

Greater South East Net Zero Hub (GSENZH) Board Meeting - 5 March 2024 Conducted via online conference.

Attendees

<p>Ben Burfoot - (Reading Borough Council) Berkshire LEP (Berks LEP)</p> <p>Nick Bell - Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA)</p> <p>Sheryl French – Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) – Chair</p> <p>Gerry Glover – CPCA Finance Manager for Greater South East Net Zero Hub</p> <p>Natasha Marshall – CPCA Finance Officer for Greater South East Net Zero Hub</p> <p>Swapna Uddin - Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ)</p> <p>Simon Wyke - Greater London Authority (GLA)</p>	<p>Andy Davis - GSENZH Energy Efficiency Contracts Manager</p> <p>Graeme Heron - Greater South East Net Zero Hub- Energy Efficiency Programme Lead</p> <p>Maxine Narburgh – GSENZH - Regional Head</p> <p>Erica Sutton – GSENZH - Hub Support Coordinator</p> <p>Sarah Gilbert – (Oxfordshire County Council) Oxfordshire LEP (OxLEP).</p> <p>Jo Simmons - South East LEP (SELEP)</p>
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Minutes

1. Apologies, Introductions

- The meeting was chaired by Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council.
- Apologies were given by:
 - Ian Barham, Buckinghamshire LEP
 - Robert Emery, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
 - Richard Hall, Consultant for CPCA / Greater South East Net Zero Hub
 - Marsha Robert, Coast to Capital LEP
 - Chris Burchell, EnterpriseM3 LEP
 - Marida Cable-Lewis, EnterpriseM3 LEP
 - Kudirat Garuba, GSENZH Energy Efficiency Programme Management Office
 - Peter Gudde, GSENZH Local Net Zero Programme Lead (North)
 - Alex Rathmell, GSENZH Local Net Zero Programme Lead (South)
 - Joe Winter, GSENZH Head of Operations (Net Zero)
 - Helen Pollock, Hertfordshire LEP (Herts LEP)
 - Nicolette Jeffreys, New Anglia LEP
 - Lisa Roberts, New Anglia LEP
 - Sally Andreou, Nigel Tipple, Oxfordshire LEP
 - Hilary Chipping, South East Midlands LEP
- The meeting welcomed Andy Davis as the new GSENZH Energy Efficiency Contracts Manager.

2. Minutes, Actions and Matters Arising

2.1 Minutes

- The minutes of the previous GSENZH Board meeting 23.01.24 were reviewed and agreed as a true account.

BOARD DECISION: The minutes of the previous GSENZH Board meeting 23.01.24 are agreed as a true account.

ACTION 1. Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council is to sign off the minutes of the GSENZH Board meeting 23.01.24 as agreed.

2.2 Actions

- The actions from the previous GSENZH Board meetings were reviewed and the following updates provided:
- 05.12.23, Action 7: Sarah Gilbert, Oxfordshire County Council to share the specification of the Oxfordshire County Council one-stop-shop Pathfinder Places bid with Alex Rathmell, GSENZH to inform the development of the Able-to-Pay Retrofit strategic project** – Sarah Gilbert, Oxfordshire LEP – We will share the synopsis if we are not able to share the whole document.
- 23.01.24, Action 2: Maxine Narburgh to include learning from the Fleet Decarbonisation strategic project in the GSENZH Board Forward Plan** - Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP - A meeting has been undertaken with GSENZH Energy Project Manager Paul Kemp and the Knowledge Transfer Network. This is an ongoing piece of work. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director - An update about this is on the GSENZH Board Forward Plan and will go ahead as soon as there is enough information to share.
- 23.01.24, Action 3: Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director to bring forward options for reallocation of recruitment and Net Zero Hub underspend to the next GSENZH Board 05.03.24** - Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director - The funding deadline for the Skills Pilots is very tight. GSENZH has arranged with agreement from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) that there can be an extension to use the funding by May/June 2024. Concerning the Local Energy Advice Demonstrator programme, a change request has gone forward to DESNZ for approval to move year 1 budget to year 2. One of the projects has closed because the expected change to the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) regulations on which the pilot was based is not going ahead. This gives scope for reallocation of funds to other projects. Regarding the underspend, this will be covered in the finance update and there is an opportunity for a public sector funding opportunity to be aligned with the new decision-making framework.
- 23.01.24, Action 4: Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director to check the Regional Director Report in the GSENZH Board Pack 23.01.24 and advise the Board whether it can be shared** - Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director – There are confidential details in the report, a summary Hub report for onward sharing will be developed.

4. Finance Report

- The update on finance was provided by Gerry Glover, CPCA Finance Manager to GSENGH. Gerry Glover apologised for not circulating a Finance Report to the GSENGH Board in advance of the meeting, which was due to the pressing need to finalise the finances for the Sustainable Warmth retrofit programme. Gerry Glover then presented the report and highlighted the following points:
- **Commentary on the report** - The first table in the report sets out the spending for this year to end June 2024. The grant income includes £19.79 million for the Local Net Zero Accelerator programme, £1 million for the Community Energy Fund, and £568,809 for the Regional Skills Pilots. Some of this funding will be carried forward. There is also the upfront payment for HUG2 and the Local Energy Advice Demonstrator programme (LEAD). In total there is £46.8 million for this financial year. The gross figure is our spending against this funding.
- Receipts in advance, which amount to £12.6 million will sit on the balance sheet and will be transferred to relevant projects as costs come in. Going forward the tables will show actual budgets. Virements have been gone through, but there are issues where income is not on the accounting system as funds have been received in advance.
- **Home Upgrade Grant Phase 1 (HUG1) and Local Authority Delivery Phase 2 (LAD2)**- We are finalising the outturn. We expect it to be £2 million under the grant level. There is some movement of measures to A&A. DESNZ have approved this going over 15%, but it is now at 21% which needs to be signed off by DESNZ. The £2.1 million underspend will be repaid to DESNZ. There was 20% (£43 million) repaid earlier this year which represents 80% repaid, but £2.3-2.4 million is still to be repaid, plus the underspend of £2.1 million.
- The GSENGH Board had the following questions and comments about HUG1 and LAD2:
- Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council - What does this mean in terms of risk? Gerry Glover, CPCA Finance Manager to GSENGH - The only risk is if DESNZ does not agree to the 21% movement to A&A. If we have to go back to 17% DESNZ will be asking for more money back. Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council - Who holds the risk? Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH Regional Director – This falls onto the contractor who breached the 10% cost cap, i.e. the managing agent. We have given DESNZ verbal weekly updates and DESNZ has given verbal approval to the 21% movement but we also need it in writing.
- **Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2** - Batch payments have gone out but in cash this represents £409,000 capital costs whereas A&A is over £1 million.
- **Community Energy Fund** - Bids exceed the grant fund so then there is no concern about delivery of funding.

- **Cumulative figures** - A table showing the cumulative figures for all years for all projects is not yet ready. Before the finance report is circulated to the GSENGH Board, this table will be included along with information about the budgets now loaded onto the accounting system. Going forward all relevant budgets will be included.

ACTION 4. Gerry Glover, CPCA Finance Manager to GSENGH to circulate the GSENGH Finance Report to 31.01.24 to the GSENGH Board, including a table to show cumulative figures and budgets loaded onto the accounting system.

- GSENGH Board members had the following questions and comments about the finance report:
- Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP - Regarding the £19 million for the Local Net Zero Accelerator are you working up where expenditure will be directed, i.e. to other parts of England? Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH Regional Director – The funding allocated to GSENGH is for £1.9 million for staffing and we are also holding a budget for £3 million for green finance support, which the three pilot areas will draw down from, and GSENGH will be able to benefit from the lessons learned from that area of work.
- Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP - Are we going to have spending delivery issues? Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH Regional Director – It is development work as well as delivery. The West Midlands Combined Authority and Greater Manchester Combined Authority have their pipeline work in a good place. The York and North East Yorkshire Combined Authority is at an earlier stage.
- Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council - Can we have the finance paper in advance for the next meeting? Gerry Glover, CPCA Finance Manager to GSENGH - Yes, the next paper will include figures for 2023-24.

5. Community Energy Fund (CEF)

- An introduction to the CEF was provided to the GSENGH Board by John Taylor, GSENGH Energy Project Manager. Information about the background to the Fund, the first round of applications to it and their assessment and respective recommendations for approval was circulated to the GSENGH Board members with the GSENGH Board Pack 05.03.24, page 26-120, in advance of their meeting.
- The Community Energy Fund is a grant programme from DESNZ for grassroots groups and parish councils for renewable energy and energy efficiency/advice projects. There is a stage 1 grant of £40K available for technical feasibility and a stage 2 grant of £100K for further development of viable projects such as planning, surveys, investment readiness and business plans. It is a two-year programme with £1 million funding per year which breaks down as a £900k grant and 10% administration for GSENGH. The launch of the programme has received an excellent response. The first funding round deadline was 15.01.24. GSENGH received 43 applications of which 31 were suitable for evaluation. The applications were initially assessed and scored by three GSENGH Energy Project Managers. The projects

were then reviewed by the CEF assessment panel, which is composed of local authorities from the region.

- There are three recommendations concerning the Fund:
 - a) The Board is asked to approve the projects in confidential Appendix A set out in the GSENGH Board Pack 05.03.24, which have passed internal assessment and been recommended by the Funding Panel for unconditional approval or approval, based on the conditions outlined therein.
 - b) The Board is asked to approve the funding of projects in confidential Appendix E set out in the GSENGH Board Pack 05.03.24, to the value of £896K out of a total £900K of available funding in 2023/24, to enable the CEF grant to be committed to projects within the funding period. The projects have passed the internal assessment processes and are recommended for funding by the Funding Panel.
 - c) The Board is asked to approve the funding of 8 projects to the value of £375,175 as set out in confidential Appendix E set out in the GSENGH Board Pack 05.03.24, subject to CEF funding being received for 2024/25, these projects will not be required to resubmit to the next funding round.
- The GSENGH Board had no questions or comments about the Community Energy Fund projects recommended for funding.

BOARD DECISION: The GSENGH Board approves the following proposals for the Community Energy Fund:

- a) The GSENGH Board approves the projects in confidential Appendix A set out in the GSENGH Board Pack 05.03.24, which have passed internal assessment and been recommended by the Funding Panel for unconditional approval or approval, based on the conditions outlined therein.
 - b) The GSENGH Board approves the funding of projects in confidential Appendix E set out in the GSENGH Board Pack 05.03.24, to the value of £896K out of a total £900K of available funding in 2023/24, to enable the CEF grant to be committed to projects within the funding period. The projects have passed the internal assessment processes and are recommended for funding by the Funding Panel.
 - c) The GSENGH Board approves the funding of 8 projects to the value of £375,175 as set out in confidential Appendix E set out in the GSENGH Board Pack 05.03.24, subject to CEF funding being received for 2024/25, these projects will not be required to resubmit to the next funding round.
- The GSENGH Board had the following questions or comments about the next steps for the Community Energy Fund projects recommended for funding:
 - Swapna Uddin, DESNZ – When will the grant offer letters be issued by GSENGH?
Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH Regional Director - Letters will be issued before end of financial year, followed by the Grant Funding Agreements. Swapna Uddin, DESNZ – I am content that the letters will be issued before 31.03.24, though signed Grant Funding Agreements would be better. Thank you for your work on the programme and the assessments.

6. GSENZH Governance

- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director advised the meeting that the proposals for future GSENZH governance had been updated following the feedback from GSENZH Board members at the extra GSENZH Board meeting 13.02.24. These proposals were set out in the GSENZH Board Pack 05.03.24 and circulated to GSENZH Board members in advance of the meeting.
- The recommendations to the GSENZH Board from the GSENZH Management were as follows:
 - 1) To agree to the boundaries of the Regional Advisory Boards (RABs) comprising three RABs (North East, North West, South) plus London.
 - 2) To approve the roles and responsibilities of the Regional Advisory Board Chair, Deputy Chair and members.
 - 3) To approve the Regional Advisory Board Terms of Reference.
 - 4) To agree to the progression of the recruitment to the RABs.
- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director provided an individual update on each of the above four elements of the governance process, following which GSENZH Board members made decisions on their approval:

1) Geographical Boundaries

- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director - The geographical boundaries for the RABs have been aligned with the Regional Transport Bodies and will align with the Regional Energy System Planners. I would like the board to confirm that it is satisfied with this proposal. The Roles and Responsibilities for RAB members and chair have been completed as have the RAB Terms of Reference. The next step is to recruit the RAB members and chair and to work on their induction. This work will be done by Local Partnerships.
- GSENZH Board members had the following questions and comments about the geographical boundaries:
- Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP - Will this make a difference to the way in which the GSENZH Energy Project Managers work and will they work across those RAB geographical boundaries.? Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director - The GSENZH Energy Project Managers are already adopting an approach of matrix working across boundaries and taking on thematic specialisms. The GSENZH Local Net Zero Programme Leads will be supporting the Hub's interaction with the RABs. You should not see any difference in the support provided by the Energy Project Managers.

BOARD DECISION: The GSENZH Board agrees to the boundaries of the Regional Advisory Board, comprising 3 RABs (North East, North West, South) plus London, as set out in the GSENZH Board Pack 05.03.23.

2) Roles and Responsibilities – Members, Chair and Deputy Chair

- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director - Purpose: This is about being representative and making recommendations to the main GSENZH board.
- Duty and responsibility: This is about providing strategic guidance and linking with local stakeholders.
- Role requirement: This is about having sectoral and geographical representation, getting local authority representation and having the skills, knowledge and experience for the role. Different levels of seniority will be involved to get a wide range of views, as well as people who can unblock barriers.
- Chair/Deputy chair: The role involves the enablement of discussions across RABs between chairs.
- GSENZH Board members had the following questions and comments on the roles and responsibilities:
- Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council – Are all these roles non-remunerative? Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director – Yes, only the chair receives remuneration.
- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director – There is guidance for members on the key attributes sought, and the Nolan principles are also included. The terms of appointment are three years with the possibility of extension. The expectation is that there will be four meetings per year and there is a requirement to attend. Key stakeholder groups from which RAB members will be drawn are also set out in the document.
- Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council – DESNZ is referred to as BEIS so this needs to be changed.

ACTION 5. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director to change references to “BEIS” into “DESNZ” in the Regional Advisory Board Roles and Responsibilities document.

BOARD DECISION: The GSENZH Board approves the roles and responsibilities of the Regional Advisory Board Chair, Deputy Chair and members, as set out the GSENZH Board Pack 05.03.24.

3) Regional Advisory Boards Terms of Reference

- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director - GSENZH Board members should note section 2.2 of the Terms of Reference, which is about the arrangements for London, which are still to be determined.
- In Section 3, Membership, local authorities are in the majority as a requirement of DESNZ. Climate change partnerships have been defined. The membership has been broadened to be between 8-18. This makes an accommodation for the North East area having a smaller number of counties. It also enables thematic leads to be invited. GSENZH will provide the secretariat.
- GSENZH Board members had the following questions and comments on the Terms of Reference for the Regional Advisory Boards:

- Sarah Gilbert, Oxfordshire LEP – Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire are referred to in the Terms of Reference as the North West, is this likely to cause confusion?
Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director - It would be helpful for the RABs to have sub-regional identity like the Regional Transport Bodies have.
- Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP - This reflects the hard work done on the governance process. Concerning next steps local geographies may prove difficult, for example Berkshire has six climate change partnerships and eight unitary authorities, so how representation is formulated is difficult. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director - Local Partnerships will be involved in recruiting and onboarding.
- Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP - Another question is how will a steer be brought into the GSENZH main Board and influence the nature of the GSENZH main Board decisions? How will the GSENZH team work on this? Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director - We are looking at how agendas and minutes will be developed to feed in and out, so that the Board and RABs get the right level of information.
- Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP - Will Local Partnerships engage with us? Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director – Yes, we will need to engage with Board members regarding the skills matrix and a local analysis will need to be done.
- Simon Wyke, GLA - We do not need extensive minutes for these boards, which reflects their strategic/informative, non-decision-making role. Regarding the climate change partnerships, I understand that this is focused on mitigation rather than adaptation and resilience, but will a requirement for the latter grow over time?
Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director - Adaptation is out of the scope of the Local Net Zero Hubs. These are the Terms of Reference for the three RABS. We can tweak the requirements for London and reflect the difference.

BOARD DECISION: The GSENZH Board approves the Terms of Reference for the Regional Advisory Boards, as set out the GSENZH Board Pack 05.03.24.

4) RAB Progression /Next Steps

- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director – GSENZH will work with Local Partnerships to support recruitment and ways of working for the RABs. We will recruit an independent chair for the main GSENZH Board. For the RABs we will look at the seniority of post and balance of officer types. We would like insights from GSENZH Board members about skills. There is no capacity to do this internally. It is a challenge for local authorities. The junior climate change officers do not bring in a strategic view and other types of knowledge.

BOARD DECISION: The GSENZH agrees to the progression of the recruitment to the RABs as set out in the GSENZH Board Pack 05.03.24.

GSENZH Board Member Nominations and Departures

- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director – Jo Simmons, South East LEP has nominated three upper tier representatives from the area for the GSENZH main Board these are Hannah Scott representing Kent and Medway, Andy Arnold, representing East Sussex and Jo Gay representing Greater Essex. Jo Simmons will

be leaving the GSENZH Board and this is her last meeting. I would like to thank you Jo for all your support and for your help with the governance process.

- Jo Simmons, South East LEP - Thank you Maxine. You have been magnificent in your role and I wish you well.
- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director – Nick Bell will be leaving CPCA and Judith Barker, CPCA Executive Director, Place and Connectivity will be Senior Responsible Officer for GSENZH.
- Nick Bell, CPCA - I have appreciated working with my GSENZH Board colleagues. I will be retiring for the second time. The last CPCA Board meeting that I will attend prior to retirement will be 20.03.24 and Judith Barker will then take over. Judith is keen to meet you and will take part in GSENZH Board meetings from 23.04.24.
- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director – Thank you for your support for CPCA and the GSENZH Board.

7. Programme Update

- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director provided a verbal update on the GSENZH programme at the GSENZH Board meeting 05.03.24:
- **Project Pipeline** - Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director - We have 50 projects on the short list with a value of £728 million, we have 18 projects completed with a value of £143 million. We have a new DESNZ tracker which also records the carbon savings from each project. We have a Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) pipeline of 69 projects with a value of £90 million we have 33 PSDS projects completed with a value of £125.5 million. North Hertfordshire was awarded £7.7 million PSDS funding which followed a 50K strategic project approval by this Board.
- GSENZH Board members had the following questions and comments on the project pipeline:
- Simon Wyke, GLA - The decarbonisation pipeline projects go through a life-cycle of feasibility through to commercial funding and commercialisation and business plan development. Do you break down projects according to maturity? Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director - We use RIBA, Net Zero Go and the DESNZ tracker. We can pull out this information. Most projects that GSENZH deals with are at an early stage of development and when they move forward they come to the GSENZH Board for technical support. Simon Wyke, GLA - It would be good to see how we can split out those stages. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director - Local partnerships is working on a decision-making process for supporting projects so we will consider both maturity and immaturity and also stalled projects so we can bring this insight.
- **Recruitment** - Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director - We have had 16 posts appointed since January 2024. This includes an Energy Efficiency Contracts Manager and an Energy Efficiency Data Analyst and Energy Efficiency Senior Data Analysts. We also have appointed a Local Net Zero Senior Data Analyst and we have

a second interview for a Local Net Zero Data Analyst with the potential to be a Senior Data Analyst. We have also appointed a Hub Support Coordinator to provide business support. We have interviewed for a Strategic Stakeholder Manager but the selected candidate has decided not to take up the post and it will be readvertised. We are going to contract a new recruitment agency for a new phase of recruitment. The roles include a Regional Projects Programme Lead, a Community Energy Fund Development Officer, a Regional Project Officer, a Heat Zoning Champion and a graduate for the LGA scheme as well as recruitment for the new Local Net Zero Accelerator Programme.

- **Local Area Local Energy Advice Demonstrator Programme** - Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director - We are starting to get interesting insights and will start to share this information about how people are engaging with hard-to-reach groups and hard-to-treat properties. These insights might be transferable to HUG2.
- **Retrofit Skills Pilots** - Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director - Four of the pilots have had an extension to June 2024 for their implementation activities. GSENZH Supply Chain Development Manager, Genevieve Dady will provide an update nearer that date.
- **Local Net Zero Accelerator Programme** - Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director – Recruitment to support this programme is critical. We will have seven staff and we expect the roles required to be in Advertised by April 2024. However, we may also make use of interim support. The law firm TLT is to do legal procurement support around green finance. A negotiated procedure may be the best fit.
- GSENZH Board members had the following questions and comments on the Local Net Zero Accelerator programme:
- Simon Wyke, GLA - Could you confirm which three places will be involved in the Local Net Zero Accelerator programme? Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director – Greater Manchester Combined Authority, West Midlands Combined Authority and the York and North East Yorkshire Combined Authority.
- Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP - Will you recruit the roles within those geographies or will it be within the Greater South East region? Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director – For the place-based manager roles it will be better to be within the three geographies, but there will be lots of meetings with DESNZ in London. Business plans will be approved 31.03.2024 and we are preparing the Grant Funding Agreements.
- **DESNZ Forward Planning** - Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director - A workshop will take place 10.04.2024 between the five Local Net Zero Hubs and DESNZ to focus on post-2025 delivery and this will also link to the Spending Review.

ACTION 6. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director to provide an update at the next GSENZH Board meeting 23.04.24 about the five Local Net Zero Hubs and DESNZ meeting on post-2025 delivery and linking to the Spending Review.



- **Heat Network Zone Implementation Champion** - Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director – We are going through a job evaluation and agreeing costs with DESNZ for this role.
- GSENZH Board members had the following questions and comments on the Heat Network Zone Implementation Champion:
- Simon Wyke, GLA - Regarding the Heat Networks Zone Implementation Champion what is their role and is it as an intermediary? Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director – This role will come in before the Heat Network Zone Coordinators are in post. The purpose is to start to raise awareness and engagement with local authorities and to see whether there will be early adopters. The Champions can then transfer into Combined Authorities and thus build capacity. Simon Wyke, GLA - So this would help in the run up to regulation and the recruitment of Heat Networks Zone Coordinators. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director – We do not yet know whether it will include London, this is to be advised. I can share the job description with you if that would be helpful.

ACTION 7. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director to share the job description for the Heat Network Zone Implementation Champion with Simon Wyke GLA.

- Simon Wyke, GLA - We have eight zoning projects in London how many are there in the Greater South East region? Steve Baggs, GSENZH Energy Project Manager – There are three local authorities in the pilot in the Greater South East with the potential for 38 network zones in the Greater South East area.
- **Public Sector Decarbonisation** - Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director – We are working with DESNZ on three intervention options: low, medium and high. We require people with building-fabric expertise to support PSDS. Previously we have used Local Partnerships resource at work peaks. The next round of the public sector decarbonisation scheme is expected in autumn 2024. If we can have additional, dedicated resource for this it frees up the GSENZH Local Net Zero team for other activities.
- **Social Housing Technical Advice Framework** - Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director – GSENZH is to deliver this for an additional year.
- **Net Zero Go** - Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director – There is £400k allocated for the next financial year to this facility. There are quarterly steering group meetings to set work going forward and we feed in via the cross-Hub working group.
- **Events** - Members of the GSENZH team attended the APSE Big Energy Summit 28-29 February 2024 and will have a significant presence at the [Futurebuild](#) exhibition at ExCeL London 5-7 March 2024 including a Retrofit Connections pavilion with seminar programme.

ACTION 8. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director to circulate the Regional Director's report highlighted at the GSENZH Board meeting, 05.03.24.

8. Forward Plan





- An updated version of the Forward Plan was provided to the GSENZH Board in advance of the meeting with the GSENZH Board Pack 05.03.24. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Head highlighted key items:
- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director - For the GSENZH Board 23.04.24 there is the Operational Strategy refresh and the next steps from the GSENZH Board November workshop. We want to ensure that all feedback from the workshop is brought forward.

BOARD DECISION: Include Operational Strategy refresh on the GSENZH Board Forward Plan for 23.04.24.

- GSENZH Board members had the following questions and comments:
- Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP – Is GSENZH Energy Project Manager Paul Kemp going to be producing a report on the fleet decarbonisation work? Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director - There will be an update and Paul Kemp will lead on that.
- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director - At the GSENZH Board 04.06.24, local area energy planning will be covered.
- GSENZH Board members had the following questions and comments on local area energy planning:
- Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP – Can we be proactively in touch with Ofgem about the Regional Energy System Planner roles to support the transition and interaction with local authorities?
- Simon Wyke, GLA - Regarding local area energy planning, can we include with that heat networks zone planning as it is integral to local area energy planning. Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council - There was an indication in the Heat Networks Zone consultation about where these zones would be located so have a look at the consultation. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director - Does the GSENZH Board want to have a working group on local area energy planning? Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP – This is desirable and I have discussed it with Peter Gudde and he is thinking about it. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director - Can you provide an overview from GLA at the GSENZH Board meeting 04.06.24 about local area energy planning and heat network zone planning as it sounds as though your thinking is mature.

ACTION 9. Simon Wyke, GLA to provide an overview of GLA thinking about local area energy planning and heat network zone planning at the GSENZH Board meeting 04.06.24.

9. Any Other Business

- **Public Sector Decarbonisation and Connection Costs** - Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council - Concerning PSDS funding approvals, in Cambridgeshire we are experiencing cost increases of up to six figures from UK



Power Networks for connections on non-domestic buildings such as schools for air source heat pumps for substation upgrades.

- Ben Burfoot, Berkshire LEP – Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks say they need longer despite there no longer being a prohibition on investment ahead of need.
- Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council - We are suddenly being asked for these costs despite this being lifted. Could there be a lag?
- Simon Wyke, GLA – Yes, perhaps business plans lag behind. We have had conversations about investment ahead of need with our DNOs. They have proposed that we work more closely with them to inform their business plans. For example, for implementation of our fire brigade decarbonisation plans, substation upgrade costs are involved.
- Sarah Gilbert, Oxfordshire LEP – We see this as a risk to the Local electric vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) fund and other government-funded work.
- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director - Has DESNZ been made aware of this? GSENZH Energy Project Manager Paul Kemp was working on DNO engagement for stalled projects worth £90 million, does he know about these projects?

ACTION 10. All areas/GSENZH Board members in the Greater South East region that are experiencing difficulty with an increase in connections costs and delays to connections should contact GSENZH Energy Project Manager Paul Kemp to help facilitate a solution.

- **Retrofit and County Council Remit** - Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council - We've been looking at what different levels of government can contribute to the retrofit agenda, for example local authorities deal with planning and housing, combined authorities deal with skills but for county councils what is the remit? What Cambridgeshire County Council can do is have a programme of retrofit around schools estate and supporting community schemes, but what are others doing?
- Simon Wyke, GLA - I agree we should know what the optimal role is at each level of government so that we can avoid overlap and wasted effort and we do what we are best placed to do. We are developing a Retrofit Office for London to understand how we work together in this regard.
- Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council - can we hear more about the Retrofit Office for London?

BOARD DECISION: Add an update on the Retrofit Office for London to the GSENZH Board Future Plan.

ACTION 11. Simon Wyke, GLA to provide an update on the Retrofit Office for London at a future GSENZH Board meeting.

ACTION 12. Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director to add an update on the Retrofit Office for London to the GSENZH Board Future Plan.

- Maxine Narburgh, GSENZH Regional Director – GSENZH sits in a gap where local authorities would otherwise not be able to bid for government funding. Essex County

Council is providing infrastructure support capacity and data analysis which is also helped to fill gaps.

- Simon Wyke, GLA - It is helpful to identify where there is direct delivery and where strategic intervention is needed for example unblocking skills.
- Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH Regional Director - Procurement at regional level works well. We held a procurement event for retrofit suppliers with good attendance. Hertfordshire has developed a retrofit strategy that is within the Growth Board programme and Surrey has developed a one-stop-shop.
- Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council - Once you can define the role you can get on with it I will update you when I know more.

BOARD DECISION: Add an update on the Cambridgeshire County Council initiative to segment retrofit activities at different levels of government (defining the county council remit) to the GSENGH Board Future Plan.

ACTION 13. Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council to update the GSENGH Board when more is known about the Cambridgeshire County Council initiative to segment activities at different levels of government (defining the County Council remit) to support retrofit.

ACTION 14. Maxine Narburgh, GSENGH Regional Director to add to the GSENGH Board Future Plan an update on the Cambridgeshire County Council initiative to segment activities at different levels of government /the County Council remit to support retrofit.

10. Dates of Future Meetings

BOARD DECISION: The next regular meeting of the GSENGH Board is scheduled for 23 April 2024, 10:00-12:30. The meeting is to take place virtually. The chair is to be confirmed and a volunteer is needed.

ACTION 15. GSENGH Board members to consider volunteering to chair at the next GSENGH Board meeting 23.04.24.

- Subsequent Board meetings are scheduled to take place virtually, 10:00-12:30 on the following dates:
 - 04 June 2024 - A meeting chair is to be confirmed and a volunteer is needed.
 - 16 July 2024 - A meeting chair is to be confirmed and a volunteer is needed.
 - 03 September 2024 - A meeting chair is to be confirmed and a volunteer is needed.
 - 15 October 2024 - A meeting chair is to be confirmed and a volunteer is needed.
 - 03 December 2024 - A meeting chair is to be confirmed and a volunteer is needed.
 - 21 Jan 2025 - A meeting chair is to be confirmed and a volunteer is needed.

11. Close

- Sheryl French, Cambridgeshire County Council as meeting chair, thanked GSENGH Board members for their participation, and on behalf of the GSENGH Board, thanked



departing member Jo Simmons, South East LEP for her contribution to the Board and wished her good luck for the future.

Minutes approved as a true and accurate record by Ben Burfoot, Reading Borough Council.

SIGNATURE	DATE

