

Camden Climate Citizen Panel: Reflection Meeting Notes

Date: Wednesday 21 July 2021, 18.00 – 19.15, MS Teams

Attendees: Anna P, Anna W, Mike, Niall, Penny, Sarah, Shana, Will

From Camden: Abigail Roberts, Jackson Bylett

Apologies: Beverly, Dwayne, Rumi, Victor, Chandrima

The panel received a short presentation from Jackson on the Council's approach for the first annual review of the Climate Action Plan. The panel were invited to provide feedback on:

- The approach / what additional things should be included in the review
- Making the information more accessible

Panel members suggested that the review document would benefit from clear and concise messaging, including a glossary of terms, as well as fewer words and more engaging numbers and infographics to make it easier to understand the scale of the climate crisis and areas that should be of particular focus of carbon reduction for Camden. Where carbon reduction has been achieved it, these figures should be stated clearly and from what date they are comparable from, and what further reduction is required. The time-lag in data reporting should also be explained.

The panel agreed that whilst the document should be user-friendly for all, it is unlikely to be the main source of information for citizens, and efforts should therefore also be directed to creating visual campaigns for social media, with messaging also displayed throughout locations in the borough e.g. billboards, bus stop etc. The panel also agreed that the 'People' theme of the plan should be specifically highlighted in the review, including guidance on what citizens can do on a personal level to tackle the climate crisis. The panel supported the idea of linking the Climate Action Plan with COP26 to re-highlight the importance of key messaging and the urgency that is required to address the climate crisis in Camden.

Panel members were also encouraged to reflect on:

- Why they joined the Citizen Panel/why climate action is important to them?
- Why should the climate crisis be important to everyone in Camden?
- What has worked well in Year 1 of the panel/what could have worked better?
- What should be done differently in Year 2 meetings?

Panel members shared some of their individual thoughts on reflections on their reasons for joining the panel. The panel were in agreement that they felt the scale of the issue had been explained and presented well over the course of the year, with panel members citing that they felt empowered as a result of feedback being taken on board from each meeting.

Panel members discussed the role of the panel – it emerged that although there is a wider understanding that the panel help to assist the Council with how to better communicate and understand the viewpoints of many different residents, there still needs to be some definition on who the panel are being consulted as i.e. Camden residents in a follow up to the Citizen's

Assembly or as local experts. The topic of climate is complex, and the panel has a mixture of citizens with varying levels of climate expertise, therefore there needs to be some consideration for how this is blended, so that panel members who do not consider themselves to be experts, do not feel overwhelmed or disengaged with discussion topics.

Panel members agreed that of the discussions that had taken place, more of a balance was required. The time that the panel have together is time-sensitive, therefore more of a focus needs to be placed on discussing how to solve challenges as opposed to discussing the net zero target and what is not possible – these types of conversations are still important to have, but could be more suited to panel discussions outside of the meeting space. The panel also added that there needs to be further progress made within the Council to breakdown any silos between departments, in order to better align and embed the climate agenda, as this is something that the panel are unable to influence. Panel members suggested that they would be keen to be utilised in more meaningful and varied ways and would like the opportunity to speak to Cabinet/with Councillors to inform them of ongoing panel work.

As the panel are halfway through their two-year term, it was discussed that it would be useful to consider how the current panel roles will be handed over to the panel replacements, to ensure a continuation of progress that can help to address some of the points raised e.g. striking a balance of expertise across the panel. It was agreed that panel members should go away from the final meeting and consider what they, as the panel and individuals, want to achieve in the next year and where they feel they can best offer their interests and expertise, to ensure that the limited time the panel have left together, is utilised in the most effective way. The panel are also encouraged to share any additional thoughts and comments on the bullet points detailed above, with Abi following the meeting.