

## ADEPT - Energy & Clean Growth Working Group Minutes

<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	<b>Monday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023, 13:30 – 15:00</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	Microsoft Teams Meeting
<b>Chair:</b>	Sheryl French - Assistant Director, Climate Change & Energy Services, Cambridgeshire County Council (SFR)
<b>Attendees:</b>	<p>Adrian Slaughter – Energy &amp; Carbon Manager, West Berkshire Council (ASL)          Alistair Craig – Programme Manager, Cumbria LEP (ACR)          Brian White – Clean Energy Manager, Cumbria LEP (BWH)          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)          Hannah Bartram – Chief Executive Officer, ADEPT (HBA)          Jordan Clydesdale – Climate Change Officer, Wiltshire Council (JCL)          Marouane Azennoud – Energy Manager, West Northamptonshire Council (MAZ)          Patrick Allcorn – Head of Local Energy, Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (PAL)          Sarah Gilbert – Head of Climate Action, Oxfordshire County Council (SGI)          Steve Palfrey - Assistant Director, Waste &amp; Environment, Suffolk County Council (SPA)          Sue Davies – Strategic Energy Manager, Luton Borough Council (SDA)</p>
<b>Guests:</b>	
<b>Note Taker:</b>	Bayley Wooldridge, Energy Projects Officer, Cambridgeshire County Council (BWO)
<b>Apologies:</b>	<p>Katie Thomas – Senior Strategy Manager, York &amp; North Yorkshire LEP          Carolyn McKenzie - Director of Environment, Surrey County Council          Jill Edmondson – Service Manager, Environmental Health          Kylie Russell – Deputy Chief Executive Officer, ADEPT          Chitra Nadarajah – Head of Service, Climate Change &amp; Environmental Strategy, Hampshire County Council          Kofi Adu-Gyamfi – Climate Change Service Lead, West Berkshire Council          Victoria Burvill – Senior Climate Officer, Wiltshire Council          Thomas Day – Head of Energy &amp; Low Carbon Programme,</p>

Item No.	Item
1.	<p><u>Sheryl French welcome, minutes and actions from the last meeting</u></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023 were agreed as a correct record following an amendment to item 3.</p>
2.	<p><u>Update from DESNZ/BEIS</u></p> <p><b><u>Local Net Zero Forum</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A conversation will take place at the next meeting in December/January to discuss whether written notes of the LNZF meetings could be made available.</li> <li>• The forum has requested a wider approach is explored to look at the synergies between domestic retrofit, heat, non-domestic buildings, transport decarbonisation, etc. A Task and Finish Group is set up and looking at what a place-based net zero might look like through devolution. Sub-groups will be set up to look at the key issues to address in order to reach place-based net zero. This will be reported to the main forum in March/April. PAL notes this wider look will not be confined to the current trailblazers.</li> <li>• There is a commitment within the current trailblazer devolution deals (Greater Manchester and West Midlands) to devolve domestic retrofit. A previous Task and Finish Group has looked at how this would be devolved and delivered. Ministers have been briefed and it is now to see if there is anything in the Autumn spending review.</li> <li>• PAL notes that a government offer is needed rather than a DESNZ offer so that all environmental issues are incorporated.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Ministerial Meeting - November</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing the primary paper from Task and Finish Group on domestic retrofit with ministers and senior leaders. PAL asks if ADEPT would like to nominate a political leader representative. HBA declines because ADEPT is an officer-only organisation, not working with elected members. <b>Action: SFE suggests revisiting ADEPT's stance on this from a strategic standpoint.</b></li> </ul> <p><b><u>Community Energy Fund</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This will be launched before Christmas - £10 million funding pot.</li> <li>• Feasibility and development funding for community groups to use towards community energy projects.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Local Net Zero Hubs</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrating their 5<sup>th</sup> birthdays.</li> <li>• NE &amp; Yorkshire hub hosted a conference on LAEPs.</li> <li>• No Government position on supporting LAEPs yet, but this will continue to be looked at. PAL notes a future meeting discussion on views on LAEPs would be useful.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Local Authority Financial Constraints</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PAL asks how this is affecting net zero delivery, business planning, etc.</li> <li>• Some general difficulties members of the group shared are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ No statutory mandate is making it difficult to deliver</li> <li>○ Cost of borrowing</li> <li>○ Interest rates</li> <li>○ PSDS funding timelines not compatible with DNO supply upgrade lead times</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
3.	<p><u>Update from ADEPT</u></p> <p>HBA shared the below written update:</p> <p><b><u>Transport</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The NAO is kicking off some work on local road maintenance – report currently planned for publication in April 2024.</li> <li>2. Homes to School SEND transport – the task &amp; finish group being co-chaired by ADEPT / ADCS is coming to an end. The two tasks were to pull together a number of Govt asks and a toolkit on best practice. Ann Carruthers (ADEPT) and Suzanne Smith (ADCS) are co-presenting on the work at the ATCO Annual Conference on 9 Nov.</li> </ol>

	<p>3. Latest Live Labs 2 blog is here - <a href="#">Live Labs 2 blog - Jane Anderson Carbon Plenary 2023   ADEPT (adeptnet.org.uk)</a></p> <p><b>Devolution / Growth / Planning</b></p> <p>4. Consultation responses – we responded to the Public Accounts Committee call for evidence on the Government's resources &amp; waste reforms (see <a href="#">here</a>). We are about to respond to the DLUHC consultation 'Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: consultation on implementation of plan-making reforms'.</p> <p>5. ADEPT published its '<a href="#">Manifesto for Stronger Places</a>' in early October – it includes nine specific asks including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unlock grid scale infrastructure investment through regulatory and other mechanisms to enable renewables to connect more quickly, and give local councils a clear remit to develop Local Area Energy Plans to manage the transition to net zero energy systems in their places.</li> </ol> <p><b>Environment</b></p> <p>6. The Environmental Audit Committee has asked the NAO to do a value for money study on government's implementation of the statutory duty on biodiversity net gain. Publication expected in May 2024.</p> <p>7. The Climate Change blog this month comes from the Chair of ADEPT's Waste Group, Steve Palfrey. ADEPT recently submitted its response to the Public Accounts Committees call for evidence on resources and waste reforms. <b>Read Steve's blog here.</b></p> <p>8. We delivered two webinars on the Environment Agency / Defra £25m fund for improving flood and coastal resilience through their <a href="#">new Natural Flood Management (NFM) programme</a>. If you'd like more info, please let me know.</p> <p><b>Events / Other</b></p> <p>9. Dates for your diary:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Highways UK</a>, 18-19 October, Birmingham – ADEPT President Anthony Payne is speaking on Day 1; we also have a panel discussion session on Live Labs 2.</li> <li><a href="#">Autumn Conference</a> – Nottingham, 16 &amp; 17 November – the conference title is <i>Creating strong places: leadership from the ground up</i> and we've secured a great line up of speakers.</li> <li>The next Lunch &amp; Learn is on Friday 20 October and hosted by Ringway. The title is "Priming the pump: diverse recruitment into highways teams". Click <a href="#">here</a> to register.</li> </ol> <p>10. We are running another ADEPT / CIPFA Green Finance Training on 6 Dec - <a href="#">Book your place here</a>.</p> <p>11. We will be putting out a call for applications to the ADEPT Leadership Development Programme 2024 next month.</p> <p>In discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SFE notes that attendance to the ADEPT Autumn Conference may be reduced due to financial constraints. HBA shared that the conference has more registrations compared to this point of time in previous years, with 48 LA's signed up so far.</li> </ul>
<p>4.</p>	<p><b><u>ADEPT Webpage and Terms of Reference Updates</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some updates to the Terms of Reference are required. <b>Action: SFE and BWO to make the suggested changes.</b></li> </ul>
<p>5.</p>	<p><b><u>Roundtable Feedback and discussions</u></b></p> <p><b>Salix Funding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PSDS Phase 3c application – match funding requirements put a lot of pressure on council budgets, and criteria is difficult to meet. Some councils have not applied for the funding on this basis.</li> <li>Issues with Salix website submitting Phase 3c application.</li> <li>Lack of understanding from Salix over LA procurement rules, timelines, etc. Salix' strict deadlines within financial years are difficult for LAs to meet.</li> <li>A lot of time and effort goes into the applications, which is often wasted unless the application can be submitted within 15 minutes of the Salix portal opening.</li> <li>Grid capacity issues are also slowing down current PSDS projects which have strict financial year deadlines imposed by Salix.</li> </ul>

## Local Area Energy Plans

- Some hesitance surrounding progressing LAEPs for some members, whilst other members already have an LAEP, or are working towards developing one.
- OCC have received Ofgem funding (Strategic Infrastructure Fund) to continue working towards their LAEP.
- It was noted that devolution deals would help LAs develop their LAEPs further.
- West Berkshire has a LAEP which is being used to plan chargepoint installations across their district.
- UKPN net zero hub – working with Advanced Infrastructure to develop a digital platform to help LAs use their tool and collect and display data. The tool aims to help LAs build what an LAEP could look like based on different scenarios and timelines.
- *Why are LAs responsible for this?* PAL advises it is so that LA's can dictate where the developments are and what the area will look like, rather than the DSOs and National Grid directing the local land use requirements for delivery of energy infrastructure.

## Heat Networks

- Exploring a heat network in Ipswich. Cambridge and Northampton are also exploring this. **Action: SFE to provide contacts for Cambridge City Council to SPA.**
- Investment interest from the private sector was reported.
- Cumbria reported they are using CEF funding to conduct a feasibility study looking at surplus heat from a paper mill.
- More focus on this in future meetings.

## Insetting

- Oxford City Council are doing some work on insets.
- It was noted it is difficult to do this work properly but was needed to prevent greenwashing.

## Green Finance

- DCC updated on their Innovate UK Fast Followers project looking at how green finance models can be applied to LA projects. Currently recruiting an officer to work on this.

## EV Infrastructure Recruitment

- Recruitment difficulties have led to some LAs having to increase salaries and change job descriptions in order to recruit.
- LEVI fund – resulted in many LAs recruiting for EV officers at the same time.
- Difficulty bringing in people with the right skillsets.

## Heat Pump Ready

- Funding from BEIS to assist the adoption of heat pumps in households.
- SFE notes LAs will need to find alternative ways of getting loans into communities due to the borrowing risk being too high for LAs.

## 6. Forward agenda planning

Suggestions for future presentations/discussions include:

- DESNZ Heat Zoning or Heat Network Delivery Unit – **Action: PAL to find a speaker.**
- Local Area Energy Plans – **Action: SFE to invite UKPN to present their net zero hub tool.**
- Insetting and Offsetting – **Action: SGI to invite a speaker from Oxford City Council.**

## 7. AOB

Nothing to report.

## 8. Date of next meeting

13:00 – 15:00, 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023.