



# Warrington Climate Emergency Commission

Teams meeting – Monday 10<sup>th</sup> March 14:00 – 16:00

## Organisations present:

- Independent Chair
- Warrington Borough Council
- Enterprise Cheshire & Warrington
- Cheshire & Merseyside Integrated Care Board
- Business Declares
- Culture Warrington
- Natural England
- Warrington Chamber of Commerce
- Warrington Community Energy
- Warrington & Vale Royal College

## Meeting Notes:

### 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. Progress with the commission's website

- A meeting was held two weeks ago where a concept for the Warrington climate action website was presented by the council's web design team.
- The meeting was productive in helping to establish preferences for branding and content. The initial look of the site was promising, but there were some changes discussed to make the message more appealing to a wider audience. For example, reframing 'climate emergency' to a message that is more action focused.
- The purpose of the website is to empower and engage local people to act. There will be some information on the Commission, but it is not intended to be a website to promote the Commission.
- The concept for the website is to be shared with the wider group for comment as it continues to be shaped.
- It was agreed that the site should signpost different groups to different types of information and resources that are most relevant to their sector, e.g., businesses, individuals, etc.
- Information will then be separated based on the themes of the climate strategy.
- To effectively communicate the message and increase engagement with the website, a discussion took place about rebranding the Commission.
- It was suggested that an alternative framing could be introduced to promote an aspiration or outcome, to make the site seem more inviting.
- This way, the messaging would not lead with a focus on climate change, but it would be mentioned in the website description.
- It was agreed that the Commission's logo would remain the same.
- The name 'Future Ready Warrington' was suggested.
- It was agreed that generally, the Commission's communications should shift towards more positive language. The notion of community resilience was discussed as a useful framing.

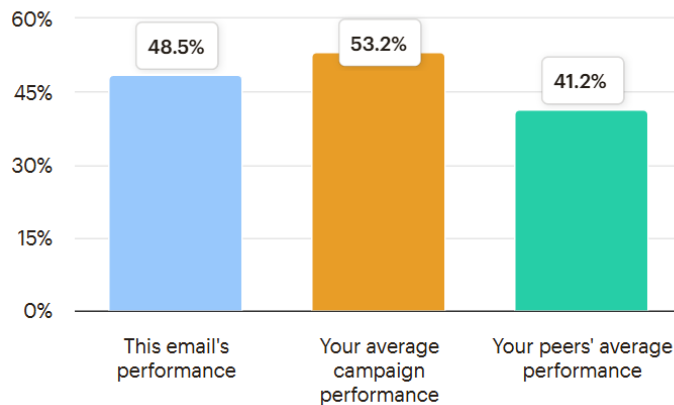
- It was suggested that the overall branding should continue to be informed by the content as it develops.
- It was also agreed that the Commission should continue to look out for what has worked well in other places.
- The group were invited to continue to share thoughts or comments on overall messaging and consider approaches taken elsewhere.

b. Developing new engagement networks

- Updates on schools/youth engagement
  - There are some final amends being made to the project report for the youth Community Conversations project, following which it will be uploaded online.
  - A formal response has been prepared on behalf of the Commission which has been shared with the young people involved and will be published online alongside the report.
  - Following discussions in the last meeting on a youth climate engagement network, Culture Warrington have volunteered to take the lead in convening the group.
  - A meeting is scheduled to take place next week with relevant Commissioners to progress this activity.
  - Culture Warrington updated that they are planning to hold a climate change exhibition during November to coincide with the annual COP conference and the climate emergency forum.
  - The November event will be the first in a series of environment-themed exhibitions, and it is hoped that the young people will be involved in the planning of this series.
- Updates on business and parish council engagement
  - The fully funded Carbon Literacy training courses for Warrington-based SMEs and Parish Councils are now available to book, with a series of initial dates listed online via [Pure Leapfrogs Ticket Tailor account](#). The links were shared with the group.
  - A number of introductory webinars took place in February and March to help promote the courses and follow-on support available.
  - Commissioners were encouraged to promote the training opportunities where appropriate, utilising direct contacts wherever possible.
  - Those who participate in the courses will benefit from follow-on support to maintain connection with peers and access further support to progress their activities.
  - It is intended that this will form the basis of two sector-specific engagement networks.
  - A conversation took place with the new manager of the Warrington IKEA store, who has showed a keen interest in a local business sustainability network.
  - IKEA are also looking to repurpose old furniture to donate to flood victims.
  - It was suggested that the council consider sending information about the training out to the councils list of suppliers.

c. Newsletter

- Issue 6 performance
  - The latest issue of the newsletter was published in February and has performed well overall with a 48.5% open rate and a 9.9% link click rate. This is slightly lower than average for the newsletters but is overall higher compared with peers.



- The newsletter featured a good range of content and opportunities thanks to the contributions of partners.
- The annual report was the most clicked link, indicating that the report is gaining traction.
- The Let's Go Zero opportunity for free Carbon Literacy training in schools received the second most clicks.
- Preparing for issue 7
  - The Commission were invited to share any new stories or opportunities for the May issue of the newsletter by 18<sup>th</sup> April.
  - It was noted that engagement appears to decrease further down the newsletter, indicating each section should aim to be as succinct as possible.
- Growing the readership
  - There are currently 437 newsletter subscribers. The Commission have set a target to reach 800 this year.
  - Commissioners were asked to consider appropriate networks to promote the newsletter.
  - Some discussion took place about an incoming report on biodiversity net gain (BNG) which is due to go to Cabinet. The report sets out the approach to implementing the new requirements and identifies a number of potential BNG sites in Warrington.
  - This discussion was followed by a suggestion to invite the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) lead to a future meeting to update on delivery of the plan.

#### d. Event opportunities

- The University of Chester are running a staff and student event series called 'Spring into Sustainability' between March-April. There may be an opportunity for the Commission to have a presence.

### 3. Promoting the annual report

- The annual report has now been published, with input from a range of partners.
- The report provides a condensed summary of actions that have progressed in the last year across the five themes of the climate strategy.
- The findings demonstrate that there has been good progress in some areas, such as transport, but less activity in others, such as resources and consumption.

- Commissioners were encouraged to share and promote the report and make use of the opportunity to re-energise discussions about the local climate response.
- A series of posts are being scheduled across the Commission's social media accounts.

#### **4. Taking stock of the commission's membership**

- A review of the Commission's membership was discussed in view of the emerging engagement networks.
- It was agreed that members must attend at least one meeting within a six-month period. A review of current members is to be undertaken.
- Following staffing changes, a new representative from the University of Chester has joined the Commission.
- Contact is to be made with Warrington Voluntary Action to invite a new representative.

#### **5. Partner updates**

- **Warrington Community Energy**

- A grant-funded LED lighting installation is underway at the Gateway.
- A solar installation on the Gateway is still under consideration as a structural survey is needed.
- A new funding bid to support interest-free loans for energy saving measures is being pursued. These would be offered on a 'pay as you save' basis through reductions in energy bills.

- **Chamber of Commerce**

- Local company, Novelis, have recently participated in a pilot to scale the industrial use of hydrogen in their aluminium rolling and recycling plant in Latchford, yielding very promising results.
- Communications have been received from EQUANS who are seeking to sell tidal energy from the River Mersey. If the scheme progresses further, it was suggested that they are invited to present at a future Commission meeting.

- **NHS**

- The latest public sector forum meeting did not go ahead. The next one is scheduled for the end of April.
- Terms of reference have been prepared for the group.

- **Lymm Repair Cafe**

- Lymm Repair Café continues to perform well, with the team celebrating a successful first six months.
- 'Vantr'y' is a new mobile food pantry service based in Warrington, where residents are able to purchase a bag of fresh produce for just 50p.
- The concept is similar to that of the 'Bread and Butter Thing', aiming to reduce food poverty, minimise waste, and increase community resilience.
- Lymm Repair Café are looking to collaborate with Vantr'y.



- **Enterprise Cheshire & Warrington**

- A communications toolkit is being prepared through the NW Net Zero Hub which will share guidance on how to engage with communities on the topic of climate change and net zero.
- Work is progressing on a regional skills pilot, led by Cheshire West. This will focus on skills/training requirements across the northwest as different job sectors transition away from fossil fuels.
- It was noted that the skills needed for nature recovery are often overlooked. Some studies have acknowledged skill gaps related to agriculture and peat, but often ignore nature recovery and biodiversity.
- Planning for a proposed Cheshire and Warrington devolution deal is underway. Government consultation is open until 13<sup>th</sup> April on the priority programme.
- Incoming heat network zoning legislation has led to the creation of a dedicated post within the NW Net Zero Hub team. The new officer could potentially attend a future meeting to discuss heat networking zoning.
- There will be a significant focus on community energy in the near future, particularly with the establishment of GB Energy.

- **Natural England**

- Consultation on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is open until the end of March.
- A number of drop-in sessions are taking place at Time Square.
- The group were asked to consider the consultation and share where appropriate.

- **Warrington Borough Council**

- A piece of work is underway to identify the risks posed by climate change to the council's services, to develop a climate adaptation plan. A series of workshops have begun with officers from across directorates.
- The second Solar Together group-buying scheme is progressing as planned, with around 60 solar installations completed to date.
- The Warrington Carbon Culture project is coming to an end. Efforts are being made to disseminate the findings with interested organisations.
- The proposed central Warrington heat network is progressing into detailed project development stage.

- **Culture Warrington**

- Culture Warrington's Education & Sustainability officer is now a trained STEM Climate Ambassador. This initiative, funded by the Department for Education, aims to support education institutions to develop and implement a Climate Action Plan by the end of the year.

**6. Any other business**

- No other business discussed.

**Next meeting:** Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2-4pm