

ADEPT - Energy & Clean Growth Working Group Minutes

Date & Time:	Tuesday 12th September, 11:30 – 13:00
Venue:	Microsoft Teams Meeting
Chair:	Sheryl French - Assistant Director, Climate Change & Energy Services, Cambridgeshire County Council (SFR)
Attendees:	<p>Alistair Craig – Programme Manager, Cumbria LEP (ACR) Brian White – Clean Energy Manager, Cumbria LEP (BWH) Chitra Nadarajah – Head of Service, Climate Change & Environmental Strategy, Hampshire County Council (CNA) Daire Casey – Energy Services Manager, West Sussex County Council (DCA) David Dale – ADEPT (DDA) Doug Eltham – Environment and Sustainability Policy Officer, Devon County Council (DEL) Jill Edmondson – Service Manager, Environmental Health (JED) Sarah Gilbert – Head of Climate Action, Oxfordshire County Council (SGI) Steve Palfrey - Assistant Director, Waste & Environment, Suffolk County Council (SPA) Sue Davies – Strategic Energy Manager, Luton Borough Council (SDA) Thomas Day – Head of Energy & Low Carbon Programme, (TDA) Victoria Burvill – Senior Climate Officer, Wiltshire Council (VBU)</p>
Guests:	Neil Madgwick – Head of Connections Service Delivery, UK Power Networks (NMA)
Note Taker:	Bayley Wooldridge, Energy Projects Officer, Cambridgeshire County Council (BWO)
Apologies:	<p>Carolyn McKenzie - Director of Environment, Surrey County Council Hannah Bartram – Chief Executive Officer, ADEPT Helen Grayshan – Climate Change and Partnership Manager, Wakefield Council Kofi Adu-Gyamfi – Climate Change Service Lead, West Berkshire Council Marouane Azennoud – Energy Manager, West Northamptonshire Council Patrick Allcorn – Head of Local Energy, Department of Energy Security and Net Zero</p>

Item No.	Item
1.	<p><u>Sheryl French welcome, minutes and actions from the last meeting</u></p> <p>Welcome to Alistair Craig.</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 20th July 2023 were agreed as a correct record.</p>
2.	<p><u>Update from ADEPT</u></p> <p>Apologies from HBA.</p> <p>DDA has shared the below written update:</p> <p><u>Transport</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. LTP guidance – still no news..... civil servants now suggesting there is no timeframe for publication. 2. Oflog – launched during the LGA annual conference (see here) – waste is one of the 1st tranche of metrics. Transport will be one of the 2nd tranche of metrics. Prep work meant to be starting soon - it will be a co-design process involving DLUHC, Oflog, DfT and LAs (not sure which ones – I did ask!). 3. Live Labs 2 (Decarbonising Local Roads) – the Strategic Outline Business Cases behind each of the 7 projects have recently been published (here), and we are publishing regular blogs – the most recent on the East Riding ‘decarbonising street lighting project (here). We are also planning an Expo in December. <p><u>Devolution / Growth / Planning</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. <i>Pathways to Planning</i> is a new graduate programme being delivered by the LGA. It aims to widen the pool of graduates entering planning roles in local authorities. The scheme is an exciting opportunity for councils and graduates alike, offering a talent pipeline and excellent value for money. Whilst the deadline for Councils to sign up for Cohort 1 has passed, there is still the opportunity for councils interested in the programme & the second cohort, to register interest. For more info see here. 5. Consultation responses – we recently responded to the Housing All Party Parliamentary Group Call for Evidence on Section 106 and CIL (see here). 6. The ADEPT Sustainable Growth Board has two new co-chairs – Chris Henning from Derbyshire County Council and Kate Martin from Sheffield City Council. The Board meets for an hour every 2nd Wednesday of the month – if you would like to attend or send a colleague, please get in touch. <p><u>Environment</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. ADEPT is part of the Blueprint Coalition, which has published its Manifesto Asks calling on every political party to commit to empowering local authorities to tackle climate change. The Coalition hosted an open webinar <i>Where next for local climate action?</i> on 12th July, which had over 180 attendees. ADEPT President Anthony Payne spoke, along with the leader of Wiltshire Council and Lib Dem MP Wera Hobhouse. The recording is available here. 8. Nutrient neutrality – we issued the following media statement: “<i>Cutting regulation will increase pollution, damage nature and harm people’s health. It is wrong and unsustainable for new developments to be allowed that may make the environment even worse. Government should be enforcing high standards and also ensuring pollution from agriculture and water companies is reduced. We need more new homes and we have the technology to build them to the highest environmental and climate change standards, as well as improving our outdated infrastructure – this is what government should be requiring house builders to do.</i>” Officials from Defra and DLUHC will be attending the next Planning Working Group meeting (26 Sept) to discuss the implications of this policy change (pending the LURB’s passage through the House of Lords this week and next). 9. The UK government published its third National Adaptation Programme (NAP3) in mid-July. This sets out a strategic five-year plan to boost resilience and protect people, homes, businesses and our cultural heritage against climate change risks such as

flooding, drought and heatwaves. This was followed by a fascinating piece of research called 'Public Dialogue on Climate Adaptation' – commissioned by Defra and UKRI's ScienceWise Programme (see [here](#)). Headline conclusion: *"There was a strong consensus amongst participants that protecting vulnerable people and their homes along with those most at risk should be the top priorities for adaptation. Participants also firmly believed that responsibility for action lay with central and local government, although they did also believe that businesses should take greater responsibility and everyone, including individuals, should do their bit."* We are working with LGA, Solace & Local Partnerships to develop a proposal to put to Defra which will focus on elevating the adaptation agenda to get more effective, senior engagement with Defra / across Whitehall; to get the LAAP taken more seriously; to get a broader view taken of the resources needed, to help move forward any political reluctance.

Events / Other

10. ADEPT will publish its Manifesto Asks later this month.

11. Dates for your diary:

- a. 5th National Traffic Managers Conference – Northampton, 5 October ([here](#)). We have the Local Roads Minister Richard Holden giving the keynote speech, then three sessions 1) preparing for change 2) delivering change and 3) managing change. Free to attend!
- b. Navigating Transition workshop – Birmingham, 13 October ([here](#)) – for place directors considering a new stage in their career.
- c. [Highways UK](#), 18-19 October, Birmingham – ADEPT President Anthony Payne is speaking on Day 1; we also have a panel discussion session on Live Labs 2.
- d. [Autumn Conference](#) – Nottingham, 16 & 17 November – the booking site is open, register now, especially to ensure accommodation! The conference title is *Creating strong places: leadership from the ground up* and we've secured a great line up of speakers.
- e. The next Lunch & Learn is on Friday 22 Sept and hosted by Costain. The title is "Leveraging systems-based approaches and digital insights to accelerate the journey to net zero". Click [here](#) to register.

12. PACE: a new joint venture between ADEPT and Amey designed to provide thought leaders with the space to find strategic solutions that are Pioneering, Action-orientated, Creative and Entrepreneurial (PACE). Designed exclusively for place directors and senior leadership, two of the fundamental principles behind PACE is to influence the future of place-focused strategies and support place leaders in driving change. The initial programme outputs can be downloaded [here](#); further information on the programme is [here](#).

In discussion:

- DDA reminds the group to check the monthly ADEPT newsletter for updates from other working groups.
- Consultation responses on planning issues provided by Planning Working Group (chaired by Paul Bernard, Plymouth City Council). SFE asks if any issues arose that could be relevant for discussion in this working group. **Action: DDA to provide a link to responses to be included in notes for this meeting, and check notes for energy-related items.** SFE emphasises bigger picture topics are also of interest, such as calculations of viability to reflect clean growth – there are key fundamentals that need more debate.
- Manifesto Asks – 6-12 manifesto asks that ADEPT will ask all political parties to include within their manifestos for the next general election.
 - Current two energy Asks: carbon pricing and unlocking grid-scale infrastructure.
 - CNA raises concern that local transport plans are returning focus to cars - active travel should still be the highest priority. Energy asks should include clarity on the role of local government in Local Area Energy Planning.
 - DCA suggests green skills should be its own point. Energy asks to emphasise the necessity for DNO cooperation and development of a DNO/local government partnership.
 - DEL raises new onshore wind legislation and recommends one policy to apply equally to all renewable energy technologies rather than separating wind – SFE advises this should be added to the planning point.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Action: DDA to ensure this feedback is passed on – priority to include LAEP.
<p>3.</p>	<p><u>Roundtable Feedback and discussions</u></p> <p>Solar Together</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Sussex are currently reviewing whether to continue with the scheme or not. • CNA advises Hampshire have just launched 3rd round following a highly successful 2nd round with low complaints and high customer satisfaction. There is already high demand for their 3rd round. It is likely that internal procurement issues will prevent the scheme continuing in the future. • SFE advises Cambridgeshire are also reviewing the continuation of the scheme by taking a paper to committee. Many challenges stemmed from GET UK going bust, which caused a lot of reputational damage. • DEL notes Devon experienced the same issues. • SDA adds that GET UK have caused problems with their PSDS funding – GET UK cannot provide the certification that Salix require for releasing funding. • CNA asks if ADEPT could organise a roundtable with local authorities and iChoosr (6+ expressed interest in this). Action: DDA to facilitate. <p>Biochar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition: encapsulating carbon via pyrolysis - generating heat/electricity in the process and creating a good soil conditioner. • BWH asks the group if anyone else has used this technology and can advise of its pros and cons. • DCA notes West Sussex are in the early stages of exploring this. Action: DCA to share contacts for Greenprint project. BWH to circulate notes from Lancashire and Shropshire County Councils, and share research by Aston University. • SPA warns biochar shouldn't be used as a solution to waste problems. <p>Deep Geothermal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dig Deep report by conservative MP highlighting the potential for the technology to be implemented throughout the country. Cumbria will be exploring this further. • DEL confirms Devon has experience of this technology. • BWH welcomes any interest in working on this - DCA expresses interest. <p>Innovate UK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SFE mentions Cambridgeshire and Oxfordshire both submitted bids. Cambridgeshire bid highlighted tackling the financial system problems for reaching net zero. <p>PSDS Phase 3c Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDA raises frustration over 'first-come, first-served' approach. • DCA agrees. West Sussex are coming to the end of their internal budget for decarbonisation, which limits match funding availability for PSDS Phase 3c. Property team also lacks capacity and resource to deliver more projects. • SGI acknowledges that human resource is a limitation for these projects in Oxfordshire, SFE confirms this is also a problem for Cambridgeshire due to lack of green skills.
<p>4.</p>	<p><u>Challenges facing UKPN – low carbon technologies, generation, and load.</u></p> <p>Summary slides will be circulated with the working group when these are received.</p> <p>16GW of generation is connected in UKPN's area – this is mostly renewable. UKPN have more customers looking to connect than is needed to reach 2050 targets (projects totalling over 300GW looking to connect). Challenges associated with this are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finding who genuinely needs to connect – i.e., what projects are 'shovel-ready'? Queue is based on application date, previously it has not been possible to understand which projects in the queue are 'shovel-ready'. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Solution: UKPN are introducing 'milestones' to better understand what stage each project is at.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Projects that are not meeting milestones will be moved down the queue allowing 'shovel-ready' projects to move up the line. ○ Priority will be given to battery storage projects, as this will then provide more capacity for more generation projects to connect. <p>2. Issues at transmission level. Instability from voltage perspective caused by generation and demand peaks being in different locations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Solution: UKPN are attempting to strengthen connections between north and south. This will be a huge project with lots of planning required, likely not complete until early 2040s. ○ The Grid is modelled by looking at peaks – need to smooth out peaks with flexible connections. ○ While waiting for the above solution, UKPN will offer products and services to fill power usage gaps at substations. Technical Limits – additional capacity at some supply points to connect more generation, but this will be limited to certain windows, so 24/7 exporting won't be possible. <p>3. Storage. National Grid model storage at a worst-case scenario.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Solution: National Grid have agreed to model batteries differently (in the way they were intended to be modelled). <p>UKPN and other DNOs are running quarterly forums, National Grid and Ofgem sometimes attend. Local authorities are welcome to attend.</p> <p>In discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDA asks where UKPN stand on private wire projects still requiring grid connection. Work with the DNO to optimise the private wire network and understand how much export/import is available. • DEL questions importance of LAEP if there are already more than enough private sector plans for renewable energy. NMA warns not all projects in the pipeline will be viable, and a mixture of technologies will be required. • SFE – decentralisation, decarbonisation, <u>democratisation</u>. Despite the queue of private sector projects, it will continue to be important to provide opportunities for local communities to be involved in energy via flexibility etc. • DCA asks what the DNO looks for in moving battery storage projects up the queue. The DSO are currently working on connection profiles – i.e., if a project meets a profile, the project can go ahead. • VBU asks about housing developments and local systems. NMA advises one house or a whole street/development could be a 'local system'. DNO is interested in the net import/export: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Example given: 3kWh solar panels installed with a 3kWh battery = export of 0.
<p>5.</p>	<p><u>Forward agenda planning</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Sussex procurement for solar PV and battery storage programme – NST to deliver a presentation. • Government consultations refresher.
<p>6.</p>	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><u>Date of next meeting</u></p> <p>13:30 – 15:00, 16th October 2023.</p>