

### ADEPT Minutes

**Date:** 5<sup>th</sup> January 2023      **Time:** 9:30 – 11:30      **Location:** MS Teams

**Present:** Sophie Broadfield - Chair (Banes), Hannah Bartram (ADEPT), Samantha Howell (Swindon), Kate Langdown (BCP), Meg Booth (Devon), Nigel Riglar (South Glos), Vinita Nawathe (Dorset LEP), Anthony Payne (Plymouth), Sally Royale (BEIS), Paula Hewitt (Somerset), Fleur Greenaert (CBI), Katherine Hawforth (Gloucestershire), Michelle Cusack (Somerset), Emma Cockburn (Devon), Anna Eastgate (Dorest), Miranda Housden (Ice.org), Sarah Valdus (Wiltshire), Jon Harris (Swindon), Emma Blackham (Gloucestershire), Jamie Hulland (Devon), Lisa Nash - minutes (Banes)

Barry Wyatt (Climate and Nature Emergency Manager) – Guest speaker

Rowena Kenny – Guest speaker with Barry Wyatt

Damien Dacey (Deputy Director English Devolution and Institutions) – Guest speaker

Item No	
1:	Apologies
	<p><b>Apologies:</b> Mike O’Dowd-Jones (Somerset), Alex Hearn (Somerset), Phil Mason (Cornwall), R Bell (Swindon), Kevin Mowat (Torbay), Gemma Dando (Somerset), Sophie Hosking (Cornwall), Lucy Shomali (Weston-Super-Mare), Parvis Khansari (Wiltshire), Peter Marsh (Cornwall), Philip Heseltine (Plymouth), Mark Rice (Environment Agency)</p>
2:	Update from Anthony Payne
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ ADEPT continues to build its relationships with DLUHC. Recently met with Siobhan Jones, Director of Local Government Policy who works to Will Garton, the DG. .</li> <li>➤ Two issues recently arise related to the Environment Act – 1) a proposed electricity generator levy which will affect Energy from Waste and Anaerobic Digester plants 2) delayed implementation of waste reforms.</li> <li>➤ Lisa to circulate email from Anthony detailing waste collection with minutes.</li> </ul>

**2a: Update from Hannah Bartram**

- Live Labs 2– we received 30 bids for the programme and put 10 bids through a Dragons’ Den in early November. Recommendations from the Dragons are currently awaiting Ministerial approval. HB will keep everyone appraised to progress.
- Transport – Some time is being spent looking at home to school transport issues. Local authority members advise on a growth for home school transport particularly with SEND. It’s exceptional in terms of associated costs and there are obvious climate change impacts as well. ADEPT have been in touch with the Association of Directors of Children’s Services (ADCS) about this issue and whether this is something they want to work on in terms of engaging with the DfE. DfT are also interested as well because it affects their decarbonisation ambition. The Association of Transport Coordination Officers (ATCO) is also doing some work on this. ADEPT will be attending the ADCS policy meeting to talk about the issue. Currently working with ATCO and DfT to will advise on the progress in due course.
- Transport & Connectivity Board – had a workshop before Christmas on road pricing and what that might look like and how it would be applied in practise, and what might be done with the funds generated. Now drafting a policy challenge paper.
- House of Commons Transport Select Committee – have launched an enquiry into strategic road investment. ADEPT drafting a response.
- Environment Board – The Government has published legally binding targets to protect the environment, clean up air and rivers and boost nature. a series of statutory This has received a bit of a muted response from the environmental sector. Defra will be publishing a new Environmental Improvement Plan in January (this is the next iteration of the 25-year environmental plan).
- Environmental / Waste – The Treasury has been consulting on an electricity generator levy, to tackle windfall profits. This will also capture energy from waste plants and anaerobic digester plants. ADEPT has written to HMT outlining concerns and requested a meeting. In the meantime, several official documents have been published around draft guidelines and written ministerial statements. Wendy Barrett – Devon (Chair) along with Steve Palfrey – Suffolk (Vice-chair) from the Waste Group are the leads.
- Waste reforms – conversations continue.
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – A consultation has been launched on proposed changes to the NPPF. ADEPT will be responding.
- Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill – is working its way through both houses, royal assent is anticipated by May.
- County Deals workshop – will showcase the 6 already agreed County Deals (Norfolk, Suffolk, Cornwall, Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire, NE & Durham, York & N Yorkshire. Details end of January / February.
- ADEPT Strategic Plan – is being refreshed, this will be published in the near future – hopefully the next 2/3 months.

- Spring Conference and Annual Awards Dinner takes place on 25<sup>th</sup> May in London – one day of conference and evening of awards.
- We have commissioned Shared Intelligence to undertake a review of place directors.
- Climate Change Working Group –just setting this up. The chair will sit on the ADEPT Leadership Team - this will be Nigel Riglar who is from South Glos. This is a cross cutting issue for everyone. Some comms will come out in future weeks about this.
- Leadership Development Programme – flagship development programme for aspiring place directors or people who just want to hone their leadership skills. Interest via expressions of interest – now closed. Fifth year of the programme, the previous four years have seen two cohorts per year – so very successful. Aimed at tier 3 and tier 4 colleagues. Jamie Hlland expressed how good the LDP course is and recommended it.
- Also delivering a Navigating Transition workshop, which will take place around 10<sup>th</sup> March.
- Newsletter – out this week.

3	Roundtable: issues from SW ADEPT members (opportunity to share and discuss live issues of concern for relay back to ADEPT leadership and national government
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- Paula H – setting budgets are the focus for the next couple of months. Moving to unitary on 1<sup>st</sup> April (5 budgets into one). Concern everyone recognises place services and pressure on adults and children’s it’s a big squeeze. Protecting things that public really value in terms of place services
- Samantha H – struggle with drivers currently also delay in guidance from Government LTP4 window closing rapidly, it’s going to impact on those people in need as well.
- Anthony P – Plymouth have got £26 million net budget with which £7 million has got to be taken out, which is not all because its income generated as well. Their council is putting prices up, which exacerbates inflation. A real challenge currently.
- Impacts will be seen on community transport to reduce air investment and spending, and areas like that.
- Concerns over construction inflation – funding was agreed 2-3 years ago.
- Sarah Valdus – unintended consequences what implications are going to be lack of clarity. New burdens coming out of environmental act. Lots coming – lack of clarity from centra Government. Difficult to do budget predictions.
- Jon Harris – Would like to turn the current challenge into an opportunity. Currently focusing on what’s happening with active travel England, investment hasn’t been seen since the original English region cycling development team back in 2000/22.
- Jamie H – Rural Design – Cycling Guide – gone a bit silent – interested in what is happening. So far has been urban. Wating on Active Trave Fund Tranche 4.

Funding needs to be allocated this financial year – tight turn around. Big challenge trying to navigate storm. Resources and finance under pressure.

- Sophie Broadfield to explore the possibility of Active Travel attending a future meeting. Rural Cycling could be another discussion as well.
- Kathryn Haworth – recruitment, retention of staff is a big issue – how much competition re bids etc, it’s hard to hang on to people.
- Jon H – Trying to understand skills staff do have – skills audit around abilities of the team and cross fertilise. Re strategic bidding down to one officer. Suggestion of forming hot teams. Jon invites anyone to contact him if they wish to work with him.

4	South Gloucestershire Live Lab 2 (Barry Wyatt, Climate and Nature Emergency Manager)
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Rowena and Barry presented some slides – see slides shared with minutes

Verge management – using verges in a different way to drive carbon reduction.

Questions:

- Has it been difficult to talk to teams and get to bid point Sophie asks? Community engagement has been challenging, internally they are fully onboard. Nervous re impact on communities with less cuts per year, hoping to ensure natures recovery. Communities think it’s to do with cost cutting but it’s not, there’s a need to spread the word about what’s happening in a positive way.
- Rowena K said there’s already some ambitious projects going on – already come a reasonable way and they have a good foundation to build on. Live lab is interested in joining up with others to work together in a wider way.
- Barry Wyatt added that they are aware work had previously been done in Lincolnshire in about 2016, they looked at putting grass from verges directly into AD, but it was agriculturally based. The difference with Live Lab 2 is they are looking at grass verge clippings and food waste and putting it through an AD, which is largely focused on food waste; so enhancing food waste’s value in terms of using ad biochar and hydrochar. The product once refined can be used as aggregate for road surfacing.
- Anthony Payne – No one else has taken it this far, believes comms are key on this for the public to understand. Barry Wyatt said there’s work that needs to be done to get the comms out.

5	Update on English Devolution (Damien Dacey, Deputy Director English Devolution and Institutions)
<p>Damien Dacey introduced himself and said he's pleased to be back in his home region working in levelling up department, looking after Governance and Legal Democracy. He spends time talking to Minsters on Devolution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The scope in England is to build on a record of deals negotiated from 2013/14 and set up mayoral combined authorities</li> <li>• Deals remain the primary way of advancement. Balance of powers, how money is distributed and managed. Political consensus – all a bit bumpy with regards to politics</li> <li>• Whitehall - has been harder and is a wider political policy debate</li> <li>• Emerging consensus by White paper – and Gordon Brown report he assumes it will be core for Labour manifesto</li> <li>• Need to tackle regional economics and outcomes. Theory of powers and funding. Merits are essential tool for collecting info</li> <li>• Extending – offering strong deals to all parts of the country by 2030</li> <li>• Deepening Boris Johnson 2021 – combined authorities. 6 of 9 places have been concluded. Other places names have not been concluded – discussion ongoing next and steps</li> <li>• Up for doing more deals for more places and what deals form the pipeline for 2023</li> <li>• Prioritisation for deals but mayoral – direct leadership suspect will sustain in 2023</li> <li>• White paper set out, pushes forward on boundaries. Currently into tail end of deals with Greater Manchester will then need to step back and look at what the new deal looks like</li> <li>• Final bit simplification – IUB working through parliament – crucial technical measures will aid progress of IUB going forward - ministers aware of how important it is. The long term goal is to reduce or indeed eliminate all the separate local growth funding pots</li> <li>• The chancellor statement – talked about scope of deals and effectively about skills and fundamental structure points. The sharper end of that is fiscal devolution, people welcome accountability. Would expect GM to use prototype</li> <li>• Accountability for ministers – total place and things like that. How do they give an account?</li> </ul>	
<p>Documents to send out with minutes:</p> <p>Live Labs 2 summary slides WDA unitary letter</p>	