

# Environmental Transformation FPG Meeting Minutes

**Time and Place:** 15:30-16:30, Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2020, Zoom

**Present:** Ian Barrett, Emma Burlow, Janine Michael, Roy Kareem, David White, Lizzi Testani (Chair), Sue Turner, Savita Willmott, Laura Martin

**Apologies:** Sacha Korsek, Jari Moate, Ryan Munn, Philip Stott, Lucy Gilbert

## 1. Welcome and apologies

- Lizzi welcomed everyone to the Zoom meeting and noted the apologies
- The board provided introductions for their roles and welcomed Lizzi as new chair

## 2. Review of the proposed role of the FPG

Lizzi circulated the proposal paper in advance of the meeting, and provided a brief overview of the proposal which aims to provide clarity and structure, specifying 6 monthly meetings in the morning feeding into the governance board meeting in the afternoon and stipulating some of the proposed activities. Lizzi asked members for feedback on the proposed role for FPG's, frequency of meetings, activities, and asked if this is helpful and feasible:

- Janine noted the proposal was clear and useful; it has built on items that were raised in the December workshop and subsequent meetings with Jari.
- Lizzi, highlighted item 4 in appendix 1 (Role of Funding Priority Groups) and felt commissioning research was more formalised than had been before. Lizzi relayed confirmation from Andy Street (chair of city funds governing board) that the FPG commission would be resourced/funded.
- Janine commented that this FPG had initially developed a research brief to see if we could get a researcher on a separate subcommittee so this does fit the FPG role.
- Lizzi confirmed the research proposal was developed when Ian Townsend was ending his membership and there were concerns regarding committing to managing the researcher. Lizzi is regularly contacted by university researchers and questioned if dedicated research capacity was needed, or if researchers could share what they discovered to see if there was crossover with this FPG. Lizzi noted there could be challenges in finding funding for research.
- In her role as NCGH chair Sue discussed their work with a researcher, and noted the hardest part was specifying what we wanted the researcher to do, and then it was straight forward, just the ongoing day to day support. This research was then shared and some of the research subjects used extracts for subsequent funding applications.

- Savita discussed the challenges of being on the research subcommittee and trying to match what the scheme required with external time scales and requirements. Savita expressed interest in revisiting the research brief, if we could reset to our time scale.
- Lizzi asked members for any comments on the level of research required, quality of engagement, if there is there a minimum level and if a professional academic researcher is required?
- Ian noted that other FPG's focus on one thing, but this FPG focuses on three different things. The earlier work we did on scope for research was broad and shallow, we didn't conclude the range of areas we want to research to add value to city funds.
- Lizzi agreed this was a starting point and the research job description could be evolved in light of the new one city ecological strategy due to be published in September 2020.
- Now we have different plans/priorities coming through Sue questioned if we had a £200,000 pot of money what priorities would we want to focus on? Sacha needs precise information to secure cash from funders.
- Lizzi confirmed the 3 priority areas have been described in the one city ecological strategy, but Covid-19 has also presented issues particularly in the food sector, supply and transport. What is going to happen with people moving away from public transport towards cycling and walking but still using cars when it's raining, there are benefits and huge risks. Lizzi questioned how to progress with solutions/innovations while balancing funding propositions.
- Emma expressed the need to collaborate; the biggest value could be gained by exploring where the synergies are in for example, public transport, poverty, climate change etc. This could enable a bolder view of what we could do with £200,000 rather than bidding for pots of money in a silo. This would be a qualitative piece of work.
- Lizzi referenced Ashton Climate Action Co-Benefits toolkit as a useful framework for city funds and the other benefits including climate action that it delivers for local authorities. Lizzi suggested rather than conducting independent research we could engage the governance board and IAC using existing frameworks.
- Janine supported Emma's idea, overlapping topics creating co-benefits. There is an opportunity to bring together all the different expertise in one FPG and have impact in multiple areas. Although we agreed in the transport terms of reference not to cover sustainable transport within this FPG, if we received a large grant we should look at broader scale impact for the city, potentially grant funding things investible in the future but not now, for example bringing together community energy to an investable programme in 1-2 years' time, when city leap is at a point to bring in investment alongside city funds.
- Lizzi commented this FPG should do 2 things, keep an eye on the horizon for opportunities specified in the terms of reference, and look at outside areas, e.g. sustainable transport. Rather than filling gaps we could provide tools for co-benefits framework, use evidence from the climate strategy to see how a transport solution work, reviewing investable areas and potential for profit making. Lizzi asked members if they agreed we are not advising on transport but balancing areas relating to environment issues.

- Ian commented the FPG had a transport discussion early on and agreed we can offer advice where transport interacts with for example, energy, waste, eco systems. We already have broad scope and need to be careful not to overstretch. John Usher would be a good person to get a broader range of input from. If we were offered £20m we don't know the best place to spend the money, we need a piece of research to focus on where in the system could be improved. The wildlife trust will be reviewing the ecological emergency action plan when it is published in September, it will be interesting to see how it fits within this FPG.
- Lizzi is on the advisory board for LSE's Place Based Climate Action Network (P-CAN) and shared that they are looking to create a database of national investable opportunities. The energy sector is also looking at doing this and City Leap has a community energy focus. Lizzi asked if members had done any work on a database to help with horizon scanning.
- Sue highlighted a problem with the IAC not sharing what they are considering, it is important the areas funded have the most impact in disadvantaged groups, and encouraging FPG's as expert witnessing. The IAC are still holding the line not to show proposals.
- Lizzi clarified the question in reference to appendix 1 item 4di (Recommend organisations/projects based on the expected impact of their project) in the proposal and questioned if this FPG has collected information regarding projects in Bristol before; if not then this is a different role.
- Emma noted that information had not been gathered from a circular economy view, but other cities had done this for example, Glasgow, Edinburgh, London, Brighton and Peterborough. Glasgow and Edinburgh received EU funding to do this and London received partial funding. We do not have a view of city wide waste resources, demographics and resource loads; we could look to other cities for feedback.
- Ian noted this FPG started out by suggesting a list of items, but this is not how it has worked with the IAC so far, we just provide context for consideration. If we produce a list of projects, we would get questions why we are funding one community project and not another, we need to look at need. As Emma mentioned we don't know where the biggest value for money could be made, we need to research and discuss with other cities the role the circular economy has played in getting bids from other companies.
- Lizzi asked if we have information on carbon neutrality, and if there was enough information on this already to remove this from the research list.
- Janine confirmed much of the work has been done to get a picture for zero carbon laid out but how to transition one set of jobs to another requires more depth. Janine highlighted the difficulty in finding areas across all priorities that are investable long term.
- Lizzi asked if there is a way to highlight to the IAC what the opportunities are, demonstrate the gaps in a summary and bring the conversation back to the governance board.
- Janine commented that before we provide the IAC with a checklist of questions, we need to understand how this fits within the wider impact work of city funds, and how this fits with IAC processes and tools. We need a detailed brief of what they need it for and how

it fits within city funds. Janine highlighted appendix 1 item 5 in the proposal, noting that FPG's had not discussed this before and questioned what this would entail.

- Ian raised appendix 1 item 5 in April's governing board meeting and requested the language be softened, recognising that FPG's do not necessarily have capacity to do this.
- David noted the significant work on evidence base from the one city climate strategy, providing a clear idea for the kinds of things that need to happen in Bristol; however, some are difficult to do without government green recovery funds. We need to make space for everyone to discuss where projects that work across strands meet. We need to get research done but don't want to cross the existing ecological research being conducted and transformational change is challenging across the piece.
- Emma agreed with David and suggested making contact with other cities regarding how the circular economy is playing out further down the process in London and Glasgow before we take action.
- Lizzi concluded that members were broadly happy with the role of FPG's as described in the proposal, there was not too much divergence from what they had been doing before, but there were questions regarding specifics on how FPG's can provide insight.
- Lizzi informed members they could still feedback comments on this until the next governing board meeting in June, where Lizzi will present members feedback. The governing board has asked for 2 volunteers to attend the next meeting, Lizzi previously circulated the doodle poll of date options and is now waiting on responses.

**ACTION 1:** Lizzi to share Ashton Climate Action Co-Benefits toolkit with members.

**ACTION 2:** Members to provide any further feedback and comments on the proposed role of the FPGs by 3 June.

**ACTION 3:** Lizzi to attend meeting with Governing board and provide ET FPG feedback on proposed role of FPGs.

**ACTION 4:** Emma and Roy to complete the Unitary Grants Panel doodle poll and attend the next meeting

### **3. Unitary Grants Panel**

- Lizzi referred to the description of the unitary grants panel on point 13 in appendix 1 of the proposal. The Unitary Grants Panel will meet separately from the six-monthly FPG meetings according to when grant funding is available, the timing of application rounds and the need to avoid keeping grant applicants waiting too long for decisions.
- Lizzi described this as a more agile way of working, when funding arrives, the unitary grants panel will be convened with 2 members from each FPG to help make the decision where this will be dedicated across city funds. The next round of grant funding will focus on health and wellbeing. Roy volunteered to form part of the panel and Lizzi asked for an additional volunteer.

- Lizzi highlighted a potential problem with the broad range of this FPG, even with 2 volunteers it will be a limited range of expertise. Lizzi asked if there was a way around this.
- Sue confirmed there is a grant of £700,000 available across all FPG's, which is a nice incentive for volunteers to purposefully spend money. The process is straight forward, there is initial training on impartiality then the panel puts together the grant guidelines, during this time there is the opportunity for the 2 volunteers to consult with other members in the FPG via email. This collaboration usually works well to find solutions. Once the guidelines are decided they are sent to one of the assessors to conduct due diligence, then the panel receive the applications that fit the set remit and meet to review. Sue noted from memory in the NCGH process there were roughly 22 applications and 10 got funded.
- Sue confirmed it is best to keep the same volunteers who set the grant guidelines rather than rotate, then when the next block of grant money comes in the membership can change.
- Emma volunteered to join the panel and Lizzi suggested stepping down from the panel replaced by Roy and Emma as representatives.

**ACTION 5:** Lizzi to investigate issues with Emma not receiving emails

**4. AOB**

- Members gave thanks to Lizzi for chairing

**5. Date for next meeting**

- The next meeting date will be circulated following the confirmed date for the City Funds - Function and Form of the FPG's meeting