

Torbay Climate Partnership

Minutes

12th September 2024

10:00 – 12:15 pm

The Board Room, Torquay Town Hall

Attendees: David Edmondson (Chair), Cllr Chris Lewis, Cllr Fox, Liz Muir, Emily Reed, Jacqui Warren, Kevin Dixon, Melanie Boarder, Alex Carter, Bethan Huntley, Tara Bowers, Chris Gunson, Sam Swann, Rachel Geary, Helen Warren, Louise Marshall, Kirsty Parker, Matthew Green, Adam Luscombe

Apologies: Chris Gomm, Cllr Billings, Jordan Pierson, Tom Dauben, David Stewart, David Lewis, Gary Calland, Jenny Hunt, Emma Magee, Joanne Brimblecombe, Rob Parsons

1.Welcome

David Edmondson (DE) as Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Announcements:

- Torbay Climate Action has folded. DE Thanked David and Rae for all that they have done to help with the Greener Way For Our Bay (GWFOB) / Torbay Climate Partnership (TCP) and for the carbon literacy training sessions they have delivered and much, much more.
- Lara Ruetsch from SW Net Zero Hub and Cllr Cordelia Law have stepped down and Rob Parson is leaving the authority. DE said he was sorry to see them all go, and on behalf of the TCP, thanked them all for their help and wished them good luck. Due to capacity issues Jenny Hunt will no longer attend meetings but will keep a watching brief.
- DE welcomed the following new members:
 - Dr Kevin Dixon (Various)
 - Bethan Huntley (Safe, Sustainable Transport Torbay)
 - Kirsty Parker Callard (Torbay on the Move)
 - Gary Calland (General Manager National Trust)
 - Cllr Fox (Torbay Council)

2.Previous Minutes / Actions

DE ran through the actions from the TCP's 7th June 2024 meeting:

| Action | Owner | Action Open or Closed? |
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| Rachel Geary (RG)/Torbay Climate Action | RG talk to TCA about climate denier engagement. | TCA folded so this has not happened. The Council has kept the channels of communication open with the Seven Concerned Citizens |

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| | | (7CC). Most recently, Overview and Scrutiny Board received the latest 7CC's report – challenging a number of climate issues and issues with the GWFOB. RG to look at other options for keeping engagement work going across Torbay. |
| Partners have until Friday 21st June to provide any further comments on the GWFOB Framework and Action Plan at which point it will be deemed approved. | All | Closed – Approval granted |
| Discuss Parkfield as a climate hub for young people. | Liz Muir (LM) /Matthew Green | LM and MG met. Current effort is going into developing Parkfield House. No capacity to work on the outside space as yet. MG has offered to facilitate the engagement with young people, as and when Parkfield is ready to become a Hub. |
| Jacqui Warren to query the status of the Marine Forum and actions on protecting sea grass with Rob Parsons (RP). | Jacqui Warren (JW) / Marine Forum | Open – JW to pick up with RP replacement. |
| Jacqui Warren to add a new action to the Action Plan that explores the bulk buying of solar panels for local communities. | Done | Closed and added to the GWFOB Action Plan |
| Action: Melanie Boarder and Matt Green to meet with Matt Reeks on the recycling education work that SWISCo is developing. | Melanie Boarder, Matthew Green, Matt Reeks | Open– No update |
| Action: Emma Magee and Davina Luther to meet with SWISCo to discuss any potential funding and | Emma Magee/ Davina Luther | Open – No update |

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| support for future tree planting projects. | | |
| Partners to reach out to Robert from EEE Safe if they are interested in finding out more/getting involved. | All | Closed now as partners have had time to reach out if they wanted to |
| Emma Magee and Marie Hale to meet to discuss the professional memberships which may be helpful to sustainability students. | Emma Magee/ Marie Hale | Open – No update |
| Chairperson Update: Action: Partners to contact Jacqui Warren with any concerns. | All | Closed – No concerns raised since June meeting. |
| Speak with Tara Bowers about possible energy solutions for Torbay Council Estate Buildings. | JW/ Alex Carter (AC) | AC and JW currently reprioritising decarbonisation plans for the Council estate. AC to get back to TB once this work is complete. |

The Minutes of the previous meeting on 7th June 2024 were approved as an accurate record and signed off.

3. Greener Way for Our Bay Framework and Action Plan (GWFOB FAP)

3a. Update on Endorsement Process

DE update all that the GWFOB FAP was approved by TCP partners on 21 June 2024, via a mixture of support from the previous meeting and offline, after the meeting, via emails confirming support.

The GWFOB FAP went before Torbay Council's Overview and Scrutiny Board (O&S) on 4 September 2024. They were asked to make any recommendations to Torbay's Place Leadership Board, prior to their final endorsement of the GWFOB FAP. O&S Board recommended that the Place Leadership Board look at how immediate plans could be bolder and expressed support for continued consultation and engagement and requested an annual review of the GWFOB FAP.

GWFOB FAP is to be presented to the Place Leadership Board on 27th September 2024 at the Berry Head Hotel. Members were invited to attend and co-present. Melanie Boarder, Liz Muir and Helen Warren expressed an interest.

JW had a positive briefing with Jim Parker, Chair of the Place Leadership Board, so it is hoped the Board will endorse the GWFOB FAP.

3b. GWFOB FAP Progress report

Progress has already been made to deliver some actions within the GWFOB FAP.

RG presented a progress report for the 30 Key Actions within the FAP. There are three red actions that partners were asked to consider. This indicated that the action was at least 2 months delayed:

Action 18: In 2024, various partners to reduce waste, explore establishing a community repair café

TCP partners suggested that Turning Heads had started one and that we look to the work being done by Exeter Community Alliance.

Action: All to let RG know of any initiatives happening in the Bay.

Action 24. In 2025, various partners to explore setting up a Torbay Community Action Group or similar to create more local community projects

This action was to be developed with Torbay Climate Action who have recently folded. Liz Muir commented that Parkfield House was working towards becoming a climate action hub. They have already begun community engagement, with flood related ARSINOE project work and it feels like they are starting to gain traction in the community, particularly through the link to heritage. The team at Parkfield are also beginning to understand the full potential of a site that was designed to be self-sufficient when it was built and are learning from what was done in the past. A circularity is forming with, for example the stables becoming a Bike Hub, which allows the story of the past to weave into the story they are telling about the future. Various other partners are also using the grounds. DE asked for an update in the December meeting. Emily Reed (ER) offered support.

Actions: LM / Parkfield to provide an update for December meeting and ER to liaise with LM/Parkfield

Action 25. By 2025, the TCP, led by the English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark to tell positive stories of action happening across Torbay

This action has been hampered by capacity issues. JW suggested we need to consider other options, such as finding external funding to employ someone. DCC have someone in post for this type of work. There was a discussion around the need to take it out of the Council/Geopark communication, so the TCP are seen to have an independent voice. It was also felt that there was a need for proactive communication through websites and workshops, tick tock.

Action: RG to look into funding options

4. Local Energy Area Plan (LEAP)

Jacqui Warren from Torbay Council presented on the forthcoming work Devon, Plymouth and Torbay are carrying out together to develop a Local Energy Area Plan (LEAP). It aims to take a full energy systems approach to preparing for net-zero. It will be looking at homes, businesses, power and heat, hydrogen, biomass, and district heating systems and transport. Working with key local and regional

stakeholders it will create a detailed co-ordinated local energy plan. This plan will be a detailed, costed, and spatial blueprint outlining the necessary changes to the local and national energy and the built environment, specifying what needs to be done, where, when, by whom, and at what cost.

It will build on the Greener Way for our Bay Framework and Action Plan, and previous work by the University of Exeter, to identify the most cost-effective net zero energy pathway and actions to achieve net-zero by 2050. The plan will support local plans, transport strategies, economic growth, and regeneration programs, covering the entire energy system. Creating a LEAP is a seven-step process. This work will start by completing stage 1-3 only. The Southwest Net Zero Hub will part fund this work and will lead this nine-month project. Stages 1-3 focus on understanding the current energy system and context, data collation and development of stakeholder engagement plan.

JW explained that there were also a range of regional and national changes happening regarding regional and national energy planning. Working up to stage 3 will allow these changes to become clearer and avoid any potential duplication.

Cllr Lewis welcomed the collaboration and reiterated that there are no energy boundaries and the importance of understanding where we are before we start trying to make changes.

JW acknowledged the need for a green skills programme to support the net zero transition.

Tara Bower (TB) also explained that many buildings cannot instal heat pumps because they are too close to the home / building and therefore fail on decibel levels. Quieter heat pumps are available but more expensive, and current grant funding doesn't cover them. Cllr Fox reiterated this.

Action: JW to update the TCP on this work going forward

5. Decarbonising Transport Update presentation

Adam Luscombe from Torbay Council presented on a range of projects.

Devon and Torbay have been awarded significant funding to enhance active travel and electric vehicle infrastructure. This included £240,000 for a new cycle crossing at Shiphay and £125,000 to develop bids for schemes in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). Additionally, the DELETTI 2 initiative will see the installation of rapid chargers at various locations, with further phases planned. The Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) project will introduce a mix of slower overnight and fast chargers, targeting on street parking and chargers at key destinations.

£7.1 million of funding for electric buses have been secured and will result in 49 new electric buses to be operated by Stagecoach in Torbay. This project will see power connections and charging infrastructure established by mid-2025, with buses in service by early 2026.

The Bus Service Improvement Plan aims to enhance accessibility, lower fares, and improve service links.

The Local Transport Plan (LTP4) envisions a sustainable, integrated transport system that supports net-zero carbon goals by 2050, focusing on decarbonisation, easier travel, and community benefits. A consultation will run through October-November 2024.

There is also progress on community car clubs. Torbay Council have three electric pool cars for staff to use. Torbay Hospital are interested in doing the same. The idea is to extend the use of both electric fleets to the public, during evenings or other times when they are not needed by staff.

Kevin Dixon (KD) asked if the bus travel targets in the LTP4 were still realistic given that since the pandemic, more people are now working from home (WFH). He also asked if there is a WFH policy.

AL said that there is data on changes to bus travel since the pandemic, but the biggest drop had been to bus users with concessionary bus passes, rather than working people. The feeling is that these people are simply going out less, and possibly getting food delivered.

Cllr Lewis said that he feels we are missing something through WFH. People cannot talk to each other as easily. Councillors miss having a chat etc. It feels we may have gone too far the other way.

Action: AL to share evidence and graphing related to what they learnt about journeys / bus use etc.

Bethan Huntley (BH) raised a concern about the steps at the Shiphay Lane crossing and about the LCWIP, particularly in relation to Paignton.

AL said funding has been secured to put in a wider ramp in at Shiphay Lane.

Action: AL / DE to talk to BH about the LCWIP

Cllr Lewis pointed out the need to make clear signage because you get pedestrians on cycle paths and bikes on pedestrian paths.

AL said the LCWIP is planning to make clean and clear paths and aims to avoid ad-hoc paths.

Louise Marshall (LM2) pointed out the importance of behaviour change initiatives like the workplace challenge that can begin to make a significant difference.

AL acknowledged that such active travel initiatives do work but funding is often intermittent, so it is difficult to keep up momentum.

ER heard about BH's work at a party in the South Hams – making the point that people who cycle talk to each other about it.

Sam Swann (SS) pointed out that there are lots of good news stories here around EV buses etc.

ER asked if there is any chance stagecoach chargers could be used by SWISCO for example.

AL explained that conversations are happening.

ER said she is also working on this and so are others in Nottingham.

Action: AL and ER to keep in touch with developments

Cllr Fox asked about active travel in relation to disability transport, particularly in relation to drop curbs.

AL said that there are funds to add more drop curbs, but it is reliant on people telling then where they are needed.

6. Climate Action Fund presentation

Liz Muir from Torbay Communities introduced the Climate Action Fund (CAF) bid the Imagine This Partnership is pulling together. The National Lottery's CAF fund aims to engage more people in climate action and inspire significant change. It will fund formal partnership projects that either link climate action to the everyday lives of local communities or influence communities at a regional or national level. The fund is suitable for formal partnerships led by community, voluntary, or public sector organizations, with grants ranging from £500,000 to £1.5 million over 3 to 5 years, potentially funding up to 25 projects

Torbay Communities Imagine This group are submitting a bid to CAF. 'Imagine this' are a local youth partnership that brings together around 30 youth groups. The bid will seek to empower children and young people to lead climate action. It will include embedding youth voices in strategic policies, creating nature-based experiences, developing practical, youth-led projects, and ensuring youth representation in decision-making. The initiative also focuses on inclusive engagement, targeting underrepresented groups, and providing tailored support through digital learning and adaptable activities. The goal is to create a replicable model for youth-led climate action across the UK, fostering systemic change through youth influence in policymaking.

DE asked if the TCP can support this by endorsement.

Action: LM / JM to seek endorsement from the TCP if required

LM2 said that Active Devon are keen to join up with this proposal as much as possible

JW said that active travel can be involved with this if the funding bid is successful.

Action: TCP to be kept informed of progress

7. Membership and Chairperson Update

DE is happy to continue as Chairperson, but the TCP should seek an independent chair in 2025.

David Hodgson, of Christian Eco Action, who was approached as a potential TCP chair in 2024, has asked to join the TCP as a member. There were no objections to this from the Partnership.

Action: David Hodgson to be invited to join the TCP

8. Roundtable updates / AOB

Destination Management Group (DMG) meet quarterly and have asked for a TCP representative. To date JW attends.

Helen Warren also attends and is happy to be the TCP representative. She has found it a useful platform. She has previously raised the risks associated with Green Tourism and potential damage to our environmental assets.

JW said that this has also be noted by the DMG.

Action: HW to be the TCP representative

ER noted that Torbay is now a Sustainable Food Place and says that she has found Food and Drink Devon to be a very constructive organisation that we could link up with.

KD suggested we speak to Jed Stevenson (JS) about Local Motion joining the TCP

Action: RG to suggest Torbay Sustainable Food Places reaches out to Food and Drink Devon. RG to talk to JS about Local Motion joining the TCP

Matt Green (MG) from SDC update all that they are down to the last four finalists in the Green Gown Award for Sustainability Institution of the year. He also offered the TCP the opportunity to engage with students during fresher's week.

TB updated all on Exeter Community Energy changes. The name is changing to Eco Advice. They are becoming a charity, and the energy generation side of their work is to be separated from the advice side. They also have a new hub / premises in Exeter. It will be called Pulse and will have a launch event in October. They have also received funding for a Pulse Hub in Torbay that will offer energy saving, retrofit and debt advice. They are looking for the right venue.

LM suggested Parkfield could be a potential site to house the Pulse Hub.

TB also said that Eco Advice have nominated Torbay Council for a most supportive council of the year award. The shortlisting results are in tomorrow.

TB said that they are worried about how people will cope this winter. 240,000 people across Devon will be affected by the loss of the winter fuel allowance. They had a significant uptick in phone calls after the new policy was announced.

BH update all that the 22 September 2024 is World Car Free day. She is holding an event at the Velo Park and would appreciate TCP partners promoting it.

AL said that all public transport will be free that day.

Action: BH to send out information for members to promote.

Next Meeting:

6 December 2 – 4pm + Mince Pies