



Climate Change Centre Reading
17 Newbury Close
RG10 9RT
Berkshire

To

Strategic Environment, Planning & Transport Committee 23-NOV-2016

RE: Meeting 23 November 2016 at 6:30pm in the Council Chamber

Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU

OPEN LETTER: My public reply to a local Lead Councillor's response on our concern - December 7, 2016 (RE:RE: ltr-carl emerson-dam - reading climate change strategy)

Dear Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning & Transport at Reading Borough Council,

Thank you for your answer to my concern about Reading's Climate Change Strategy. I am glad that you agree with the overall aims that we have suggested. However, as we now find ourselves in a Planetary Crisis, it is paramount that your words are put into action as soon as possible. The global greenhouse gas dilemma has been well known for the last 30 years, so there has been ample time to prepare. The time for delivery has now come.

There is a growing mass of **climate city concerned residents** worldwide who need and want to be connected, empowered, and propelled; as well as an ecosystem of **stakeholders** willing to partner with Reading 'glocally', i.e. both at the local and global level. They urgently need to know that they have Reading Borough Council's full cooperation.

Reading has good Public Transport and a well-utilised bus network. However, the congested roads are still a major issue. You are now trying to force through a solution to Reading's longer and longer car queues with the 5-year-old "Park and Ride" solution. However, this is far from adequate. Where is the Cycle Network? Where are the trams or trolley-buses that Reading once had? It seems as if we have been going backwards instead of forward...

Climate Change Centre Reading proposes the following:

Please use existing traffic regulation powers to Prohibit Unnecessary Idling. Also, **Instigate a Monthly Car-Free Work-Day.** Furthermore, invest money in a **Fully Connected Cycle Network**, to be completed by 2025. Also, **Cities are getting increasingly congested due to single-occupancy car trips, focus more on Ride-Sharing.** Finally, aim for a **Zero-carbon Economy by 2030.** NB:, there has been no interest to get on board with several divestment/investment campaigns initiated by green groups, which is highly disappointing. For example, why hasn't RBC come up with a directive that is going to make divesting workplace pension funds from fossil fuels potentially much easier?

Since 2012, Reading Climate Change Centre have yearly proposed that **RBC joins the European Green Capital Awards for sustainable excellence.** However, this fantastic EU opportunity for second cities has been avoided for four years and has resulted in delaying Reading green development with four years. Soon it will be RBC's last chance to apply for 2019 EGCA before Brexit. I urge you to take it.

On top of this, two years ago, Reading was offered to consider a **possible Monorail (Sky train) around Reading**. Climate Change Centre Reading knows at least two contractors that can do the job. We are looking at about three years for planning consent. Where is the action?

Reading Borough Council has had 11 months to prepare and respond to the now valid Paris Agreement (PA), but very little has been done. Neither morally, ethically or in any other way. Where are the city campaigns for energy savings and responsible life-style programmes? Who is the PA contact person for Reading Borough Council?

The Reading Climate Change Strategy papers brought to Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport committee meeting on 24th November are not adequate and need to be revised.

Judging by your response, there seems to be very little will to seek climate innovation, city carbon solutions or any initiatives to **reach zero emissions as rapidly as possible**. There are net zero solutions everywhere. Hundreds of second cities going 100% renewable energy before 2025. So why can't Reading?

Why is the "Reading Climate Change Strategy 2013-2016" not part of the RBC framework on the Reading Council website? Who is the contact regarding soil pollution? Who is the contact regarding water pollution? Who is the contact regarding air pollution? Which department is the contact with regards to carbon budgets and emission reductions? Where are the expert officers?

Who in Reading Borough Council is the climate expert and responsible for leading Reading Carbon Emission Reduction Strategy?

Who can give a proper and adequate response to why the two reports below from Strategic Environment, Planning & Transport Committee 23-NOV-2016 are not effectively engaging with current risks and are simply disengaged from their core task? Especially with regards to all committee meetings since 4th November!

NB: The Paris Agreement was formalised on the 18th December 2015. It has entered force on the 4th November 2016 and is now bound into Law of Treaty. The UK government ratified the agreement on the 18th November 2016.

10.	<p>ANNUAL CARBON FOOTPRINT REPORT, 2015/16</p> <p>A report informing the Committee of continued reduction in the Council's emissions of carbon and greenhouse gases.</p>	BOROUGHW
11.	<p>READING CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY 2013-2020: PERFORMANCE REPORT TO MARCH 2016</p> <p>A report on progress made towards the targets in Reading's Climate Change Strategy 2013-2020, which sets out a vision for Reading to be at the forefront of developing solutions to climate change and for low carbon living to be the norm.</p>	BOROUGHW



Climate Change Centre Reading
17 Newbury Close
RG10 9RT
Berkshire

*“The local planning system must deliver the homes and communities that our nation needs, but it must do so within the context of one of the greatest challenges ever to face our society: climate change. It remains unclear whether the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Paris Agreement resulting from the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 21) held in December 2015 can deliver long-term climate stabilisation, but this report highlights that **England’s planning system is not effectively engaging with current risks and is simply disengaged from its core task of addressing long-term future change. The system remains critically unprepared to deliver both carbon dioxide emissions reduction and the kind of resilience measures needed to deal with the scale of the climate change impacts anticipated in the UK, as identified by the scientific evidence.**”*

Find evidence here, page 59-61:

<https://www.tcpa.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=7d92ec4c-09f7-4b21-9d22-b1aad77fd062>

Since the Paris Agreement last year, we have entered a post-millennium era only to realise the risks of impending climate runaway due to human activity. We hear about mass extinction every day, and more horrors are to come. Reading is at tipping point by not being on-board the Global Agenda! In the new society, we make inclusive and accessible decisions together - “Everything is connected. Nothing exists in isolation”.

Councillor, as a servant of the people you should only serve for the best possible planetary outcome. Action is the word from COP22 in Marrakech. Kindly listen to cities going into a sharing paradigm, away from the delusion of growth and ownership. The compact resilient city is already here. Be bold, embrace and invite new stakeholders and non-state actors. It is time, adopt to modern compact vertical passive (net zero energy) housing standards. Reading needs a de-growth plan, which Reading Climate Change Centre would be happy to consult on. Reading needs to join glocal partnerships in local, regional and global climate urban innovation. Put a hold on greenhouse gas emissions **as rapidly as possible** in the Greater Reading Area **with all means possible**.

The reason the board of “Reading Climate Change Strategy 2013-2016” has failed RBC is because they are not presenting a framework. The RBC need to incorporate the “Reading Climate Change Strategy” as suggested by Reading Climate Change Centre and implement it A.S.A.P. Then the Reading Climate Change Partnership can have more of a community role.

OBJECTIVE 2020: READING BOROUGH TO COMMIT TO ECOLOGY

RBC needs to fast track actions now towards a 100% sustainable Reading. Every Planning Application must have mitigation/adaptation consent and all new-build should be passive housing.

CHALLENGE: SET OUT A CLEAR VISION COMPETITION RDG-2030

for every local resident to get behind and support. With two main criteria: sustainability and climate resilience.

FINALLY: SUPPORT and PARTICIPATE in ECOPRENEURS_RDG CLIMATHON

where we invite Reading's vibrant community groups, students, businesses and residents in the spring of 2017

Councillor, now is your chance to finalise your legacy by giving Reading a clean future. My wake-up call came 8 years ago, when will yours be?

I am looking forward to your concerted action,

Many thanks,

Kind regards,

Carl Emerson-Dam
Climate Change Centre Reading

--

Feel free to ring me or email me any time.

Many thanks, Carl Emerson-Dam

Climate Change Centre Reading / Ecopreneurs for the Climate in Reading

CCCRdg.org.uk (blog)

Phone number. +44 7447 934 700 (Carl)

Email: cccrdg@outlook.com, info@cccrdg.com

Twitter <https://twitter.com/CCCRdg>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/CCCRdg>



For further information: ECOPRENEURS_RDG CLIMATHON's, Climate Organisers in Reading: Carl Emerson-Dam, eco4clim@cccrdg.org.uk or Tanja Rebel - tanjarebel@hotmail.com