

Press Release

Climate Change Action for Air Quality conference 2023

Central England Air Quality People's Chamber (CE-AQPC) - www.cwairquality.com

The emphasis of the conference this year is on the government and the local councils **Net Zero plans**. Almost all councils have now drafted their Net Zero Plan and this is the first time we have a Minister responsible for Net Zero.

The CE-AQPC (www.cwairquality.com) has been involved with interacting with government ministers, local MPs, many councillors, academics, Engineering and medical profession to identify areas that the local communities and resident associations, businesses and individuals with a view to help the local, national and international efforts in reaching the stated pollution targets; but also to ensure the global warming is no longer a threat to mankind. The projects involved a climate change school competition, a series of STEM projects for schools, developing projects for college and university students, helping to promote Engineering institutions net zero activities by engaging with schools, universities and the local communities through actual projects, lectures and workshops. Some of the projects were classified as outstanding such as C4FF contributions to several national and international papers including the IMechE clean transport and work on GreenShip which was submitted to the EU. The work on reliable locally made air quality sensor is continuing. The winners of the national climate change action for air quality school competition sponsored by CE-AQPC, IMechE and C4FF were two young ladies who were presented with a certificate and two prizes, one them and one for their school at the IMechE Dinner function organised to celebrate the Institution's 175th Birthday. Some of the activities can be viewed at the CE-AQPC website or for instance at <https://www.marifuture.org/Publications/News/October-November2022News.pdf>

With regard to the Government actions, the recent efforts primarily focused on the impact of global energy supply disruptions that are being weaponised both by the West and the East. Such disruptions have led to a surge in household bills and slowed economic growth across the globe. To this end, the UK government has intervened to mitigate these effects by covering around half of the typical energy bill and plans to expand the use of renewables, revive nuclear power and build new industries such as carbon capture, which is expected to create jobs across the country, provide new opportunities for British businesses at home and abroad, and endure the UK intention of reaching net zero by 2050. The emphasis is on accessing cheap, abundant and reliable energy as the foundation for a thriving economy hence the new focus on Energy Security but trying to accelerate the move to cleaner, cheaper, and home-grown energy through strategies such as the Green Finance Strategy. The government has already announced a series of measures aimed at bolstering its efforts to boost the UK's energy supply, cut carbon and drive bills down. Among the key initiatives are a commitment to carbon capture usage and storage (CCUS) and a £160 million fund to support port infrastructure projects to kickstart investment in the UK's emerging floating offshore wind industry, while the first tranche of green hydrogen production projects is set to receive backing under the £240 million Net Zero Hydrogen Fund. This together with the fifth round of the UK's Contracts for Difference scheme, aimed at incentivising investment in renewable electricity, will be backed by a budget of £205 million and the new competition to select the best small modular reactor technologies will, it is said, to help the UK towards the set Net Zero targets in 2030 and 2050. In parallel the government is speeding up the planning process to attract investment, reforming it to enable the building of more energy infrastructure, including solar power and offshore wind projects, more quickly. Other measures include more support for energy efficiency by reducing reliance on fossil fuels to heat buildings with a £30 million Heat Pump Investment Accelerator as well as boosting the UK's electric vehicle charging points and infrastructure with an investment of over £380 million and. The most potent tool is the UK Export Finance provided with an extra £10 billion capacity to boost exports, including from the UK's world-leading clean growth sectors. **The question is are all these efforts going to reduce carbon emissions by 68% from 1990 levels by the end of the decade as pledged in Paris Agreement?**

Climate Change and Air Quality affects us all, so if you have something to say or wish to hear the views of the Government, local politicians and specialists on recent actions regarding Net Zero and the reactions from the local communities and many organisations and individuals from a range of background please register for the conference by writing to Lena at lena_kendall@yahoo.co.uk. Attendance to the conference is free and refreshment and lunch is provided.

Professor Reza Ziarati - Chair of CE-AQPC