



## Forest of Dean Climate Emergency Partnership

### Development Event (Part 2) Summary

#### Table of contents

Development Event (Part 2) Summary .....	1
The HUB model .....	2
FoD Climate Emergency Assembly.....	3
Annex A – Background .....	3
Annex B – Discussion notes for each option.....	4
Ask the council to lead .....	4
Pros .....	4
Cons.....	5
Potential functioning for the partnership under this suggested structure .....	6
FoD Climate Emergency Assembly.....	6
Pros .....	6
Cons.....	7
The Transcoco / FEP Hybrid Model.....	7
Pros .....	7
Cons.....	8
The HUB model .....	9
Pros .....	9
Cons.....	10
Potential functioning for the partnership under this suggested structure .....	10
Other questions or comments .....	10

Following the inaugural development event for the development of a Climate Emergency Community Partnership in July, the Council hosted a part 2 event on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September. The background and context of the development of a partnership in the Forest of Dean can be found in Annex A.

The part 1 event focused predominantly on listening and absorbing ideas. We heard from three speakers and in turn three different partnership examples: David Trevelyan and FEP,



Sue Middleton and Foresters' Forest and Chris Crookall-Fallon from Transition Community Corsham.

The part 2 event, however, focused on discussion and workshopping ideas of a preferred structure and function for the partnership moving forward. Derived from the part 1 event and community feedback four partnership structure options were presented to the 25 delegates on the call and then discussed in breakout groups.

The four options discussed were as follows:

1. Ask the council to lead
2. FoD Climate Emergency Assembly
3. The Transcoco / FEP Hybrid Model
4. The HUB model

In breakout groups the delegates discussed the pros and cons of each proposed option and how this could work in the context of a FoD Climate Emergency Partnership. Many negatives become apparent for option 1 during these discussions and it was quickly written off when no delegates voted for this option during a later poll taken on the evening. Full discussion notes for options 1-4 can be found in Annex B.

There were mixed feelings towards option 3, with many delegates favouring its open and inclusive nature but many raising concerns of it being run by volunteers and the pitfalls this often presents.

There were strong positives for option 4, although not a perfect option, it came out on top, receiving jointly the most votes in the poll alongside option 2.

Following a break, and in plenary style, there was an open discussion of the preferred two options, option 2 and 4. It became apparent that there was a strong consensus of adopting some form of the HUB model (option 4) in terms of the partnerships structure and functioning. However, delegates were keen to see this accompanied by a FoD Climate Emergency Assembly, with the outcomes of which, directing the deliverable actions that the Partnership would take. There was also the hope that by having an Assembly this would capture a cross section of the community that have not previously be involved in environmental groups throughout the district and bring them into the HUB.

Please see below for details of option 2 and 4:

### **The HUB model**

A partnership model run by 5-10 core members (some of which could be paid part-time or full-time roles), with a secretariat, acting as a hub which then consists also of a wider visionary group of 40-50 key local organisations, stakeholders and/or influencers, and then a much wider community group of local residents.



This model would need to be financially supported somehow as the partnership develops, with funding sought on a project case by case basis moving forward. However, there is currently no funding in place.

The HUB (team of core members) would meet potentially monthly to seek practical solutions to the climate crisis, with the ultimate aim to ensure the district becomes carbon neutral by 2030. The HUB would bring in members of the wider visionary group and community group on a project case by case basis, with wider community involvement progressing over time.

### **FoD Climate Emergency Assembly**

A climate emergency assembly is a group of people who are brought together to discuss an issue or issues, and reach a conclusion about what they think should happen. The people who take part are chosen so they reflect the wider population – in terms of demographics (e.g. age, gender, ethnicity, social class) and sometimes relevant attitudes (e.g. preferences for a small or large state).

CE assemblies give members of the public the time and opportunity to learn about and discuss various climate crisis related topics, before reaching conclusions. Assembly Members are asked to make trade-offs and arrive at workable recommendations to tackle the climate crisis and ensure the district becomes carbon neutral by 2030. The assembly would seek to provide workable recommendations to the district council and other existing local groups and organisations but would not action these recommendations themselves. Alternatively the partnership could follow a different model but utilise an Assembly to guide its projects and initiatives.

Such an assembly would likely take place over two to three weekends and be hosted by the by a trusted local partner or district council or. Funding would need to be sought.

Examples: [Oxford Citizens Assembly on Climate Change](#) and [Climate Assembly UK](#).

### **Annex A – Background**

The Climate Emergency (CE) Rapid Action Plan (RAP) identifies that there is a desire amongst community stakeholder to develop a community based CE partnership.

Two questions therefore arise;

- How should a partnership initially be established and function?
- What will its priorities and areas of focus be?

One will have an effect on the other and no doubt a partnership would change and evolve over time.

The principles for CE partnership are set out in the CE RAP:



1. The Council will invite individuals and groups to form a community partnership to support the delivery of action to address the declared climate emergency.
2. The partnership will be independent of the Council.
3. The objective of the partnership, initially, will be to co-ordinate community wide activity to support the delivery of a carbon neutral and climate resilient district by 2030.
4. The partnership shall elect its own chairperson and agree terms of reference and terms of office.
5. The Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency will act as a formal liaison between the community partnership and the Council.

## **Annex B – Discussion notes for each option.**

### **Ask the council to lead**

Give ownership of partnership back to council and council to collaborate with trusted partner and form a Climate Emergency Partnership Trust or CIC (Community Interest Company).

#### **Pros**

- Direct line to Council
- We could have clear and frank conversations, and clear jurisdictions/ responsibilities
- CICs can apply for grants
- Add legitimacy to people who are used to a traditional structures/ roles
- Existing framework for communications- Council does have communications facility which can reach anyone in the district. Outreach from them may have legitimacy/ call to arms.
- If Council had more direct hands on in partnership, making what is possible more deliverable
- Critical partnerships at county and district levels.
- Could activate community; rather rely on relatively disparate groups, some of which are still unformed.
- Financial capacity and records to match funding, demonstrates accounts required to manage funding.
- Hybrid org with Council behind it gets over that problem.



## Cons

- Council politics get in the way...party politics can override decisions. Defines potential problems- local politics of the ballot box. Subject to vagrancies of election results.
- Moves it away from community...becomes more distant and remote. How does it engage the community when it is so formal?
- Would reduce cooperation/ involvement
- Top down rather than bottom up
- We want grass roots direction.
- Puts responsibility onto making a success of it Council (pro as well).
- As individuals, we have independent interests, whether Councillors have broader community interests, which may influence their decisions.
- FEP- lot of work falls on a few people...finding people with that much time can be difficult.
- Mindset problem...Council departments and rigid and rule bound. Eg. Building and housing referred to planning, but planning may not best to respond.
- What if one of the aims/ strategies of the community/ CIC is in conflict the Council?
- Council might be moving into areas that they are unfamiliar with, and poorly equipped to respond to.
- Slightly removed from communities, communications and engagement with communities become more difficult.
- More restricted just to one partner.
- Council's are constrained on who they can get involved.
- Difficult to see how it could hook up the breadth of the community.
- Very narrow charter, not broad enough to capture the wide spectrum of people and interests.
- What happens if we end up with a unitary authority...would it be attached to District or County? If we build it through the FoD, what happens if the district councils are amalgamated?
- Certain legal obligations on Council, accountability ties into Council business which would hold the whole thing back.
- Would create a new sphere of bureaucracy will not deliver at the pace needed
- Substantial costs involved to Council.
- Far down the pecking order of Council responsibilities because it's not a statutory obligation.
- Becomes something that the Council should be doing...trying to get them to do something they can't do.
- Money and grants available to non-gov. organisations, but not always Council.



### Potential functioning for the partnership under this suggested structure

- Collaborating with trusted partner.
- New organisation can have the charter of communicating the engaging the community.
- Larger group of people feed in, with smaller sub/ working groups which feed into the structure.
- Eg. FEP sub groups. Climate change groups would exceed the number of FEP, but could be on more than one group
- Coordinators between Parish and district for geographic spreads.
- Must be able to influence and feed into what the Council is doing (district and county) and hold them to account.
- Behaviour change is fundamental- local groups are going to critical in that respect.
- Assume this would be happening at a district level- and this is a FoD conversation
- If adequately resourced, then officers can get things
- Key vulnerability to political change and the district council becomes unitary....to future proof against these risks, it would transition into a more community based model
- Are we working with the other districts?
- Could this model still facilitate/ host citizen's assemblies?

Risk is that people write it off as a council thing, and it will be hard to change that impression...therefore the short term outcomes from extra capacity would be negated over time.

### FoD Climate Emergency Assembly

#### Pros

- Grass roots based
- Inclusive of those who may not be usually engaged or given voice.
- Involving people other than the usual suspect may be more creative and support 'new' approaches
- Has some general popular support
- Potential to have 'respect' and call on advisors.
- CA could have a strong voice because of make up outside of the established political set



## Cons

- Potentially Talking shop with little teeth
- Not part of our established political process.
- Should have authority to make decisions
- How does selection of delegates take place?
- Selection could take a long time
- Tends to complete and hand on recommendations rather than own them itself and deliver.
- Needs to have political influence

Our CE partnership needs to:

- To make it part of our existing institutes
- A partnership to institute policy action is need
- The implementation of the emergency is needed

## The Transcoco / FEP Hybrid Model

Run by volunteers and open to everyone, this partnership model is formed of a core team of 'elected officers' (e.g. Chairperson, Treasurer, Directors, 'Board' members) and subscription members. The partnership would action projects in five key areas: energy, transport, food and agriculture, recycling and awareness.

The partnership would be an unincorporated, not-for-profit association funded by membership subscriptions, grants and business sponsorship or could become a CIC and apply for funding. The partnership would work with other community groups, town and parish councils, schools, businesses and residents, seeking practical solutions to the climate crisis, with the ultimate aim to ensure the district becomes carbon neutral by 2030.

Open meetings where new ideas and initiatives are discussed and progress is given on all existing projects would likely take place monthly. Sub-groups will be formed to take specific projects forward, with the relevant stakeholders and partnership members involved.

Example: [Transcoco](#), [FEP](#)

## Pros



- Very open and inclusive
- Volunteers running in increases inclusivity
- Subscription secures engagement
- Volunteers would be already actively engaged – groundwork has already been done across multiple areas
- Existing knowledge in the community – draw on this
- Allows for local grassroots level
- Friendly approach and easy to join
- Could have more authority than other similar models as endorsed by council
- Independence from what is happening with local politics – felt to be v. important → allow a sustained voice within the district
- Potential for young people to become involved. They are key stakeholders, perhaps have more time to fill the volunteers. Bought on board at an early stage and skill up on the journey.
- Economic context, relationship with economic activity in the Forest of Dean
- Feels like this model could bring in the health section – very important for covid-19 and climate crisis
- Could include the great and good and with leverage, industries, government
- CIC model funded by the partners
- Funding and resources management
- Thinktank model incorporated to problem solve and consultancy
- Go for a landscape area rather than set existing administrative boundaries
- Go for a national reputation

## Cons

- Concern about paid subscriptions (payment needs to be discussed i.e. £1 and then more donation?)
- Potentially hierarchical? Top down feel.
- May be difficult to get a cross section of people involved. Volunteers certain type of person...- this issue has been raised by Transcoco
- Will it have the weight to be able to bring everyone across the district together? Es. As there is no paid staff?
- Could end up with the same people in the management group – could close doors for new people trying to get involved
- Experience from FEP – can be reliant on the same people
- We have 9 years! Would this model be able to sustain the required action and the requisite skills if drawn from volunteers





- Time lag whilst setting up a non-for-profit, we need action now (hybrid of option 3 and 4?)
- Potential to be chaotic
- Key areas doesn't cover enough areas of what we need to tackle the climate crisis e.g. housing and health (could be discussed at a later stage)
- Worried about possibility of glass ceiling, large interests could have too much influence on small group at the top, grassroots ideas could bounce back and not get proper consideration.
- Concern over volunteers dropping out very easily
- Would it work on district wide scale
- Needs staff

How would you bring in volunteers? And sustain it?

Question over the process of electing officers?

Make sure wider partnership group is heard. All voices heard.

Whatever model is decided upon it has to be able to deliver, be able to persuade others to act.

What authority would this group have over the community and the council? Need to avoid being a talking shop without powers to make anything happen.

## The HUB model

### Pros

- Sustainable as it has a core membership
- Wide section of people but involves others when they have interest in the project
- Wider visionary group but has clear structure that can be understood – can enable the group to have input
- This model will give an opening for some actual work completed
- Core group could be quite professional – knowledge & understanding
- Has a longevity – if independent and a freedom to move in way to draw finance.
- Great strength in our community assets and groups.
- Has the potential for decentralisation.
- Potentially lot of people hours to drive the activity



- Breadth – nature of inclusivity. But the centre needs to clear – also has a lot of power to it. Traditional models haven't got through to community so far so will this model cut through
- It's got weight – ability to consult with wider membership – paid staff to add to that weight. possibility it might deliver
- Maybe ways to change section 106 to support ways to fund this.
- Equal partnerships with the council. Strong links but equal partnership

### Cons

- ? would funding be available
- Needs to be independent of the council – may be DC as a start – this doesn't seem to be the case if with DC in the core?
- Would we need additional resource in the DC – not have the capacity
- Could see the community as a group to inform rather than 2 way process – maintaining dialogue.
- Could be an expensive model to run – costs going into administration.
- Might not be a sustainable model as too much for the core to do.
- Hard to manage
- Is it a top down model?
- Would it be a talking shop – more detail needed – a little woolly – how would the communication be managed.

How much influence will this model give to the local residents into this – they need to be right at the top of the model.

### Potential functioning for the partnership under this suggested structure

A drop in centre would be better to have a physical presence. Reached out to the community quite successfully. Maybe mini hubs – how would this feed into the structure. May be good to look at a local perspective.

Manageable with a mind map that lead to the projects

Invite groups

Education for residents – you need a strong educational side to this so that misinformation is dealt with.

Use the colleges and schools to get interested groups inc Dr's to get good feedback.

Number of trusts that give grant funding.

Business volunteers to support

### Other questions or comments

Possible sponsorship (Ecotricity) – something similar in Stroud



Not clear if this would be a CIC - not clear regarding funding

Got to be run by community.

Are there other groups that are already running this model and learn from their experiences

Who will be setting priorities

Who will be the decision makers? Do the community follow the decisions? Isn't clear enough.

Funding in terms of other developers in the FOD

How would those core members be chosen – a decent cross section of people (not the usual suspects)