



Warrington Climate Emergency Commission

Teams meeting – Monday 13th January 14:00 – 16:00

Organisations Present:

- Chair
- Warrington Community Energy
- Culture Warrington
- Independent Advisor
- University of Chester
- Warrington Borough Council
- Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington
- Warrington & Vale Royal College
- Warrington Chamber of Commerce

Agenda:

1. Notes of previous meeting and action points not covered elsewhere on the agenda

- Notes were approved from the previous meeting
- The action log was updated

2. Communications and engagement update

a. Reflection on the Climate Emergency Forum events programme

- The 2024 Climate Emergency Forum consisted of more events and was supported by a wider range of organisations than the previous year.
- There was a mix of online and face-to-face events. From a council perspective, providing support to the commission, the additional online events were less resource intensive to organise as easy to set up but still worked and probably attracted people who might not have attended a face to face event
- At the previous Climate Express event in 2023 there was a call for more repair cafés in Warrington to help address overconsumption. The impact of this message was highlighted during Climate Express 2024, as two new repair cafes have since been set up.
- The popularity of Lymm repair café was raised, noting the huge demand from the public.
- However, the paid car park at the site is becoming a barrier for the volunteers who require a vehicle to transport tools for repair.
- The presentation of the visioning work undertaken by young people in Warrington attracted an audience that included a local MP and council cabinet members.
- This visioning work was referenced by the council's portfolio holder for climate change during a recent cabinet meeting. It was there that the leader of the council expressed interest in hearing from the young people themselves at a future meeting.
- A final report from Involve, the charity who led the process, is due. The report will contain the vision and associated recommendations.

b. Newsletter

- The commission's mailing list currently has 420 subscribers.
- Engagement, including opens and link clicks, is good and is performing better on average than other similar campaigns.

- The next newsletter will be sent out in early February. It will contain a roundup of the forum events, wider stories and activities which have recently taken place across the borough and funding opportunities.

c. Commission's website

- Work is ongoing to produce a concept for a new website.
- When a concept is produced, a smaller meeting to review and refine the websites' purpose will be arranged.
- The commission would like the website to be action driven using visual prompts.
- A [communications guide](#) to help ensure climate change is framed in the most impactful way was shared with the council's communications team. This resource may be useful when producing the website.

3. Youth engagement update

a. Update on the visioning project

- The youth visioning project is now complete, and the vision was presented at during the Climate Emergency Forum last year.
- The young people had 75 conversations about the future of Warrington in a climate changing world.
- The outputs of these conversations were translated into a representation produced using virtual reality. The vision concerned all of Warrington but was illustrated using three areas Kingsway, Longford and Warrington town centre.
- Once the final report has been received and snippets of the virtual reality representation prepared it will be shared widely and embedded where opportunities arise.

b. Establishing a youth engagement network

- Following on from discussions around the legacy of the youth visioning project, the possibility of establishing a youth engagement forum or network was discussed.
- The network would need to be facilitated by an interested party such as a local educational establishment.
- Some young people who participated in the visioning project expressed that they would like to stay involved beyond the project.
- If established this would provide an opportunity for a young person to join the commission as we no longer have a youth representative.
- For this network to be established someone needs to volunteer to take it forward.
- There is potential interest from The University of Chester, however a more focused meeting is needed to discuss interest.

4. Annual report

- A draft annual report has been produced by the design team at the council.
- In line with discussions at workshop held last year, this year's draft report is designed to be much more accessible by reducing the amount of text. Each page has a stand-alone leaflet-style, allowing it to be more widely shared and engaged with.

- Commissioners were thanked for their input into the report.
- Upon reviewing the draft, some further amendments have been requested.
- Once published it is important that we ensure that as many people as possible read it.
- The report will be circulated once published.

5. Forward Plan 2025

- A summary of the commission's achievements against its forward plan for 2024 was circulated ahead of the meeting. It showed that the commission achieved many of the things it set out to do last year.
- The content for a new forward plan for 2025 was discussed
- Many of the standing items will remain such as meeting occurrence and newsletter publication schedules.
- It was agreed that this year the commission should continue to prioritise growing self-supporting engagement networks.
- This includes a business network. Delivery of Carbon Literacy for local small and medium enterprises (SME's) through the Warrington Carbon Culture project may facilitate in establishing a network
- [More information and booking links](#) for the upcoming Carbon Literacy training offer for SME's and parish councils will be circulated when available with commissioners asked to help promote.
- It was highlighted that the right framing when contacting business is imperative to their engagement as many businesses are overwhelmed, meaning that we must empathise with their needs.
- The managing director at IKEA has contacted the commission and is keen to get involved where opportunities present.

Business Declares have held two sessions at The University of Chester for business students on the three levels of actions for businesses. A slide pack with all the information was produced and could be used to support business engagement.

- It was noted that all of the commission's social media platforms gained followers over the year. However, engagement and follower numbers on X had begun to decrease probably linked to a wider reduction in users in response to the activities of its owner. The option to create a BlueSky account was raised as it would be relatively simple to set up. It was agreed this would be worth pursuing in the light of engagement falling on X.
- It was agreed that the commission will aim to organise another Climate Emergency Forum this year.
- It would be helpful to understand what attendees find most valuable. This year feedback on the events should be gathered.
- It was also raised that there needs to be more time allocated at the end of the Climate Express event for informal discussion and networking.
- A target of 800 subscribers to the commission's newsletter was suggested. It would also be helpful to review how each commissioner can share the mailing list based on their networks.
- Culture Warrington shared plans for events happening over the coming year including a climate café in November. This event could potentially form part of the Climate Emergency Forum.

- It was suggested that there could be an opportunity for a collective 'events calendar' to help promote existing or planned activities via the commission's new website.
- It was agreed a new forward plan be drafted based on the discussion and circulated for further input.

6. Council / commission partners update

Warrington Borough Council

- Installations for the second round of Solar Together Cheshire and Warrington are progressing. So far there have been 27 installations in Warrington.
- A series of workshops to assess the council's vulnerability to climate change and approach to climate adaptation are due to commence this week. The first workshop will be Adaptation Literacy to ensure everyone involved in the process has the same baseline understanding of why we need to adapt to a changing climate. The process will involve officers from across the council.
- The final session of the Warrington Carbon Culture support programme for staff is due to take place next week.
- There remains a squeeze on capital due to costs associated with borrowing. Grant offers made to the council have had to be declined for some projects due to a lack of match funding.
- Children's services have produced a climate action plan with service specific actions in support of the wider council policy and action plan. This was a positive step in embedding wider action and highlighted the benefit of increased engagement across the council with the wider agenda.
- Electric buses to replace Warrington's Own Buses diesel fleet continue to arrive.

Warrington Community Energy

- The board is considering installing solar on The Gateway in an effort to help voluntary organisations with their energy bills.
- An application for further support through the Energy Redress Scheme has been made, Warrington Disability Partnership has already been offering free and impartial energy advice with the benefit of past funding. If the application is successful, this service will be extended for another two years.

7. Any other business

- No other business

Next meeting: Our next meeting is Monday 10th March 2-4pm