

### **First online meeting September 2nd 2021:**

Present:

Cllr Linda Taylor, Leader Cornwall Council

Peter Marsh, Service Director Environment, Climate Change and Chief Executive of the Local Nature Partnership  
Mark Holmes, Manager, Carbon Neutral Cornwall, Cornwall Council

Cllr Martyn Alvey Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change  
Rob Uhlig – Bude Town Council and Project Coordinator Bude Climate Partnership

Melissa Benyon – Helston Town Council & Helston CAG

Karen Jeffereys, member St Day & Carharrack CAG & Cornwall Climate Action Network

**Aim:** to understand the position of Cornwall Council in terms of climate & ecological emergency. Establish regular meetings.

### **Main points from meeting :**

- Established Cornwall Council priority is the housing crisis.
- Importance of environment is the thread that runs throughout Cornwall Council .
- All important decisions are made using the Cornwall Decision Making Wheel.
- Cornwall Carbon Neutral Team leads on the development and implementation of the Carbon Neutral Action Plan. Currently looking at Transport. Cornwall Carbon Neutral Team Wants to share with community. Ambition to reach 60% of people launching with COP 26. Involved with regional and national programmes eg UK 100 and key areas of Climate Change. Also work with government - share learning back with UK.
- Climate Literacy Training rolled out to all Cornwall Council, Town Councils & Parish Councils.
- Surveyed 3500 residents in Cornwall most of whom said plant more trees, increase recycling rather than individual change.
- Need for government funds to help fuel poverty etc.

Outcome: agreement on the need for dialogue to go forward and monthly meetings.

### **Second online meeting 19th January 2022**

During this time the Cornwall Climate Action Coalition was formed.

This was the first of agreed regular monthly meetings since the introductory meeting 2nd September 2021.

**Present:**

#### **Cornwall Council**

Cllr Linda Taylor, Leader Cornwall Council

Cllr Martyn Alvey, Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change

Mark Holmes, Manager, Carbon Neutral Cornwall.

#### **Cornwall Climate Action Coalition Members (CCAC members)**

Karen Jeffereys

Melissa Benyon

Madeline Constance

Helen Angel

### **1. Introduction**

The meeting clarified we are members of Cornwall Climate Action Coalition and outlined the newly formed Coalition.

## **2. Transparency and high profile communication of Climate and Ecological emergency including public messaging**

### **Communication, Leadership and Transparency**

CCAC spoke about the importance of, Cornwall Council's communication about the climate emergency, Cornwall Council Strong Leadership Model and the Cornwall Decision Making Wheel.

#### **Question 1. How many Councillors have completed the Cornwall Council Carbon Literacy Training?**

10 Cornwall Councillors have completed training

11 Cornwall Councillors are on their way through the training

7 Cornwall Councillors have set up accounts but not yet started the training.

10 Town/parish councillors have completed the training

21 Town/parish councillors are in progress

#### **Action: Individual councillors to continue to complete the Climate Literacy IT training**

#### **Question 2. Can you reassure us that following the failure to use the Decision Making Wheel regarding the Newquay - Gatwick flights that there will be a speedy investigation to identify the mistakes, correct them and learn lessons to avoid repeating those mistakes?**

- Council explained that Cornwall Decision Making Wheel was amongst the initial completed papers however, when it came to the sign off, it was not included in the paperwork.
- This has been taken up with officers to ensure that the Decision Making Wheel integral to all Cornwall Council paperwork.
- Clarified Cornwall council officers and councillors receive an education session on the Cornwall Decision Making Wheel.

ACTION: Council will take the Cornwall Decision Making Wheel to the all members briefing.

ACTION: Mark Holmes offered to give a presentation on the Cornwall Decision Making Wheel to the Cornwall Climate Action Coalition. CCAC members will take this offer to the Cornwall Climate Action Coalition.

## **3. Communication and Public Health Campaigns**

CCAC commended the Cornwall Climate Action Plan 2019, and quoted on a number of relevant statements that related to communication and public health messaging. Specifically pointing out that the climate emergency message is not effectively reaching the wider public and that there are conflicting messages such as subsidies for flights, road expansion, the space port, not using the Decision Making Wheel, and not supporting the CEE Bill. There is an imperative to quickly educate and engage the public and have the information accessible to everyone. A huge public campaign would make a great difference. Some practical suggestions were given such as: Messaging in Cornwall Council Building; Add a climate change message on every email from the council; Educate in schools. Radio and TV advertising campaign; Messages on the roads, public transport, in public places and town centres.

Question 4. Cornwall Council has a Publicity Team. Would you commit to a huge public awareness campaign about the climate crisis?

Question 5. Will the Council commit to stop the dichotomies and align everything with rapidly and consistently transitioning to a fossil fuel free economy for us to thrive, for the physical health and wellbeing, and survival and economic well-being of all our citizens?

Council agreed that public awareness is absolutely important. A budget to run an expensive radio and TV campaign would be ideal but far beyond the Council's budget. CCAC asked whether council could demand more finance from central Government to do public messaging campaigns.

**ACTION:** Council is looking at getting publicity to the wider public. Council committed to do more on public awareness and will look at what is available in the budget and particularly promote the use of social media.

- Council clarified there is a dedicated Public Relations and Media officer for Carbon Neutral Cornwall officer and a Media Press Officer who makes press releases on what individuals can do, what Carbon Neutral Cornwall team are doing. The Council produces: a monthly climate emergency newsletter since January 2019. They also include climate initiatives in the weekly Council Email "Keeping Cornwall Updated". This includes a wide range of issues such as Covid information and other Council initiatives.
- The Council pointed out the size of the challenge of reaching the public. Even engaged people, for example Cornwall Climate Action Coalition members, are not signed up to the newsletter and the Council email. They asked if the Coalition can be advocates to promote and widely share these council communication channels.

**ACTION:** The members of the Cornwall Climate Action Coalition agreed to share and promote the newsletter and the council email through the Coalition and other groups. See links below.

- Carbon Neutral Cornwall also runs a Schools Programme. They part fund the schools officer who promotes the eco schools challenges and other activities. They have run two school conferences.
- The Council significantly reduced travel by working from home and using shared transport and stopping overseas travel for trainings. CCAC encouraged council to showcase these changes in order to engage and inspire public interest.

### **Vision and messaging**

It was clarified that Cornwall Council's vision for Cornwall Net Zero 2030 is referring to Cornwall wide not just the Council owned estate.

### **Reporting and progress**

CCAC addressed the importance of regular reporting on progress towards the targets defined in the Climate Action Plan.

- A timeline to accompany the initial roadmap with regular interim targets and quarterly reporting would be helpful.
- If progress towards Cornwall Net Zero 2030 is delayed because of finance, then Cornwall Council should demand increased financial support from the UK Government (ref 7.29 Climate Action Plan).
- Proposed a "Climate and Environment Scrutiny Committee" to oversee processes and decisions within the Council and emphasised public inclusion in this committee.

Council confirmed they report quarterly to the Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee since January 2019 and these reports are publicly available.

### **Cornwall Council Climate Emergency Development Planning document (DPD)**

Q8: When will the Climate Emergency DPD be released? And what progress has been made on this?

- Council confirmed that the DPD is currently with the Secretary of State under investigation, that although the Council cannot fully implement it until approved by Government; many aspects of the DPD are already being used.

- Council confirmed that measures in the DPD not yet approved, or not in national planning policy, can be considered as “positive considerations” i.e. if a developer adopts a positive measure outlined in the DPD.
- The challenge of setting policy locally is that proposals can be overruled by national policy set by central Government. Agreed that changes to policy at national level are needed.

### **Accessibility and education:**

CCAC asked council to consider how inaccessible Cornwall council website is to the public.

- Council agreed that the website is impenetrable
- Council explained the challenge, the sheer number of active consultations at any one time, and that any changes have to go back to public consultation

Council noted that public responses to public consultations do not correlate to the importance of the topic. CCAC suggested that this is clear evidence for education since the public are only responding to consultation topics they confidently understand.

- Cornwall Council have developed two alternative platforms and would like these to be promoted
  - “Let’s talk” provides access to active consultations
  - “The Hive” provides opportunity for interaction and to input ideas around climate change.

**ACTION:** CCAC to encourage Coalition and other groups/organisations to engage in the consultations via “Let’s talk”, and visit “The Hive” to use it as an interactive site.

Agreement to meet in one month’s time-

**ACTION:** CCAC to arrange with council

**Update :** Confirmed next meeting with Cornwall Council, Monday 14th March.

Notes from the People’s assembly 22.2.22 topic: the fuel poverty crisis, will be sent to the Cllrs Taylor and Alvey, and Mark Holmes prior to this meeting.

Focus of next meeting will be:

- Following up on actions from last meeting,
- Fuel Poverty Crisis
- Leveling Up Funding Application.