM and CB to discuss adjustments to the Water Theme narrative.

PM/CB

Decision: All happy to proceed.

- Action Plans:

- Are there any bear-traps in the Action Plans that we need to prepare for (e.g. Thames flood alleviation scheme, 3rd bridge)?

Water theme: the flood alleviation scheme could be. CB confirmed that RCCP will not be pro or against the scheme, and our approach would be to encourage others make an informed decision for the town. He confirmed that he is happy that the 2 actions in the Water theme are measured and reflect this position.

Transport theme: the action plan was discussed. There is no reference to a 3rd bridge in this 5 year plan.

Nature - it was noted that some of the public parks are planned to act as flood water storage areas on occasions. It was felt by all that this would be agreeable with the public given the alternative.

Resources - no bear traps.

It was noted that we need to all be aware that we will not please everyone. The language and tone of the document needs to be positive. Stepping on toes is ok if its for the right reasons.

Energy theme - there are many bear traps. We are moving away from gas - which will be an issue for gas industry. The Energy Futures programme that BB is currently developing will help to mitigate this.

It was felt that noting the carbon reduction achieved going forward would strengthen the strategy narrative. However

explanation would need to go alongside the figures - as the reduction would not be linear, taking into account the initial time allocated to lay the foundations for carbon reduction programmes, and also the later programmes that will be focussed on the much higher hanging fruit.

Decision: All happy to proceed.

- Agree concept of ownership (vs Lead) for each action

Decision: It was agreed that no individuals will be named on the action plan. Perhaps the lead partners should be read as 'initial delivery partners' - to encourage greater sign up during the consultation.

Decision: Ownership of actions is the RCCP board.

- Do we want index numbers for actions?

Decision: All agreed for simple indexing. PM and KB to insert for the consultation. All agreed that the theme sequence in the strategy should be in line with level of carbon reduction: Energy, transport, resources, water, nature, health.

PM/KB

- Plan for cross-cutting theme actions

Decision: It was felt that the agreed themes (education, community, business and adaptation) are now bedded into the 6 action plans. As required they will be addressed in the communications and engagement section.

- Are we happy with tables of unowned 'B list' / parked actions?

These actions do not have an identified Lead / owner, and therefore are not in the main Action Plan tables. Themes will still have a record of these and hopefully will be able to deliver the work within this strategy period.

Action: All theme coordinators to provide PM with their plan B information if there is anything to input into the narrative.

- Are we happy with Peter's narrative?

Theme
co-
ordinators

- Links to Adaptation and sister Mitigation plans. Also, local plan, Reading 2050 and other relevant and parallel ‘visions’/activities (Tim)

TD noted that PM has done a terrific job under difficult circumstances. He has forwarded his comments - as points of detail. He felt there was a need for a more tight and focussed vision.

CB felt the document was very zero carbon focussed and needs a better balance against adaptation preparedness. This was debated and the range of views discussed: TD disagreed. TRC suggested the document be called ‘Climate Emergency Action Plan’ with a clear signpost to the Adaptation Plan. PH felt that more direct adaptation references were needed in this doc. WL wanted more on the climate emergency rather than zero carbon, TM had prepared many comments which PM will consider. BB confirmed that the document needed to be branded with RCCP, as ReadingCAN was not a formal entity. PM assured all that, given the time pressures of submitting the draft doc to admin briefing at RBC, he would be able to strengthen the balance and slim down the zero carbon sections, however could not manage a massive shift of goalposts. PM was mindful of the current discourse of bringing emissions down.

Decision: All agreed that PM would be able to shift the balance in the narrative quickly to address the concerns raised above.

Action: PM and CB to meet quickly after the meeting to discuss more substantive comments.

PM/CB

- What is the over-arching Vision?

CB suggested that, in addition to adaptation and mitigation, a third underlying vision element for the town is around ‘climate change learning’. This was rejected though.

Decision/ Action: The board agreed to a straightforward adaptation and mitigation vision, with a minor adjustment to the phrasing. PM will alter as agreed

PM

- What is the name for the Strategy (e.g. ‘Reading Climate Emergency Action Plan’?)

Continuing the previous discussion - concerns about the initial ‘zero carbon’ vs the ‘Climate Emergency’ title were discussed. It was

<p>noted that the use of the word ‘emergency’ could have more of a campaign group tone (e.g. Extinction Rebellion). Perhaps RBC would not feel comfortable about this. Others confirmed that in their business arenas ‘emergency words’ were being used and would not put businesses off engaging. Others felt it was an attractive title.</p> <p>Decision: The title was agreed by a majority vote ‘The Reading Climate Emergency Strategy: Towards a net zero carbon and a resilient Reading’.</p>	
<p>What is the plan for comms and engagement for the public consultation?</p> <p>All to provide feedback to PM concerning the narrative and consultation questions as track changes by tomorrow afternoon.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from meeting with Gill (Ben) • Manage impact of Council Election period (26 Mar - 7 May) • Budget - see spreadsheet • Advertising • <i>Who are we sending the plan? we have the existing database of people. I have a list of other names that could be added if that is the way forward. (Trish)</i> <p>There was no time left to discuss the above. KB and BB have had initial meeting with RBC in regards public consultation, further meeting with communications next week</p> <p>Decision/ Action: It was agreed to organise a subgroup meeting, focused on comms and engagement through the consultation. Please confirm to Katie if you want to be in this.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>All</p>
<p>Stop / Go decision for June launch of the strategy</p> <p>Decision: All agreed to a launch in June</p>	
<p>Where are we with current ‘Reading Means Business on Climate Change’ Strategy?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RBC review of the actions (did this happen 2019?) • Closure report? • Plan for website (move old page to post) (Chris) 	

<p>There was no time left to discuss the above.</p> <p>Decision / Action: Agreed that BB will feedback to all on any RBC plans regarding closure. We can follow up with any required RCCP decisions.</p>	<p>BB</p>
<p>We should have a Big launch event (+ other events?)</p> <p>Strategy artwork and design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage Reading artistic community with competition (+ prize) • Photographs • Schools competition <p>There was no time left to discuss the above</p> <p>Decision/ Action: It was agreed to organise a subgroup meeting, focused on comms and engagement through the consultation. Please confirm to Katie if you want to be in this.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>AOB</p> <p>Date for the next meeting - Tues 28 April 2020</p> <p>10-12 noon</p>	<p>All</p>

Outstanding actions from past meetings:

- PH to link with the Royal Berkshire Hospital to engage with and populate the action plan. PH to meet with health theme co-ordinator Gill Ringland and the person tasked with pulling Action plans together - to add key adaptation health needs, and then put into NHS plans.
- CB to add RCCP budget update to January board agenda → move to April
- TD to investigate the possibility of a student doing a scoping study of RCCP funding opportunities

- CB and BB to investigate further how to raise more funds, on a more permanent basis – to provide RCCP with more sustainable funding. To arrange a joint meeting with RCES on this challenge. To link with RCES to investigate how to spend the benefit fund, and discuss how to scale it up as a significant way to bring funds in
- All to keep an eye out for potential funds – to share at April 2020 board meeting.
- BB: to investigate the potential of advertising ReadingCAN (consultation and ongoing messages):
 - on bus shelters/buses
 - on big screen by Reading station (speak to Marcus).
- TP to ask his fellow Councillors to spread the message on ReadingCAN, and cascade the information in the new year.
- CB to link with Zsuzsi from Reading Fringe Festival in regards a presence next year.
- BB to make sure ‘travel planning’, ‘climate emergency’, ‘schools conference’ and ‘Eco schools’ is included in RBC leader’s letter to all schools.
- TD: to investigate the possibility of students filling some of the research needs in the action plans
- KB to investigate using the art boards in the shopping centre – to Launch the RCCP strategy
- CB and KB to follow up contacts at Parent Governors Association.
- KR to add to grant applications to RCCP board agenda in Jan for review → July
- TD to investigate if University would be interested in hosting green business network meetings
- KB to write letter to all school governors and all neighbourhood managers – to highlight strategy being written – and to get involved. What do you need from us? – you can help shape the agenda.
- Rebecca Lindsay to enquire with RBC’s cultural scheme to suggest that their recent event have climate change as their theme
- TM to put a shopping list together of materials that would be good for events and take forward with KB.
- All theme co-ordinators to send TM info for GIS mapping
- 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)..
- CB to investigate the possibility of Richard Stainthorp (head of Reading Parent Governors) becoming a ‘community’ board member.
- TM to investigate potential of Victoria Hunter from Acre being a suitable ‘community’ board member.
- KB and BB to investigate Reading Youth Council.
- All to propose community members for the Board.



- Green Business report (see Tracey's email) [CB to load onto RCCP docs]
- BB to ask policy colleagues for community organisation contacts
- TM to investigate faith forums such as Noah (Christian..)