

A Green New Deal from the City Up

Investigating local institutional capacity to advance Green New Deals
in the UK: a case study of Brighton and Hove

Lauren Sellers

Supervisors

Jenny Palm

Frans Libertson

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Abstract

The Green New Deal (GND) is an idea that has mobilised civil society in the United Kingdom (UK), leading to calls for a publicly led transformation of society away from fossil fuels. Despite the widespread support for a GND in the UK, government action at the national level remains stagnant. The recent burst of energy in local climate politics, with over 75% of local authorities in the UK declaring climate emergencies suggests that the enthusiasm around a GND could lead to policy implementation at this level of government. However, councils in the UK have experienced years of budgetary cuts and restraints. This has limited their institutional capacity to act. Therefore, this study aims to analyse the current institutional capacity of local authorities through a case study of Brighton and Hove. This is an apt case because the council has a high level of climate ambition. Therefore, the lessons learnt from it will apply to other councils as they progress with their climate action. I conducted interviews with council members and employees and experts, as well as observing meeting and document review to deduce the institutional capacity of Brighton and Hove council.

I established that institutional capacity exists in Brighton and Hove that can and is being directed towards the goals of a GND. This is despite the varied interpretation and commitment to GND framing in the city. However, I found that institutional capacity in Brighton and Hove and other local authorities in the UK is shaped to a large degree by the constraints on funding and power put in place by the central government, illuminating some useful changes that could be made to national policy. Despite these constraints, local councils can pursue the goals of a GND without changes to national policy and legislation.

Keywords: Green New Deal, Institutional Capacity Building, Community Wealth Building

Executive Summary

After many cycles of reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) it has become clear that avoiding the worst effects of climate change demands a drastic cut in emissions over the next 12 years (Pettifor, 2019). ‘It would be difficult to overstate how dramatic this trajectory is. It requires nothing less than a total and rapid reversal of our present direction as a civilisation’ (Hickel, 2018). It is armed with this knowledge and this rallying cry that NGOs, think tanks, unions, politicians, and school children have directed their energy towards the societal and economic transformation required to achieve these emission cuts. One proposal for transformation that has arisen from civil society is the Green New Deal (GND), which originated and gained traction in the UK and US and inspired the European Green Deal. The recent prominence of and widespread support for the GND makes it an exciting and essential subject for study. I focused this study on the UK as the birthplace of the GND and, therefore furthest along the timeline in the concepts’ development and spread through civil society, academia, and government.

The most recent report of the IPCC, Working Group II highlighted the importance of public financing for the decarbonisation of the economy, both for the initial financing and in order to leverage private financing (IPCC: The Working Group II, 2022). The report also outlined how essential it is to build capacity in governments at all levels. In the UK there is clear desire for GND style transformation in civil society. This support can be observed both explicitly through campaigns and implicitly through the public favouring the policies that constitute a GND. In particular, it has been explicitly acknowledged in Brighton and Hove with the unanimous support for a GND motion (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2019). The GND provides a useful policy framing that currently garners support for a publicly driven, democratising, strategic green transformation. However, it is clear that at the moment the current government is not willing to implement a GND of the style demanded by civil society, this induces a shift in focus of advocates for a GND to the possibilities for a local government driven GND (Lawrence, 2019).

With over 75% of UK local authorities showing their dedication to climate action through declarations of climate emergency they seem like a possible candidate for climate action. The prospect of local government as a tool for climate action, must be grounded in the realities that face these institutions. Councils in the UK have experienced years of budgetary cuts and restraints which makes the course of action a rocky one that has to be navigated carefully (Shaw & Theobald, 2011). Therefore, it is crucial that through the process of pursuing strategic action local authorities develop the institutional capacity to be able to lead and deliver climate policy.

It is argued that local governments are a key player in the ambition to reduce the release of anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions (Wretling & Balfors, 2021). This argument rests on the foundation that local governments are uninhibited by complex, slow international negotiations, they have the closest proximity to citizens, and they are responsible for a large range of service provisions and planning (Wretling & Balfors, 2021). One paper looked at how the institutional capacity of local government affected local climate change adaptation (Aall, 2012). They found that increases in local institutional capacity resulted in local governments adopting further environmental policy than those dictated at the national level, taking on additional climate responsibilities.

The aim of this study is to find out what strategic possibilities exist at the city level to pursue the goals of a GND style transformation. The importance of local government for climate policy implementation combined with the widespread support amongst UK civil society for a GND style transformation, makes a compelling argument for investigating the local level as a site for progressing this goal. I aim to look specifically at local government as the key actor, given this

aligns with the GNDs emphasis on a publicly led transformation. To illuminate what strategic possibilities exist, I establish the existing institutional capacity in Brighton and Hove City Council with a focus on a potential GND. To do so I explored the following research questions:

RQ1: What institutional capacity exists in local government to support a Green New Deal style transformation in Brighton and Hove?

SRQ1: How can the goals of a GND be advanced in Brighton and Hove by local authorities using this institutional capacity?

RQ2: What can be done at the national level to enhance the ability of the local level to pursue a GND style transformation?

To answer these research questions, I utilised case study methodology to assess the institutional capacity available to the local council to advance the goals of a GND in the city. I conducted interviews with councillors, council officers and experts from inside and outside of Brighton and Hove Council. Interview data was complemented by observations of council and committee meetings as well as documents review. This provided me with an overview of the climate and GND strategy of the council and allowed me to determine the institutional capacity available.

I defined the goal of a GND according to the plan sketched out by the think tank Common Weal (McAlpine et al., 2019). The Common Home Plan describes the GND they produced as a comprehensive plan which outlines “a process of public planning, organised and implemented by public bodies and paid for out of the public purse” (p. 9). The GND was created using some guiding principles, such as collectivising the solutions to climate change, utilising public funds, and only including the use of technology that currently exists (whilst future proofing for the development of better technology).

I found that the framing used by Common Weal and the framing adopted by the council shared many similarities, but some key differences. Crucially, they contrasted in whether they saw the GND as the plan for decarbonisation, or whether it was one aspect of a plan that emphasised green jobs. Perhaps more importantly, I found that they differed in the commitment public institutions and funding as the drivers of the GND. Common Weal is firmly committed to the publicly led transition. Whereas the council included more public-private financing like LEPs. Furthermore, it was revealed that the Brighton and Hove plan to decarbonise the economy had far less focus on democratisation and community ownership. Other conceptualisations of a GND saw democratisation of the economy as a key strategy to shape the economy to prioritise the needs of people and planet over profit. Additionally, it became clear that the council does not have the regulating power that a central government.

Despite these differences in framing, I established that institutional capacity exists in Brighton and Hove that can and is being directed towards the goals of a GND. However, I found that institutional capacity, in Brighton and Hove and in other local authorities in the UK is shaped to a large degree by the constraints on funding and power put in place by the central government. Which has illuminated some useful changes that could be made to national policy. Despite these constraints, local councils can pursue the goals of a GND without changes to national policy and legislation.

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Abbreviations

GND = Green New Deal

LTN = Low Traffic Neighbourhoods

LEP = Local Enterprise Partnership

CCC = Climate Change Committee

IPCC = Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

1 Introduction

After many cycles of reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) it has become clear that avoiding the worst effects of climate change demands a drastic cut in emissions over the next 12 years (Pettifor, 2019). ‘It would be difficult to overstate how dramatic this trajectory is. It requires nothing less than a total and rapid reversal of our present direction as a civilisation’ (Hickel, 2018). It is armed with this knowledge and this rallying cry that NGOs, think tanks, unions, politicians, and school children have directed their energy towards the societal and economic transformation required to achieve these emission cuts. One proposal for transformation that has arisen from civil society is the Green New Deal (GND), which originated and gained traction in the UK and US and inspired the European Green Deal. The recent prominence of and widespread support for the GND makes it an exciting and essential subject for study. In particular I am interested in the UK as the birthplace of the GND and, therefore furthest along the timeline in the concepts’ development and spread through civil society, academia and government. The precise details of a GND style transformation will be explored further in sections 1.2 and 1.3. Firstly though, I outline the background of the GND in expanded detail.

1.1 Background of the Green New Deal

Now that I have introduced the GND as one of the calls for societal transformation that has emerged from the environmental movement, I will outline the history of the GND in greater specifics. Given the GND conceives of the government as an actor that should intervene to progress climate action it follows that they require a government that is favourable. At present, key advocates of the GND have said that the key to achieving a GND is winning a government that will implement one (Green New Deal UK Organiser, personal communication, 10 December 2021). The focus on influencing or winning a GND government can be seen within the strategies of key groups, such as targeting the Labour Party to get the GND into the 2019 General Election Manifesto (Labour for a Green New Deal, 2018). Emerging from another advocacy group, there is a cross party parliamentary group aiming to galvanise support across the political spectrum, the goal here ultimately is to influence the government of the moment in favour of GND style policies (Green New Deal Group, 2022).

It has been argued that the Conservative Party under Boris Johnson has made some progress in committing to climate action, however their ideological commitment to the free market economy and avoidance of interventionist strategies suggests their distance from GND style transformation (Bailey, 2019). Furthermore, the absence of a single Conservative Parliamentary member in the cross-party parliamentary group reinforces this argument. There has also been increasing doubt that Keir Starmer, Leader of the Labour Party will maintain his manifesto commitment to a GND (Chaplain, 2022). With the next general election in 2024, and with the chance that the new government would pursue a GND being uncertain it is key to look elsewhere to advance the goals of the GND. This brings us to the field of urban studies, and cities in particular as the relevant site for climate policy development and implementation. In the UK, there has been a recent focus on local government as a political force to tackle climate change (Gudde et al., 2021). Since 2018, 75% of UK local governments have declared a climate emergency, this was in response to the IPCC Special Report 15 and the resulting increase in public pressure (Gudde et al., 2021; IPCC, 2018). In 2020, the local council for the city of Brighton and Hove (formerly two separate towns that conjoined to form a unitary authority which gained the status of a single city in 2001) passed a motion in support of a GND nationally and at the local level (Councillor Heley & Councillor Hills, 2019). The activities of the council over the two years since this motion passed, provides a chance to study the opportunities and obstacles to local level implementation of ambitious climate action plans. In order to study the

city as a site of action, I will analyse the actions and opportunities of Brighton and Hove Council using institutional capacity building. This framework allows me to assess the current institutional capacities that the council can and is currently drawing from, as well as investigating the impact of the GND motion that passed as a result of mobilising these institutional resources and capacities.

1.2 What constitutes the Green New Deal?

Having outlined the importance of the GND, I now turn to the substance of the GND. Given GNDs have arisen from networks and organisations that have designed and advocated for them, there is significant variation between them. This generates a focus on the concrete planning and commitments made in relation to GND style plans in order to understand how the abstract visions are translated into reality. This directs the attention of advocates towards commitments and policy implementation. Furthermore, there is recognition that due to COVID-19 we have seen a shift in macroeconomic policy in favour of greater government intervention. However, advocates of the GND are concerned that the wave of fiscal stimulus and utilisation of macroeconomic policy in response to COVID were merely short-term consequences of the pandemic (Kedward & Ryan-Collins, 2021). This means that there is a risk that the focus on and perceived necessity of economic transformation may be lost during the recovery from the pandemic. It is thereby crucial to study the discourses that shape GND advocacy, which is included within the institutional capacity building framework under the title: frames (Healey et al., 2003). Frames refer to the understandings “which shape conceptions of issues, problems, opportunities, and interventions, including conceptions of place” (Healey et al., 2003). These frames will shape the type of GND that is pursued and eventually implemented. Within the cycles of GND development it can be observed that each iteration demonstrates differences in their understanding of institutional constraints, decentralisation, ownership and their articulation of goals and strategies. The variations seen amongst GNDs is explored further in section 5.1 with particular reference to the contrasts seen between the efforts in Brighton and Hove and the academic conceptualisations of GNDs. One paper arguing for a feminist GND in the UK, identified the following themes of prominent GND proposals (Cohen & MacGregor, 2020):

- Decarbonising the economy
- Democratising the economy
- A ‘socially just transition’
- Preserving the natural environment
- Reform of finance and banking systems
- Governance and oversight
- International responsibility

These common themes are emphasised to greater or lesser extents, and the ability of an advocacy group to include them depends on the position of the group in relation to government. Essentially, the likelihood that the group will have to implement their proposal impacts how far the proposal departs from mainstream politics (Cohen & MacGregor, 2020). For the purposes of this paper, the GND definition will be underpinned by the principles outlined in the Our Common Home Plan, which is thus far the most comprehensive articulation of the GND in the UK (McAlpine et al., 2019). It is particularly useful because the plan has been fully costed, which provides some concrete measure against which to assess current commitments and actions. The Common Home Plan describes the GND they produced as a comprehensive plan which outlines “a process of public planning, organised and implemented by public bodies and paid for out of the public purse” (p. 9). This echoes a further important sentiment of GNDs which is that they should form a publicly led strategy to plan and execute the decarbonisation of the economy. Pettifor, as one of the original authors of and leading figures shaping the GND,

states that the GND demands major system change (Pettifor, 2019). This necessitates economic and ecological change requiring structural changes not only behavioural, community or technological change (Pettifor, 2019). The idea behind the GND that was born in the UK in 2008 was built on the understanding that the economy, finance, and ecosystems are closely connected and that achievements in relation to protecting ecosystems cannot be achieved without transformation in other sectors. The overhaul of the economy required for effective decarbonisation, can only be achieved if the financial sector is subordinated to work for the interests of society and the planet (Pettifor, 2019). In most iterations of the GND, the power of public investment and coordination are put forward as the logical drivers of decarbonisation. It is argued that these combined efforts can achieve such ambitious goals at the speed, scope and scale required to meet the emission reduction targets outlined in the Paris Agreement (Aronoff et al., 2019). Part of the attraction of adopting the term GND for the purposes of this paper, and in Brighton and Hove is that it links action at the local level to the national and international movements working on systemic transformation to achieve environmental and socially just ends. In the UK the ability of local government to advance many of their goals is closely tied to policy at the national level, it is therefore valuable to adopt a shared policy framework such as the GND.

1.3 What the Green New Deal is not

The GND exists in opposition to an environmentalism that emphasises consumer choice, lifestyles and the actions of the individual (Bell & Bevan, 2021). Pettifor (2019) presents forcefully, that environmental advocates have for too long advocated for individual action (such as change your lightbulbs) or community action (recycle, reuse, reduce, localise). In contrast to the neoliberal notion that it is the individual and not the state that should be resilient, the Economist (2019) argued that the new version of the GND that came about in 2019 in the US which has since inspired similar ones in the UK “is an outright rejection of the orthodox economic approach to climate change”. In this new GND framing, the climate emergency is not a market externality to be fixed through pricing, but rather it is part of a social crisis. Such crisis can be addressed only “by redistributing economic and political power” (The Economist, 2019). Pettifor (2019) argues that the systemic change needed across sectors at the global and national level requires state action. This is not to say that the GND precludes action at the individual level, however it is key to understand that the GND aims to facilitate action through the coordinated action of the state. It is likened to the efforts poured into a post war recovery, or a war time preparation (Pettifor, 2019). The GND moves in force against a kind of green austerity, it combines the fight against climate change with the necessity to tackle social inequalities and in doing so builds public support to foster radical change (Aronoff et al., 2019, p7). Aronoff *et al.* (2019) also clearly distinguish the GND from what they describe as a “faux Green New Deal” which aims to harness capital to be redirected for climate benefits through research and development, moderate subsidies, and carbon pricing. They, argue that carbon pricing should be a secondary tool which complements the principal strategies which are public spending, coordination, and regulation with the goal of decarbonising whilst simultaneously raising the general standard of living. This is based on the argumentation that without providing affordable and accessible no-carbon alternatives, increasing the price of carbon usage will be both unjust and cause sharp political backlash.

1.4 Problem definition

In broader terms, I have sketched out the reasons to look at the GND as a plan to decarbonise the economy. Additionally, I have demonstrated that the city Brighton and Hove can provide a case study for looking at the implementation of ambitious climate action. This brings me to look

in finer detail at the research gaps in the areas as well as highlighting the role that this area of study can play in advancing climate action at the local level. Furthermore, I orientate the importance of local governments as a public institution able to direct their resources and capacities towards climate mitigation goals, in the absence of national government ambition.

The most recent report of the IPCC, Working Group II highlighted the importance of public financing for the decarbonisation of the economy, both for the initial financing and in order to leverage private financing (IPCC: The Working Group II, 2022). The report also outlined how essential it is to build capacity in governments at all levels. In the UK there is clear desire for GND style transformation in civil society, as has been outlined above. This support can be observed both explicitly through campaigns and implicitly through the public favouring the policies that constitute a GND (Buller, 2020; Head of Policy and Research at Common Weal, personal communication, 15 February 2022). In particular, it has been explicitly acknowledged in Brighton and Hove with the unanimous support for a GND motion (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2019). The GND provides a useful policy framing that currently garners support for a publicly driven, democratising, strategic green transformation. However, thus far this support has been met with little more than rhetorical support, or a continued emphasis on making targets far into the future (Buller, 2020; Head of Policy and Research at Common Weal, personal communication, 15 February 2022). The UK Prime Minister, Boris Johnson outlined his 10 step plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, which plays into the framing of the GND and was previously the title adopted by the Labour Party for their GND style plan (The Labour Party, 2019). The 10-step plan outlined by Boris Johnson pales in comparison to the detailed and costed plan laid out by Common Weal. Johnson's plan was supported by a £12 billion promise of public spending anticipated to spur a further £36 billion of private sector investment. This amounts to a total of £48 billion which does not even cover half of the yearly extrapolated cost of £100 billion calculated by the Green New Deal Group from the comprehensive plan for Scotland by Common Weal (Green New Deal Group, 2020a; McAlpine et al., 2019).

It is clear that at the moment the current government is not willing to implement a GND of the style demanded by civil society, this induces a shift in focus of advocates for a GND to the possibilities for a local government driven GND (Lawrence, 2019). Furthermore, it has been argued that the electoral failure of the GND in 2019 provides an increased incentive to pursue local GNDs (Vansintjan, 2020). It was argued that the translation of the GND to the local level will help to garner support as it turns the abstract into more tangible and therefore desirable outcomes. It has been argued by the Climate Change Committee, the independent advisory body to the government on climate change, that local authorities will be key actors in implementing climate policy (Climate Change Committee, 2020). It is therefore important that the ability of local authorities to drive and implement climate policy is investigated. Around 75% of UK councils have declared a climate emergency, with accompanying carbon emission reduction targets (McInroy, 2020). This, combined with the wider public support makes local councils a crucial target for thinking about the strategic possibilities of a GND. It is also an arena that is less developed than the GND policy and strategic thinking at the national level, this can be seen by the national focus of most GND policy proposals (Aronoff et al., 2019; Elliott et al., 2008, 2013; Green New Deal UK, 2021; Labour for a Green New Deal, 2018; Pettifor, 2019). The recent emergence of local government as a site for climate action and the enthusiasm of local government, alongside the stagnation of action at the national level, makes cities a worthwhile target for study.

Having outlined the exciting prospects of local government as a tool for climate action, I must ground this enthusiasm with the realities that face these institutions. Councils in the UK have experienced years of budgetary cuts and restraints which makes the course of action a rocky one

that has to be navigated carefully (Shaw & Theobald, 2011). Therefore, it is crucial that through the process of pursuing strategic action local authorities develop the institutional capacity to be able to lead and deliver climate policy. This was argued by Aronoff *et al.* (2019) that a key factor in achieving a successful GND, that the implementation of a GND hinges on building capacity in public institutions. Additionally, this connects to the GND framing as outlined above, as placing an emphasis on building resilient public institutions as opposed to relying on the resilience of individuals.

Brighton and Hove is a case of a council with large ambitions, they have declared a climate emergency, passed a motion supporting a GND for the city and developed plans to become climate neutral by 2030 (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021b). It therefore makes the ideal case for examining what can be done at the local level where ambition is not the inhibiting factor. This allows more in-depth investigation of the institutional obstacles and opportunities, rather than becoming absorbed by the political constraints. The conditions in Brighton and Hove have made it a site of several studies investigating sustainability transitions (Durrant *et al.*, 2018; Yalçın & Foxon, 2021). Particularly studies looking at the influence of civil society on local government. In the study by Durrant *et al.* (2018), actions of the local government as a driver of sustainable transition were explicitly excluded from the study. This makes room for this study which intends to look specifically at the strategic possibilities for local council using the framing of institutional capacity building.

Institutional capacity building allows the study of the GND using the perspective of place based, relational policy analysis. The framework is designed to capture the resources and capacities available to the local council, whilst simultaneously investigating how successfully these capacities have been mobilised in pursuit of the innovation goal. In the case of Brighton and Hove, the goal in mind is the GND. The motion that passed in council proposed a two-fold approach towards the goal, it proposed support for a GND at the national level as well as aiming to investigate and pursue a GND at the local level (Councillor Heley & Councillor Hills, 2019). This second goal was in part put on pause due to COVID (Brighton and Hove Sustainability Council Officer, personal communication, 7 April 2022), and therefore largely the GND framing was incorporated into the wider sustainability strategy of the city. This research therefore also acts to continue the second goal of this motion, to specifically investigate the strategic possibilities available to the local council.

1.5 Aim and Research Questions

The aim of this study is to find out what strategic possibilities exist at the city level to pursue the goals of a GND style transformation. As outlined in the section 1.4, governments at the local level are key drivers and implementers of climate policy. When combined with the wide support amongst UK civil society for a GND style transformation, a compelling argument can be made for investigating the local level as a site for progressing this goal. I aim to look specifically at local government as the key actor, given this aligns with the GNDs emphasis on a publicly led transformation. To illuminate what strategic possibilities exist, I intend to establish the existing institutional capacity in Brighton and Hove City Council with a focus on a potential GND. To do so I explored the following research questions:

RQ1: What institutional capacity exists in local government to support a Green New Deal style transformation in Brighton and Hove?

SRQ1: How can the goals of a GND be advanced in Brighton and Hove local authorities using this institutional capacity?

RQ2: What can be done at the national level to enhance the ability of the local level to pursue a GND style transformation?

1.6 Scope and delimitations

The research questions partially indicate the scope of this study, in that I am investigating institutional capacity within the city council. Furthermore, due to the GND focus only the actions of the council since the motion was proposed in 2019 will be looked at in this study. The empirical materials looked at include the council's policy documents and motions, as well as interview data from eight interviews and observation material obtained through looking at the recordings of three key council and council committee meetings.

The boundaries of this study are also in part drawn geographically, by focusing the case study on Brighton and Hove (figure 1) the possibilities for a local GND are narrowed to this locality. Although the lessons may be applied more broadly, my investigation was limited to this city. The choice of a case study further limits the scope and then type of methodology used. There are discussions in academia about the generalisability of case studies (Creswell & Creswell, 2017, p. 276). However, as will be outlined in more detail in section 3.1.3, Brighton and Hove is a unitary authority so many of the lesson learned from this case study can be applied to the 58 other unitary authorities in the UK. I have also narrowed my scope further by focusing on the possibilities for the local governments, there have been previous studies that have investigated the effects of actions of civil society in Brighton and Hove (Durrant et al., 2018). Therefore, the research gap in Brighton provides a further focus on the actions of Brighton and Hove City Council. Furthermore, the focus on the council aligns to the GNDs emphasis on public institutions.

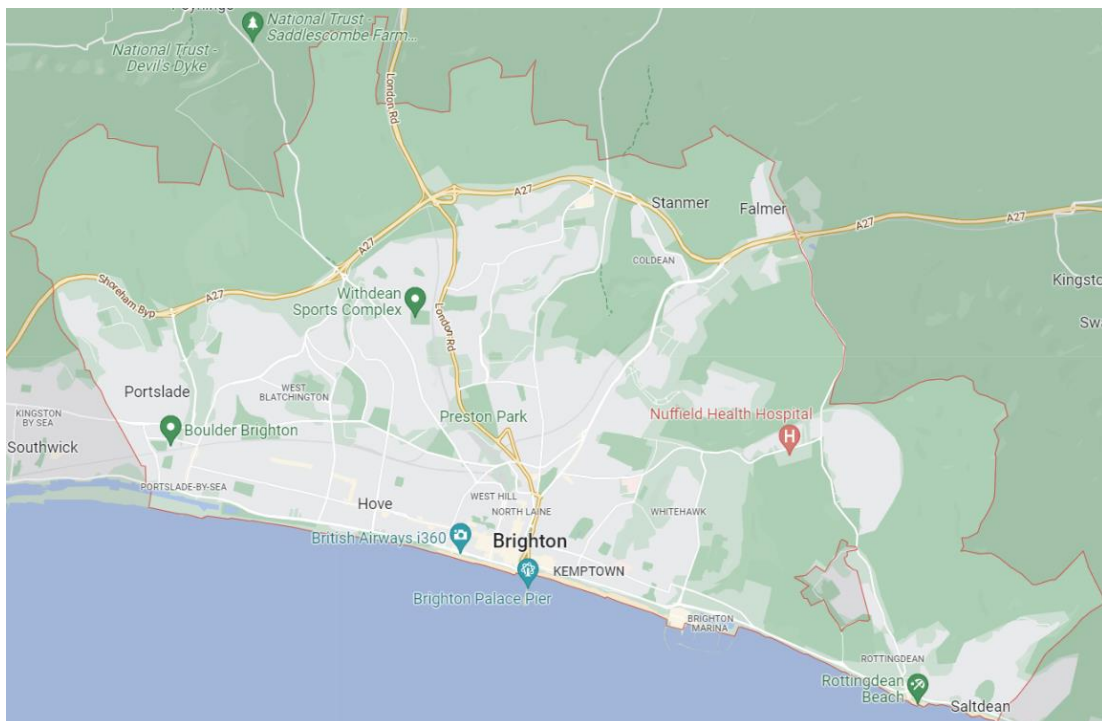


Figure 1 Map of Brighton and Hove

Source: Google maps, 2022

Snowball sampling was partially used as a method for sampling to find interview participants, however, I used temporal boundaries to ensure that sufficient time for data analysis. At the end of interviews, I asked the interviewees whether they could recommend someone else for me to talk to. I planned to and did finish conducting interviews by the middle of April, I still asked interviewees in the later stages whether there were other relevant actors that I should talk to. This allowed me to make an informed decision as to whether the rule still applied or whether the actor would offer too crucial an insight to miss. In this way I could gain the benefits of using snowballing to contact participants that previously interviewed participants had mentioned as important. Drawing these boundaries temporally allowed me to have access to a wider pool of relevant participants whilst not compromising the quality of my analysis.

The use of the institutional capacity building framework, although broad and extensive in its scope, provided me with some delimitations and focus for my study. I used it to guide my interview questions and line of enquiry. Using the methodology outlined in section 3 I was able to gather data to provide understanding for all except one section of the institutional capacity building framework. I was unable to gain information about the morphology of the council's network, that is their 'social networks, in terms of density of network interconnections and their 'route structure' (Healey et al., 2003, p. 62). Additionally, I amended one section in accordance with my qualitative methodology.

In addition to the guidance afforded by the framework used, I have further drawn the boundaries of my study to focus on the GND as articulated by Common Weal (McAlpine et al., 2019). In my exploration of the case study of Brighton and Hove I kept my line of enquiry open, although guided by the framework, to capture the complexity of this particular case. However, in section 5.2 I will draw from Common Weal's plan to shape the discussion and highlight the similarities and contrasts between the plan unfolding in Brighton and Hove and the already existing version designed by the think tank.

1.7 Ethical considerations

Throughout the course of this research, I have endeavoured to uphold high ethical standards, through pursuing transparency of practice and honesty of sources and information. This spans my writing, interviewing and observation. All sources will be properly and accurately referenced throughout this paper to ensure transparency and access to the information used in this study.

To conduct the data collection, particularly the use of council documents and participant observation, content will be studied that I have not received explicit permission to study. However, due to the public nature of this information it is free to use the information for analysis. This was confirmed following an email exchange with a councillor, who said explicitly that the public availability of the information meant that their permission was unnecessary.

This research will be conducted independently and without the provision of outside funds that could impair the quality or accuracy of the research. The fact that I will be interviewing and obtaining data from Brighton and Hove council as they are the subject of my research means that I will need to ensure that their hopes for the outcome of the research, or how they want to appear to the public does not influence the direction of my findings. This will be aided by conducting document review and participant observation, alongside interviews, as well as speaking to experts in the field who are not affiliated to the council.

I am sensitive to the fact that working with networks that collaborate may cause harms to the relationships between them, in order to minimise harm, I will give interview participants the possibility to check any information and direct quotes included from their perspective before

the thesis publication. I can promise not to include names of participants, but they may be able to identify one another by patterns of speech or roles in the organisation. I will make it clear to participants that I can promise not to use their name but cannot promise absolute anonymity, particularly if they are recognised by the organisation they work for or their use of language. However, there are some cases of individual researchers who have explicitly stated they are happy to be identified in research whose names will be included as their name reveals key information about why they are relevant to the research. The councillor's although they gave permission for the use of their names, will be referred to by their titles to provide clarity to the reader.

All data will be stored securely on a personal external hard drive which will be protected by a password. Transcriptions of the interviews containing information about who was interviewed will be stored on this secure hard drive. All sensitive personal details will be removed before any sections of the transcript are included in the final paper.

1.8 Audience

This study specifically targets people working within, alongside or acting to influence local authorities. The outcomes and implications of the study will be interesting to local authorities, particularly those in Brighton and Hove it may also be of interest to advocates of the GND in the UK working in think tanks, campaigning organisations or the grassroots as this research aims to offer a new and complimentary avenue through which one can advance the goals of the GND. It may also be useful for individuals who are interested in cities and urban governance, who are curious about what the GND framing can offer for the local level.

1.9 Disposition

To aid your navigation of this paper and the details of the study, refer to the outline below which details the chapters and a brief explanation of the content included.

Chapter 1 outlines the background of history of the GND in order to place this research, and its focus on the GND into context. Once the importance of the GND has been established I turn to the progress, or lack of progress at the national level in relation to the goal of the GND. Finally, I outline the possibility for a GND and other forms of climate action at the local level, with a particular focus on the institutional capacity that exists at these levels to pursue a GND.

Chapter 2 introduces the literature to explain, expand and support the problem definition sketched out in chapter 1. This includes: GNDs in the UK, city level GNDs, a brief introduction to the previous research in Brighton and Hove. Then I introduce the academic conceptualisation of Institutional Capacity Building Framework that informed this research before turning to examples of the application of the framework to local climate action and providing a summary of the analytical framework used in this study.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the methodology used in this research. Including, a description of the reasons for the methodological choices, greater detail on the logic behind the case study focus on Brighton and Hove. Finally, I outline of which data was collected, how it was collected and subsequently analysed

Chapter 4 presents the findings from interviews, meeting observations and document review in order to indicate the institutional capacity available in Brighton and Hove and how it has been mobilised to progress the goals of a GND.

Chapter 5 discussed the findings outlined in chapter 4 findings are placed within the literature to offer further guidance as to the key takeaways from the case study. Some key points of contentions between interviewees, for example around the framing of the GND, are placed within the wider academic debates that share this disagreement.

Chapter 6 draws from the discussion and the findings to provide recommendations for the target audience of this paper. In this way I hope to provide the reader with a way to turn this academic inquiry into guidance for improved direction of institutional capacity. In addition to better using the institutional capacity that exists, I intend to demonstrate avenues to develop institutional capacity in Brighton and Hove and other unitary authorities in the UK. Finally, I outline that this research provides a basis on which the GND movement in the UK could focus more attention to the strategic possibilities within local government.

2 Literature Review: What is a local GND in the UK? What is institutional capacity building and How Can You Assess it?

To provide the academic foundations of this research, on which I hope to build, I first provide a history of the development of the GND in the UK as an idea. Subsequently, I outline the details of the most comprehensive GND in the UK from which I define the GND for the purposes of this study. I then turn to the conceptualisations of GNDs at the city level, before detailing the theoretical and analytical frameworks utilised in this study. Additionally, I outline the particular relevance of the theoretical framework, institutional capacity building, to climate action at the city level.

2.1 Green New Deal in the UK

The first articulation of a GND for the UK, written by the Green New Deal Group and published by the New Economics Foundation (Elliott et al., 2008), was triggered by what they described as the ‘triple crunch’ of crises: the financial crisis, accelerating climate change and increasing energy prices. Broadly, they argued for the re-regulation of taxation and finance in combination with transformative changes away from fossil fuels in a way that results in widespread secure employment (Elliott et al., 2008). Firstly, the goal of the GND they outlined was the rapid and at scale roll out of a low-carbon energy system, in addition to improved energy efficiency. They then proposed a range of measures to reign in financial systems and provide low interest public funding to support this scale of transformation. Furthermore, they highlight the growing consensus that the challenge posed by climate change demands the scale of action seen only in the face of war. This is reinforced by the call for public expenditure to finance this drastic transformation, which rests on the principles of Keynesian economics. That is the creation of jobs through public expenditure will result in higher tax money available for the government to pay off debts and reinvest (Elliott et al., 2008, p27).

The report released by the Green New Deal Group did not ignite calls for a GND throughout wider society. However, the idea gained new energy and traction once it was picked up by the Sunrise Movement. During their sit-in at Speaker of the House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi’s office, newly elected Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio Cortez joined them and provided a more ambitious proposal for a GND. This action invigorated the energy in the UK, building new support for the GND. This led to the group Labour for a Green New Deal, which successfully managed to get a GND set of policies on to the Labour Parties 2019 Election Manifesto (The Labour Party, 2019). Following the Labour Parties’ defeat in said election, a new non-party affiliated group launched, Green New Deal UK (Green New Deal UK, 2019). To begin with they focused on encouraging local groups around the country, which is still part of their strategy, but they have since set up the campaign group Green New Deal Rising, which focuses on pressuring Members of Parliament publicly to challenge them to support a GND (Green New Deal UK Organiser, personal communication, 10 December 2021). Additionally, Green New Deal UK and the Green New Deal Group have collaborated to launch a motion in parliament, for which they have gained cross party support (Green New Deal Group, 2022). The motion is still however, in its early stages but has struggled to gain support from the Conservative Party, with zero Conservative Members of Parliament supporting the motion. The electoral and parliamentary failure of the GND has led people to examine the other avenues that could both build support for and advance the goals of a GND. Academics and advocates have concluded that the development of local and city GNDs will play a role in this (Buller, 2020; Lawrence et al., 2019; Vansintjan, 2020). This trend can also be observed in the original authors in the UK, the Green New Deal Group, since their release of resources and guidance

for local authorities (Green New Deal Group, 2020b). The specific details of GNDs at the city level is explored further in section 2.2.

For the purposes of this paper, I will broadly adopt the GND outlined by Common Weal: a Scotland based Think Tank. The deal, name the Common Home Plan (Table 2-1) was created through using some guiding principles, such as collectivising the solutions to climate change, utilising public funds, and only including the use of technology that currently exists (whilst future proofing for the development of better technology. They conducted an option analysis to decide how to resolve the following:

Table 2-1: Results of Common Weal’s GND option analysis, adapted for the purposes of this study

Carbon emissions and climate change	Replace all non-renewable electricity generation
	Replace all non-renewable heating sources.
	Adapt agricultural practices.
	Reforest
	Move to zero-carbon transport
	Improve energy efficiency and reduce energy usage
	Move to zero-waste
	Adapt carbon intensive industries or reduce their volume.
	Change diets
	Shorten supply chains
Species extinction and biodiversity loss	Move to an agroecology system of agriculture
	Rewild – allow some land to revert to an unmanaged state
	Change diets and greatly reduce food waste
	Tackle climate change
Pollution	Continually strengthen and police regulation on pollutants
	Move to a zero-waste economy
	Adapt agricultural practices
	Reduce and eventually end the use of plastic
Water shortage	Put in place effective water shortage planning
	Improve household and industrial water use efficiency
	Adapt agricultural practices
Resource drain	Deconsumerise – reduce the amount people consume in the first place
	Use a hierarchy of borrow, reuse, repair, remanufacture and recycle
	Move to a zero-waste economy and end landfill and incineration
	Price-in the externalities of products
	Shorten supply chains
Deforestation	Change diets and stop felling forestry for agriculture
	Replant forests and establish new forestry
	Move to a zero-waste economy and deconsumerise
Soil degradation	Move to a system of agroecology
	Move to a zero-waste economy with composting
	Change diets

Source: (McAlpine et al., 2019)

2.2 City level Green New Deals

To arrive at the Common Weal plan broadly outlined above, the think tank conducted this analysis specifically for Scotland, so some of the choices they made will not apply to Brighton and Hove, as well as some of the problems such as peat loss (McAlpine et al., 2019). I will use the problems outlined and draw from the solutions presented by Common Weal to guide the strategic possibilities for a GND in Brighton and Hove. For analysis purposes I will exclude stopping peat loss.

The think tank Common Wealth (different although sharing a similar name to Common Weal) imagined what cities in the UK might look like, if a GND had been achieved, outlined in Table 2-2 (Lawrence et al., 2019). This helps in encouraging imagination and mobilisation for a potential future but does not help to achieve the vision outlined in more ways that inspiration. This city level plan echoes the plans of many other GNDs and gives the impression of what life in a city could look like with a GND. However, as with all the visions for a GND it provides little grasp as to what to do unless the national government is willing to implement it. It will be drawn from in the discussion to investigate the proposals in Brighton and Hove and to draw from the inspiration of what could be possible at the city level.

Table 2-2: Outline of City GND

Banking and finance	Regional investment banks – democratise finance + more autonomy for small traders Reshape private financial institutions – drive decarbonisation, create new requirements to guide green investment, improve transparency
Transit networks	Free public transport Shared cargo bikes Electric taxi coops High-speed rail Electric buses
Workplace	Local production and maker spaces to develop 21st century craft-making Vocational training systems Thriving unions, sectoral bargaining Expansion of democratic ownership – gives meaningful stake in both workplace and economy
The commons	Urban allotments and increased public space Communal luxury – cultural spaces, parks, civic spaces
Energy systems	Decentralised and decarbonised energy system Regional public energy companies, co-ops, community, and local businesses, 100% renewable power Localised distribution networks Locally-owned biomass energy systems – recycling and collectivising energy through district heating
Housing	Retrofitting Local authorities – given tools and resources to build new wave of low-carbon affordable homes Increased energy efficiency

Source: (Lawrence et al., 2019)

The Centre for Local Economic Strategy (CLES) published a report, stating very clearly that localities cannot afford to wait for national government to pursue the necessary transformation (Brown et al., 2019). They argue that even if there was policy change at the national level that followed GND style transformation, this alone would not ensure a transition to a democratic and decentralised green economy. Additionally, the urgency to act, they suggest, makes local and municipal levels the appropriate and necessary site for systemic transformation. Crucially, they point to the absence of a regional focus in the UK, due to the emphasis of major strategic policy interventions led by central government. In this report they include some strategic possibilities for local GNDs. The first step is Community Wealth Building in order to deliver a GND. This hinges on utilising the capacities of anchor institutions (immovable/stable institutions like local government and schools) which form pillars of the community who are able to influence their spending in ways that maintain wealth in the community. The anchor institution approach harnesses raw financial and economic power to be directed towards a green transition, it also helps to achieve a connectedness and symbiosis between the public and commercial sector.

2.3 Previous research in Brighton and Hove

Brighton and Hove has been identified as a city that makes a suitable case study to investigate local possibilities from transformation, it has been noticed that despite the favourable local political conditions of Brighton and Hove: a Green Member of Parliament and a Green Party led council, there is little evidence to suggest an acceleration of a green transformation (Durrant et al., 2018). The date of this study indicates the necessity for a re-investigation. Brighton and Hove has clearly established itself as a leading city in the UK when it comes to sustainability, becoming a One Planet Living City in 2013, the first UNESCO Biosphere Reserve to include a large urban area, and has been named the CIVITAS European city of the year in 2014 for the sustainable transport policy (Durrant et al., 2018). The previous research on Brighton and Hove forms a good foundation on which to build this research, crucially it also makes clear the real appetite for green transformation in this city. The existing political will provides a useful opportunity to study implementation and institutional barriers.

2.4 Framework: institutional capacity building

It is argued that the ability of local government to deliver action on climate change is closely tied to their institutional capacity (Wretling & Balfors, 2021). Institutional capacity building as a framework has also been used frequently to study the activities and possibilities for action at the local and regional level (Malhotra et al., 2021; Storbjörk & Hedrén, 2011; Wretling & Balfors, 2021; Yeh, 1995). Therefore, I will use institutional capacity building to guide my analysis of the case study of Brighton and Hove. The framework, primarily as conceptualised by Healey et al., (2003) is laid out in Table 2-3 below. I have maintained much of the original language to remain consistent with the original intention of the framework, this is also translated into the codes used for the analysis. This also facilitates my research fitting in with the wider literature on institutional capacity as conceived of by Healey et al (2003), which largely remains faithful to their use of language within their conceptualisation.

According to Healey et al. (2003, p. 62) institutional capacity building can be understood as the combination of three elements: knowledge resources; relational resources and mobilisation capacity. These three dimensions are summarised and broken down into further constituent parts in Table 2-3 below. The knowledge resources section ties in the discursive elements of policy making. This section includes the range of knowledge that actors have access to whether that is explicit or tacit, systematised or experiential (see figure 2 for expanded detail).

Additionally, analysis of knowledge resources includes the frames of reference that form the conceptions of the issues, problems, and interventions, including how participants conceptualise the place they are operating in. For example, in Brighton and Hove the frames could be whether council members think that Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) are the main solution to transit in the city, or it could be that one participant could see the GND as the key to transforming the city, whereas another could see it as unnecessary or a partial solution.

Table 2-3: The dimensions of institutional capacity building

Knowledge resources	The range of information resources available including explicit (documented and able to be shared directly) and tacit (gained through direct personal experience and difficult to document), systematised (organised) and experiential (gained and communicated through experience). Figure 2 outlines the quadrants of these types of knowledge.
	The frames of reference which shape conceptions of issues, problems, opportunities, and interventions, including conceptions of place.
	The extent to which the range and frames are shared among stakeholders, integrating different spheres of policy development and action around place qualities.
	The capacity to absorb new ideas and learn from them (openness and learning).
Relational resources	The range of stakeholders involved, in relation to the potential stakeholders related to the issue/what goes on.
	The morphology of their social networks, in terms of density of network interconnections and their 'route structure'.
	The integration of the various networks (this has been adapted from the original framework)
	The location of the power to act, the relations of power between actors and interaction with wider authoritative, allocative, and ideological structuring forces.
Mobilisation capacity	The opportunity structure is the perceptions by different stakeholders with respect to the desirability, opportunities and constraints for institutional change (Wretling & Balfors, 2021)
	The institutional arenas used and developed by stakeholders to take advantage of opportunities. This includes where discussion takes place and the style of the arena in which discussion takes place (Scott, 2004)
	The repertoire of mobilisation techniques used to develop and sustain momentum
	The presence or absence of critical change agents at different stages

Source: Healey et al., 2003, p. 62

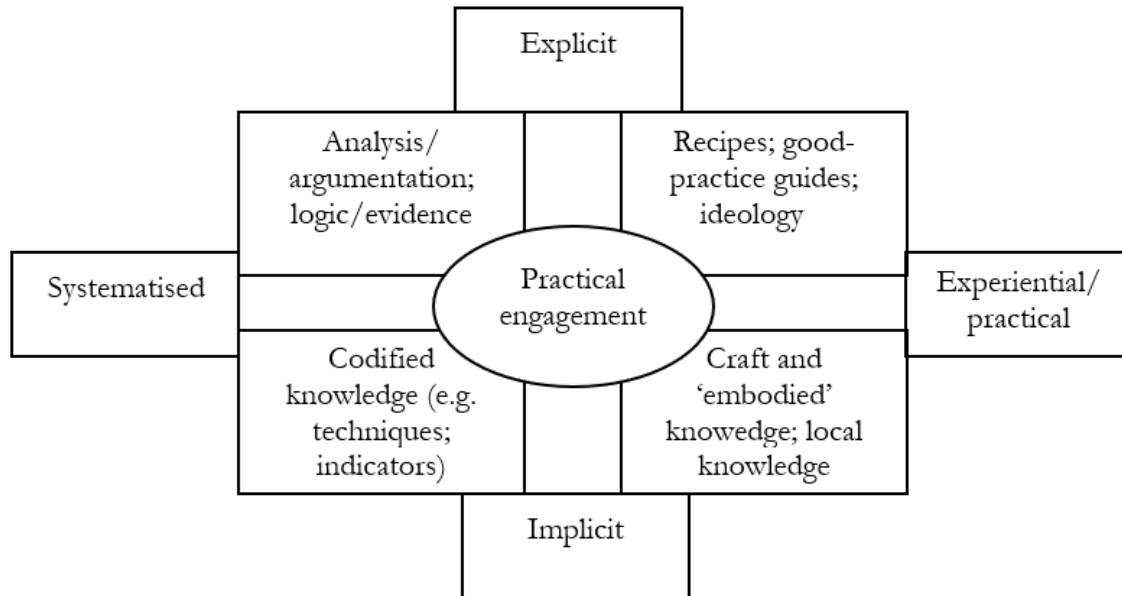


Figure 2: Expansion on the dimensions of knowledge resources included within institutional capacity adapted from

Source: Löfgren, 2020

The framework was developed to be able to capture the institutional capacity required to facilitate policy making at all levels of governance (Healey et al., 2003). The framing adopted by Healey et al. (2003) aims for more inclusive and collaborative policy making. This echoes the problem definition of this thesis that shifts focus from central government to local government. One articulation of the institutional capacity building framework emphasises using an 'interpretive' angle, suggesting that meanings are created in their specific context, this captures the constant changes in the nature and landscape of politics (Lindseth & Reitan, 2007). The collaborative nature of the approach places importance on 'practice-oriented' and 'deliberative' policy making. 'Practice-oriented' here means that the solutions are arrived at tentatively within the situation of interest (Lindseth & Reitan, 2007). 'Deliberative' refers to the interactive and collective methods through which policies are arrived at. Additionally, it captures the contested nature of the definitions of the problems outlined and the solutions proposed to address them. These more discursive elements of governance are combined in the framework with the more institutionalised features of governance. The 'relational resources' describe the networks that surround and immerse governance actors (Healey et al., 2003). For the purposes of this study one aspect of the 'relational resources' has been adapted from the extent of integration in networks to simply the integration of networks, to capture the more qualitative and relational integration of actors in the city. The power to act refers to the relational power between actors, as well as the "interaction with wider authoritative, allocative and ideological structuring forces" (Lindseth & Reitan, 2007, p 4). Lastly, 'mobilisation capacity' relates to political aspects, such as the institutional arenas developed and utilised to make the most of opportunities (Lindseth & Reitan, 2007). This refers to 'where' discussion is to take place and the 'style' of the arena. In my analysis two main aspects will be considered: firstly, arenas for strategy development will be discussed, and secondly, arenas for decision-making will be outlined. Additionally, it includes the methods utilised to build and maintain momentum as well as the critical change agents that are present or absent in different stages (Lindseth & Reitan, 2007).

2.5 Building institutional capacity to tackle climate change

It is argued that local governments are a key player in the ambition to reduce the release of anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions (Wretling & Balfors, 2021). This argument rests on the foundation that local governments are uninhibited by complex, slow international negotiations, they have the closest proximity to citizens, and they are responsible for a large range of service provisions and planning (Wretling & Balfors, 2021). One paper looked at how the institutional capacity of local government affected local climate change adaptation, environmental policy, local Agenda 21 and local climate change mitigation (Aall, 2012). They found that increases in local institutional capacity resulted in local governments adopting further environmental policy than those dictated at the national level, taking on additional climate responsibilities. Furthermore, they suggest that the de-institutionalisation of environmental policy can inhibit “strategic planning and community development in order to foster real changes in society” (Aall, 2012, p. 592). A further element of decarbonisation of the economy is the energy transition, it has also been argued that institutional capacity is key to achieve this (Lee, 2018). Therefore, maintaining or increasing institutional capacity within local government, as suggested by the studies outlined, is crucial for wider successful engagement in local climate action.

One application of institutional capacity building that is of particular relevance to Brighton and Hove was the study of Kristiansand’s transport planning and politics (Lindseth & Reitan, 2007). As will be outlined in the findings section, Brighton and Hove as well as other local councils have seen particular tension and controversy around transport policy. The analysis using an institutional capacity building framework highlighted that transport policy can be understood and best described “as a social struggle over problem definitions and future choices” (Lindseth & Reitan, 2007, p. 146). I would argue that this can be expanded to all planning and politics around environmental policy. Utilising this framework and its combination of the discursive elements of policy making and the institutional elements allows examination of this conflict over future choices. “Mouffe (1996 in Hajer, 2003, p. 99) argues that: “policy making should not just be evaluated according to whether it gets implemented or not, but also as a place where differences and conflicts are articulated”.” (Hajer & Wagenaar, 2003; Lindseth & Reitan, 2007).

2.6 Analytical framework

To fully explore the strategic possibilities for a GND in Brighton and Hove, I have drawn from the institutional capacity building framework outlined above. I have taken the motion passed in council to mean that the goal of a GND can be used as a target against which to measure the existing institutional capacity, and where shortcomings may arise. See figure 3 for my conceptualisation of the analytical framework that guides my analysis. I have outlined the framework in its entirety in Table 2-3 in section 2.4, however, for the purpose of my analysis I will take knowledge resources, relational resources, and mobilisation capacity as broad categories. This allows me to capture the specific case and complexity in Brighton and Hove, organised within the framework but allowing for the overlap that occurs in categories such as knowledge resources and relational resources. The range of knowledge, frames, integration of frames, and integration of network in Brighton and Hove are overlapping because the range of knowledge available to the council will be shaped by the internal and external people that make up the network within which the council is embedded. It is difficult and does not make sense to separate these categories for the sake of consistency with the framework, so I have adapted in accordance with the purpose of this research. Likewise, this same framework was simplified during the discussion and analysis when Healey (2003) applied it to a UK local authority project. The comprehensive framework guided the data gathering process, but analysis will be conducted with the three broader categories in mind. Although sometimes for the purpose of thorough

analysis the finer elements of the framework were maintained when it made analytical sense, this will become apparent in section 4.

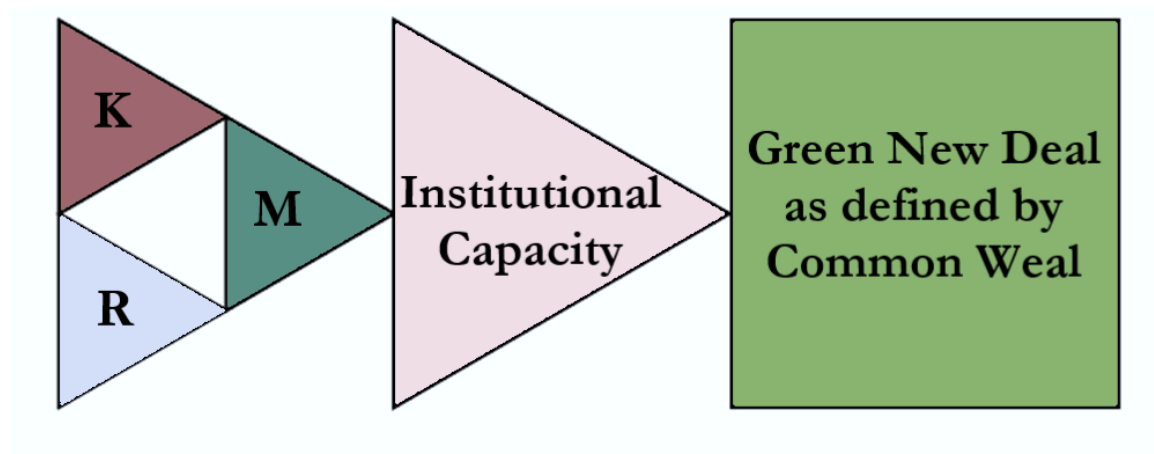


Figure 3 Analytical framework utilised in this research where K = Knowledge Resources, R= Relational Resources, both of which lead into M= Mobilisation Capacity. The combination of these elements captures the institutional capacity available to the council which can then be applied to advancing the goals of the GND as defined by Common Weal.

Source: Institutional capacity building framework from Healey et al., 2003, diagram combining K, R and M is adapted from Malhotra et al., 2021.

3 Research design, materials and methods

3.1 Research design

I have adopted the criteria outlined by Creswell & Creswell (2017) to justify my choice of research methodology, these include the worldview and research problem, as well as the target audience.

3.1.1 Worldview and research problem

The worldview here consists of two elements, firstly the worldview of the GND, which has support within wider civil society but also aligns with my own worldview. The GND arguably adopts a transformative worldview given its centring of the needs of marginalised communities (particularly those most impacted by a transition away from fossil fuels) (Brett, 2022; Elliott et al., 2008; Lawrence, 2019; Pettifor, 2019). It also adopts an explicitly political understanding of the solutions to climate change (Bell & Bevan, 2021; Chomsky et al., 2020; Pettifor, 2019). It is argued that the cornerstone of analysis in line with the transformative worldview:

“is formed by commitments to social transformation that uniquely position us to see what is through the prism of how the present situations and conditions came to be and, also, in light of the imagined and sought-after future – of what we believe ought to be.”
(Stetsenko, 2020, p734).

This accurately describes the goals and academic work of the GND project. My interest in the GND in part stems from my own alignment to the transformative worldview, with my goal for this research being to advance a particular understanding of climate justice under the GND. This is my own particular belief about the imagined future that *ought to be*. This justifies my use of qualitative methods, in addition to the use of semi-structured interviews with some open ended questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2017, p54).

Secondly the worldview I adopt stems from the idea outlined previously that policy debates are “a social struggle over problem definitions and future choices” (Lindseth & Reitan, 2007, p. 146). My academic interest in the GND initially stemmed from the conflicts that arose around the framing of a GND plan, it has since developed into more of a focus on policy development and implementation. However, I have not lost interest in how the way that advocates conceive of and construct the GND shapes what and how they advocate for and the methods they use to do so. This interest in the how ideas are shaped and conceived brings in an element of the constructivist worldview (Creswell & Creswell, 2017, p. 46).

As has been argued in the literature review in section 2.5, the ability of local governments to pursue climate action, is in a large part shaped by their institutional capacity. Institutional capacity as defined by Healey et al. (2003) combines discursive elements tying into the constructivist worldview, as well as capturing the institutional elements that include mobilisation for a particular goal. This utilisation of institutional capacity for a particularly desired goal demonstrates a belief and a movement towards what “*ought to be*” (Stetsenko, 2020, p734). The GND always includes a belief in how the world ought to be, particularly in relation to what the transformation of the economy and society away from fossil fuels should look like. This ties in my constructivist worldview which allowing me to also look at how the conception of a GND shapes the way that people understand and interact with it. It also allows me to study the people’s frames in relation to climate change and environmental degradation more widely, which shapes the knowledge and the actions of the council. This informs my choice for qualitative

methods, but also more specifically my utilisation of participant observation as a methodology in line with constructivism (Creswell & Creswell, 2017, p54).

3.1.2 Audience

The intended audience of this research is people who work in UK local councils, including and perhaps particularly Brighton and Hove Council who want to advance the climate action in the city. It will be of particular interest to those committed to GND framing, this is also a reason for choosing research methods consistent with a transformative worldview. As both the research and I as the researcher assume that actors are committed to transforming local or wider politics in a particular direction and that their ability to do this is impacted by their institutional capacity.

3.1.3 A Case of Brighton and Hove

This study lends itself to case study methodology, which can capture complex real life activities at a level of depth (Noor, 2008). Capturing this level of depth is crucial to investigate the policy creation, implementation and strategic possibilities for Brighton and Hove. As is the trade-off with case studies, the specific in-depth analysis limits the generalisability of the research, however the lessons learned from this case study will be useful to other councils if not directly transposable. A case study methodology will be adopted, following the guidelines of Robert Stake: *The Art of Case Study Research*. These guidelines are outlined in Table 3-1 below.

It is particularly useful to conduct a case study in Brighton and Hove, and on the institutional capacity of the city council as they have consistently demonstrated their high ambitions for climate action. They have done so recently through declaring a climate emergency, supporting the GND motion, expanding their sustainability team (Brighton and Hove Sustainability Council Officer, personal communication, 7 April 2022), becoming a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, pursuing Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and being awarded the Gold Sustainable Food prize (Durrant et al., 2018). The council's high levels of ambition makes creating a case study focused on their institutional capacity particularly compelling because the issues they have encountered will demonstrate potential problems that would face currently less active or further behind councils. The lessons drawn from Brighton and Hove and the recommendations given will be useful to councils at a similar level of ambition and for other councils as the progress further with their climate action.

There is a GND for London which can be useful to learn from, however London has a greater ability to access funding than Brighton and Hove and many other forms of local government in the UK because London has different powers and authorities under the Greater London Authority Act 1999 which outline specific devolution of powers (UK Parliament, 1999). Brighton and Hove form a Unitary Authority, of which there are 58 in the UK (GOV.UK, 2021). A unitary authority provides all the local government services to their area, they are normally cities and large urban areas. Therefore, the ability to borrow money and impact local infrastructure is particular to this kind of local governance, which is widespread in the UK.

I have broadly adopted the case study methodology outlined by Stake (1995) as presented in (Yazan, 2015, p.148). A version of this methodology has been tailored to my study and presented in Table 3-1 below.

Table 3-1: Summary Table of Stake' case study design edited in relation to my case study design

Epistemological Commitments	Constructivism, in alignment with Stake and Transformative in alignment with the principles of the GND.
Defining Case and Case Study	<p>Case is “a specific, a complex, functioning thing,” more specifically it is “an integrated system” which “has a boundary and working parts” (p. 2).</p> <p>Qualitative case study is a “study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances” (p. xi). In the case of Brighton and Hove this is a council that has demonstrated a high level of climate ambition and therefore, the complexities of this specific case can provide lessons for cities at earlier stages of their ambition.</p> <p>Defining characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Holistic (considering the interrelationship between the phenomenon and its contexts) - Empirical (basing the study on their observations in the field); my case will additionally include interviews to reflect the constructivist nature of the framework - Interpretive (resting upon their intuition and see research basically as a researcher-subject interaction) this is key due to my argumentation in favour of the GND, and the inclusion of it as a goal of institutional capacity building
Designing Case Study	<p>I used a flexible design which allowed me to make major changes as demanded by the research questions. This has still been guided by two main research questions and one sub research question detailed in section 1.5, these have helped to “structure the observation, interviews, and document review” (p. 20). The flexibility combined with the overarching questions follows the conceptualisation of a case study drawing from Parlett and Hamilton’s (1972) description of “progressive focusing” which builds upon the assumption that “the course of the study cannot be charted in advance” (cited in Stake, 1998, p. 22).</p> <p>Being a qualitative case study places requires that throughout the process I need to know “what leads to significant understanding, recognizing good sources of data, and consciously and unconsciously testing out the veracity of their eyes and robustness of their interpretations. It requires sensitivity and scepticism” (Stake, 1995, p. 50). I have kept this in mind throughout the research process and attempted to triangulate and verify data from interviewees as well as using multiple types of data.</p>
Gathering Data	I used multiple types of data, utilising observation, interviews, and document analysis as data gathering tools.
Analysing Data	<p>Data analysis is “a matter of giving meaning to first impressions as well as to final compilations” (p. 71).</p> <p>I simultaneity collected data whilst keeping in mind and beginning my analysis.</p> <p>I decided to use categorical aggregation after “reflection, to find the forms of analysis that work” (p. 77) this is because grouping the data into categories allowed me to get an overview of the institutional capacity according to my framework.</p>

Validating Data	Issues of data validation are involved in triangulation. I used data source triangulation for this case study, collected data from interviews, observation, and documents.
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Source: Stake, 1995 in Yazan, 2015, p.148

3.2 Methods used to collect data

This study will be entirely qualitative in nature, as this fits with the epistemological commitments of Stake as summarised in Yazan (2015) and it is in accordance with my worldview outlined in section 3.1.1, it is also appropriate to answer the research questions. Although the research questions could potentially be answered using quantitative methods, qualitative methods provide more information about the complexity of the governance structures and institutional capacity in the council. This is particularly the case given the inaccessibility of councillors, the difficulty in getting responses from councillors necessitates the use of observation of Council meetings.

Interview subjects were through finding relevant organisations and actors. Interviewees from the council were found by identifying and contacting councillors who work on environmental topics (the members of the Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee). These actors and organisations were identified through literature review, pre-study interviews, webinars on the subject and snowball sampling from initial interviews. I contacted potential interviewees via email or LinkedIn depending on which contact details are available (see table 6 for an overview of eventual participants. All interviews were conducted over zoom and recorded using a voice recording device. The recordings were transcribed using otter.ai and reviewed and corrected accordingly. These were then stored on a password protected personal drive. Policy documents are found through Brighton and Hove Councils website, or motions included in council meetings which are also available through the council’s website (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2022a).

Table 3-2: Details of participants interviewed

Interviewee name/role	Organisation
Green Party Councillor	Brighton and Hove Council
Labour Party Councillor	Oxfordshire County Council
Senior Researcher	Centre for Local Economic Strategies
Head of Policy and Research	Common Weal (Scottish think tank who developed a GND for Scotland)
Programme Officer	Brighton and Hove Council
Organiser	Green New Deal UK
Project Manager	Sussex Surplus
Green New Deal Group Co-Author	Green New Deal Group

Interviews will be one of the most important sources of information for this case study, as is true for most case studies (Tellis, 1997). They will be conducted in a semi-structured way, whereby the following themes will be questions in relation to the specific angle the interviewee offers focused around enabling and constraining factors:

- Resources and capacity
- Knowledge and information

- Institutions and governance

These themes align with the key factors that influence climate action on a subnational level identified and outlined by (Martins & Ferreira, 2011). I asked the interviewees questions that were aimed at providing me with information about the institutional capacity (according to Healey et al., (2003)) that exists in Brighton and Hove Local Council. See the table 7 below to see how the interview questions aligned with the different sections of the framework. Some questions aimed at capturing several aspects of the framework, with additional follow up questions in the interview to get interviewees to further elaborate.

Table 3-3: Aspects of the institutional capacity building framework mapped onto their respective interview questions

Knowledge Resources	The range of information resources available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ask specifically about the work that made me contact them in the first place (i.e., council GND, campaign GND, researcher). ▪ What are the sources of knowledge/research used to inform the strategy for a Green New Deal in x?
	The frames of reference which shape conceptions of issues, problems, opportunities, and interventions, including conceptions of place.	Whether and why the Green New Deal policy framing was important for them?
	The extent to which the range and frames are shared among stakeholders, integrating different spheres of policy development and action around place qualities.	Can be understood through the range of interviewees answers and council meetings
	The capacity to absorb new ideas and learn from them (openness and learning).	Who is/should be involved in the Green New Deal development and implementation?
Relational Resources	The range of stakeholders involved, in relation to the potential stakeholders related to the issue/what goes on.	Who is/should be involved in the Green New Deal development and implementation?
	The morphology of their social networks, in terms of density of network interconnections and their 'route structure'.	This section of the framework cannot be studied using the methodology chosen and has therefore been excluded.
	The integration of the various networks	How connected is the work of the x on x to allied networks?
	The location of the power to act , the relations of power between actors and interaction with wider authoritative, allocative, and ideological structuring forces.	What powers exist at the local level?
Mobilisation Capacity	The opportunity structure is the perceptions by different stakeholders with respect to the desirability, opportunities and constraints for institutional change (Wretling & Balfors, 2021)	How do you see the Green New Deal being enacted at the level of Brighton and Hove/local (both at present and in the future)?
	The institutional arenas used and developed by stakeholders to take advantage of opportunities	<p>Funding constraints exist at the local level – how could they be overcome?</p> <p>How do you see the Green New Deal being enacted at the level of Brighton and Hove/local (both at present and in the future)?</p>

		What is the response like from the community to Green New Deal policy framing/the specific framing adopted by the interviewee? How does the x currently and intend to in future bring people on board?
	The repertoire of mobilisation techniques used to develop and sustain momentum	What is the response like from the community to Green New Deal policy framing/the specific framing adopted by the interviewee? How does the x currently and intend to in future bring people on board?
	The presence or absence of critical change agents at different stages	Not directly asked but observed, and studied through interview answers and council meetings

Source: Healey et al., 2003, p. 62

I watched council meetings, from full council and from relevant committees, when they discussed key topics in relation to the city’s GND motion and Carbon Neutral Strategy. The specific meeting observed were chosen because they included the motion, discussion of the Carbon Neutral Strategy budget and transportation. The council meeting minutes did not provide a full account of the happening in the meetings, so instead the three key meetings outlined in table 8 were watched to find key moments where there was discussion of the GND, the climate and active travel plans for the city and relevant budget from 2019-2022 Watching these meetings provided some understanding as to how the GND plans are received by councillors, and how they are discussed amongst them. Following interviews with councillors, the bike lane expansion project in Brighton and Hove was identified as a particularly contentious area, so I observed the meeting where the council discussed the travel plans for the city.

Table 3-4: Details of council meetings observed

Section of council	Date of meeting	Focus of meeting included
Full Council	24 th of October 2019	Green New Deal motion
Environment, Transport and Sustainability	15 th of March 2022	Transport in the city
Policy and Resources Committee	7 th of October 2021	Carbon Neutral budget

3.3 Materials collected

The materials collected to obtain data for analysis are described in table Table 3-5, this includes some advantages and limitations of each type of documentation as adapted from (Tellis, 1997).

Table 3-5: Materials used for evidence in case study analysis

Material	Specific Type	Advantages	Limitations
Documentation	Policy documents and webpages of the council	Remains stable and so can be returned to for review Available and already exists	Reporting bias Access may be difficult

		Exact Broad coverage	
Interviews	Councillors, experts working on GNDs, local sustainability project, community wealth building, relevant actors identified from snowball sampling	Targeted towards the focus of the case study Insightful Expert opinion	Response bias Reflexivity – responding what the interviewer wants to hear
Participant observation	Meeting recordings of Brighton and Hove Council, including various relevant committee discussions and motions	Covers the interaction, interpersonal behaviour, and priorities as they happen in real life Covers event context	Time consuming Bias due to investigator's actions

Source: Tellis, 1997

3.4 Methods used to process information

Interviews were recorded and transcribed. I used a combination of deductive and inductive coding. Deductive because the interview data was coded using codes drawn from the institutional capacity building framework (Healey et al., 2003). However, I also utilised inductive coding as I remained open to codes that fell outside of this framework to ensure not miss important discoveries. The key one that emerged was the code financial, which was helpful to distinguish from other barriers and short fallings in institutional capacity. All interview data was coded using NVivo, which then transferred into a summary table organised according to the codes to see the themes that emerged in each element of the framework. The key themes and findings will then be analysed in relation to the goal of the GND according to my analytics framework pictured in figure 3.

4 Findings, results, and analysis

All findings from the data collected will be organised according to the institutional capacity building framework. However, I have allowed some flexibility and interpretation of the framework when the boundaries of the framework did not serve the most accurate presentation of findings. Organising the information in this way will allow me to spot the weaker spots of the local authority, and the possibilities to overcome these. Where there was insufficient information to investigate an aspect of institutional capacity, this suggests an area for further research in the future.

4.1 Knowledge resources

The knowledge resources of the council can be captured by looking at the people that feed into their processes both internally and externally and the information embedded in the institution. This knowledge also captures what the council knows already about their efforts towards climate action, what policy they can implement to advance the goals of a GND, how to implement said policies and then how to monitor and measure their progress. In this way the knowledge resources found from data collection have been organised in relation to the goal of the GND. All findings from the data collected will be organised according to the institutional capacity building framework. However, I have allowed some flexibility and interpretation of the framework when the boundaries of the framework did not serve the most accurate presentation of findings. Organising the information in this way will allow me to spot the weaker spots of the local authority, and the possibilities to overcome these. Where there was insufficient information to investigate an aspect of institutional capacity, this suggests an area for further research in the future.

4.1.1 Sources informing the council's climate action strategy

Although drawing from diverse sources, and focusing on a range of strategies, I wanted to highlight here the diversity of sources of knowledge that help to shape the policy direction of the council.

To begin with the initial policy framing that sparked this research, I found that the GND motion that passed in council in 2020 has since become a key part of the city's 2030 Carbon Neutral Programme. The project design and delivery is being led by the 2030 Carbon Neutral Member Working Group (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021b). The working group consists of eight members to form an elected group that report to the council's Policy and Resources Committee. The council's work on the GND has had feed in from a number of council officers, who are civil servants who work full time for the council, additionally it has had input from the Climate Assembly that the council hosted, as well as the GND motion being based on the work of national researchers such as the Green New Deal Group and The New Economics Foundation (Councillor Heley & Councillor Hills, 2019).

To inform the decisions and policy making of the council they must either have in house or external expertise. The external expertise can take the form of paid consultants. In addition to this form of knowledge outsourcing the council receives support from and institutional capacity from its' partnerships and engagement with the wider community. The two local universities provide intellectual support to the council. The council frequently engages local professors, local business leaders and other partners to help inform the policies pursued by the council (Brighton and Hove Sustainability Council Officer). This feeds into the emphasis that the interviewee from CLES put on the importance of a place based, network approach involving key institutions in the city (CLES Employee). The influence of this shared knowledge development can be seen in

the city's Circular Economy Strategy, which is part of the 2030 Carbon Neutral Programme which cannot be separated from Brighton University's expertise in Circular Economy (Brighton and Hove Sustainability Council Officer). The strategy emerged through several avenues but has been consistently supported and driven forward by the university's intellectual contribution.

In one interview, it was highlighted by someone who is familiar to working with councils on GND style plans, that current councils have somewhat lost the capacities to commit to and implement major infrastructure projects (Green New Deal Group Co-Author). This view stemmed from a sympathetic perspective, that councils have been underfunded and stretched over years of austerity, but also an acknowledgement that councils did once have this capacity to a greater extent. A different interviewee noted that there is a current trend of young professionals in the environmental field viewing local councils as a site for climate action, and therefore an influx of people can be seen energising the knowledge in local councils (CLES Employee). This demonstrates that this is both an area that can and is being developed across local councils, including Brighton and Hove Council.

4.1.2 In house monitoring and measuring

To meet a target, any institution must understand how far they currently are from that target, and how much they still need to progress. Brighton and Hove council monitor their carbon profile, using the SCATTER (Setting City Area Targets and Trajectories for Emissions Reduction) project which is a free software that allows UK local authorities to calculate their carbon footprints and identify areas for improvement (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021b). The city's greenhouse gas emissions in 2018 were 1,242 kilo-tonnes. 435 from transport, 399 from energy and water, 391 from the built environment, 22 from waste and 16 from land use and agriculture (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021b). So far, the largest reduction in emissions has resulted from the increase in the proportion of renewable energy providing electricity to the National Grid. The current goal of being carbon neutral by 2030 requires greenhouse gas emissions to fall by 12.7% annually from 2020 onwards (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021b). This target was produced by the Tyndall Centre and is a science-based target aiming to keep the city's emission reduction targets in line with the commitments in the Paris Agreement (Tyndall Centre, 2022). It also places the ambitions of the council as significantly greater than those of national action, even despite the gap between targets and current trajectory (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021b). The target was developed in collaboration with and is therefore compatible with the SCATTER Project software. According to the Council's carbon neutral plan the target is still aiming for the 2°C target rather than the 1.5°C target.

In terms of aligning with the GND principles and creating green jobs in the local supply chain it can be difficult to measure the positive impact of the council. For example, determining the benefits of developing local supply chains for retrofitting buildings, knowing how many jobs have been created and the resulting economic benefit for the locality is very challenging (Brighton and Hove Sustainability Council Officer). In the context where spending has to be justified and weighted against other funding requirements (Brighton and Hove City County Green Party Councillor), projects that have an uncertain or unmeasurable impact are potentially more difficult to advocate for or less easy to attain funding for.

4.1.3 Citizen consultation and partnerships

As was briefly mentioned previously, the council conducted a Climate Assembly to help inform their policy development. The focus was on transport in the city. The council produced a wealth of accessible videos and documents from experts, council officers and stakeholders in the city

to inform the decision making of the citizens (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2020b). The goal was to feed in the output of the citizens assembly into the cities strategy to reduce transport emissions, the consultation process focused on the questions: “How can we step up actions to reduce transport-related carbon emissions in the city?” (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021b). The answer to this question that was developed in the citizens assembly helped to inform the 2030 Carbon Neutral Strategy as well as the latest Local Transport Plan alongside the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021b). Citizens were found to favour the prioritisation of active travel and LTNs in the city.

Brighton and Hove Council are keen to do another citizens assembly, however, the price of over £100,000 is difficult to argue for in times of financial scarcity (Brighton and Hove City County Green Party Councillor). This is challenging because it makes integration of knowledge and engagement with a range of stakeholders via citizens assemblies a significant financial and therefore, political ask, given the funding constraints of the council. However, one interviewee proposed that permanent citizen’s assemblies or citizens could be set up as part of the permanent infrastructure of the council. In the case of Oxfordshire, the university is collaborating and providing funding to help set up the jury. This could be an option that Brighton and Hove could consider, particularly given the two universities in the area.

4.1.4 Skills and knowledge available in local supply chains

The knowledge resources available to the council shapes what projects they are able to drive forward, and then which extra capacities they are required to outsource due to lacking knowledge resources. This creates an additional drain on financial resources. The council has a sustainability team, one which they have invested money to expand, to include an ecologist and a communications specialist (Brighton and Hove Sustainability Council Officer). The issue of the expertise that is available to the council was raised in a budget meeting focussed on climate action. In response to a public question, Councillor Phélim Mac Cafferty, highlighted that the council is sometimes reliant on outside consultants to compensate for the lack of in house expertise (Brighton and Hove Council Policy and Resources Committee, 2021). Councillor Phélim Mac Cafferty suggested that it is the many years of cuts to council budgets that has resulted in this absence of in-house expertise. This is common practice within local authorities in the UK, but it was noted by the Brighton and Hove Sustainability Council Officer that having an increased bank of in-house expertise has made a difference in the sustainability team’s capacity to take projects forward and highlight climate issues across the council’s work. The council has begun to push for a Community Wealth Building angle, aiming to procure locally to develop supply chains and support the city’s economy. The community wealth building procurement principles extend to the sourcing of knowledge and consultation, i.e. providing work and financial support to local experts and organisation. One example of this is a local Cooperative who provide guidance around renewable energy. In the meeting where this question was raised, Councillor Phélim Mac Cafferty reassured an expert from the Brighton and Hove Energy Services Cooperative that the council intends to change the procurement rules to allow for more inclusion of local expertise in future consultations. This indicates that the procurement of knowledge capacities could help add to the development of local supply chains for consultancy. The council now has a Social Value Procurement policy which includes local sourcing (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2016).

To translate such expert knowledge and advice into tangible outcomes, the council has developed a new City Employment and Skills Plan as part of the fulfilment of the requirements of the GND motion, this plan aims to develop the local supply chain to strengthen the provision of green infrastructure (Carbon Neutral 2030 Report). The council’s programme to install Solar Photovoltaic and retrofit council owned building stock will generate skills and specialities within

the city that can enhance the capacity to deliver and encourage retrofitting throughout the city's housing stock (Brighton and Hove Sustainability Council Officer and Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021b). This indicates that the challenge for councils is not only about the skills available within the council, but the skills and availability of people in the community and most importantly the supply chains to execute the GND plans. The creation of green jobs also requires training and capacity building within the general population.

In terms of the knowledge resources used to acquire funding and develop skills, the council has a close cooperation with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) called Coast to Capital, which is an organisation that provides advice to businesses and councils. This partnership is in part helpful due to its provision of specific knowledge in relation to raising funds for projects. The partnership also helps to develop local businesses, therefore creating skills and knowledge capacity in the local supply chain. The inclusion of the LEP was an essential amendment put forward by the Labour Group to the GND motion. LEPs will be investigated in more detail in section 5.4.3. as further literature investigation is required to understand their role in a GND.

4.1.5 Framing of the decarbonisation of the economy

Since the GND motion unanimously passed in the council meeting, it could be assumed that there is broad support for this policy framing for the decarbonisation of the economy. However, there is some variation in how it is understood and subsequently translated into a strategy for the city. This returns to the concept outlined in 2.5 whereby policy is understood and evaluated through the conflicts that arise in relation to policy goals. When looking at the councils 2030 Carbon Neutral Programme it seems that the GND has been incorporated as one aspect of the wider plan rather than the overarching vision guiding the plan as is proposed by Common Weal (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021b; McAlpine et al., 2019). It has been connected to the council's strategy as a way to ensure that the transition to a decarbonised economy includes good, well-paid jobs. This does not seem to have been the original goal of the motion which passed, which included a request for the council officers to assess the possibility of a GND in the city. In many ways the GND style plan could be viewed as the way to achieve the goal of carbon neutral by 2030, however this does not appear to be the framing of the council. To understand this institutionalised framing of the GND it is useful to look at the way it is framed in the 2030 Carbon Neutral Programme, which will shape the inward strategy of the council as well as acting to inform the public:

“A new City Employment and Skills Plan is being developed (...) this will help to strengthen the local supply chain for green infrastructure. In January 2020 the council unanimously passed a Notice of Motion supporting a ‘Green New Deal,’ seeking to address climate change in ways that also boost jobs, address poverty and inequality, and restructure our economic system. The Green New Deal approach can help to grow ‘green’ skills and local jobs, linking public sector decarbonisation initiatives and council retrofit programmes to opportunities for skills and training.” (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021a, p. 28)

This is the entirety of the reference to the GND in the council's 2030 Carbon Neutral Programme. From this it is clear that the council as an institution sees the GND primarily as the linkage of decarbonisation to employment.

Having established the type of framing adopted by the council, I turn to the first and perhaps most important key point of contention between interview subjects. This is whether GND policy framing viewed as helpful for advancing its goals. One councillor that I interviewed was eager to advance GND policy framing (Brighton and Hove Green Party Councillor). They

argued that it is a framing that can be commonly understood that the public will get behind it because it emphasises what government can do to facilitate a fair transition that improves quality of life rather than focusing on how individuals need to change their behaviour (Brighton and Hove Green Party Councillor). Another councillor, not for Brighton and Hove, argued that it is the combined values of climate and social justice that are important in the GND, and not the GND framing itself (Oxfordshire Labour Party County Councillor). “The actual the Green New Deal is a phrase hasn't really taken off” was said when talking about how the ideas of the GND had shaped a lot of their work but explaining their reason for not explicitly adopted the phrase GND. This perspective seemed to be shaped by the experience of communicating with constituents. However, they did argue that the GND framing had shaped their pursuit of the combined goals of social and climate justice. The interviewees who seemed most attached to the GND framing were those that were connecting it to the national push for a GND, whether through a wider network such as Green New Deal UK or the Green New Deal Group (Brighton and Hove Green Party Councillor and Green New Deal Group Co-Author). It seems that this connection to national politics could be helpful to better facilitate local councils to act on climate change. One interviewee brought up the previous strength in uniting local government around fair tax regulation.

“Green New Deal policies are those that are just transition policies” Oxfordshire Labour Party County Councillor suggested, which echoes the sentiment of the Brighton and Hove Green Party Councillor who stated that the GND proposes to

“stop the worst of climate change and how you could have a better life and have a more pleasant life and be healthier and have better jobs and better pay”. (Brighton and Hove City County Green Party Councillor, personal communication, 14 March 2022)

These perspectives seem to understand the GND as an avenue to bring people along with the decarbonisation of the economy, promising a better, more just outcome as a result of the low carbon transformation. One side of this includes the focus on employment “thinking about how jobs, employment, skills can be boosted by enhancing the green economy” (Brighton and Hove Sustainability Council Officer) whereby the GND is seen as an additional focus on jobs within the decarbonisation of the economy. Another side incorporates improving and decreasing the cost of housing, (Brighton and Hove City County Green Party Councillor), shifting ownership to different kinds of public ownership (CLES Employee), improving public health through encouraging active travel (Oxfordshire Labour Party County Councillor). This is less of a point of contention, but instead a differing understanding of how broadly encompassing the GND framing is or should be.

The participant from Common Weal was keen to make the GND something more tangible than a distant idea or target, and that the GND should instead represent plans and roadmaps with measurable outcomes. Brighton and Hove Council have provided a target with a measurable trajectory provided by their Science Based Target. Importantly given Brighton and Hove has incorporated their GND into their 2030 Carbon Neutral Programme, they define Carbon Neutral as interchangeable with Net Zero, a relevant quote from Common Weal:

“net zero itself is a scam, what Net Zero actually means is we will give you a license to pollute in slightly diminishing amounts for another quarter of a century, at which point you will promise to do no more damage to the planet” (Head of Policy and Research at Common Weal, personal communication, 15 February 2022)

This quote in part is referencing offsetting as one aspect of Net Zero. Brighton and Hove Council are prioritising actual reductions in carbon and will only offset what it is not possible

to reduce, however, it is worth noting this quote whilst addressing the time of action the council can and should take.

A few interviewees mentioned Community Wealth Building as the tool to achieve some kind of GND within the current political and economic constraints that face councils (CLES Employee; Green New Deal Group Co-Author). The employee from CLES stated that

"the Green New Deal is based on [...] how our economy should actually be functioning [...]. Community wealth building is already in that space, it's just uses the practical mechanisms that councils can put in place to deliver it. (CLES Employee, personal communication, 23 March 2022)

This was shared by Green New Deal Group Co-Author who stated that Community Wealth Building is about

"how to keep money within local communities and how to work within local constraints, I think that's a really important. I'm very keen on people thinking that way." (Green New Deal Group Co-Author, personal communication, 18 February 2022)

Community Wealth Building has also been emphasised and spoken about as part of the strategy for the Brighton and Hove Carbon Neutral Plan (Brighton and Hove Council Policy and Resources Committee, 2021). Furthermore, the council has emphasised the creation and sustenance of local supply chains for renewable energy and retrofits, as outlined previously in section 4.1.4 (Brighton and Hove Sustainability Council Officer).

In the 2030 Carbon Neutral Programme, the council emphasises the use of heat pumps and consumer choices within the home in order to meet the city's targets. This aligns with what the Common Weal Head of Policy and Research suggested that governments will often put the emphasis on the individual consumer purchasing and installing heat pumps as the demand on infrastructure spending is reduced. This fits into the framing of the solutions to heating, which in this case falls to the individual consumer rather than government. However, the council is also investigating possibilities to implement district heating, which practically and in terms of framing represents a collectivised solution (Brighton and Hove Council Policy and Resources Committee, 2019). Within the context of local council funding constraints perhaps this is the only option available to them, however, it reveals the necessity of funding from central government. This will be explored in more detail in section 4.3.3.2.

4.1.6 Framing of active travel

The framing of active travel is worthwhile isolating, because it was the subject of the Climate Assembly and because travel makes up a large proportion of the policy interventions possible for the local council. It also particularly useful to look at because it emerged as a key talking point amongst interviewees (Brighton and Hove City County Green Party Councillor; Oxfordshire Labour Party County Councillor). This is mostly because the expansion of active travel in Brighton and Hove is framed as a source of tension between the public and the council (Brighton and Hove Green Party Councillor).

The pushback against LTNs can be loud, however, several interviewees highlighted that it is normally polled that the majority of people are in favour or indifferent (Brighton and Hove City County Green Party Councillor; Oxfordshire Labour Party County Councillor). This can be evidenced with this quote:

“it feels like this divisive debate, in essence, people are against it are 10 to 15%, the population, people that are in favour is 40-50%. And then you get also like 30%, who don't really care. And that's pretty solid across the country from all the representative polling” (Oxfordshire Labour Party County Councillor, personal communication, 16 March 2022)

Returning to the outcomes of the Climate Assembly, the participants suggested that the council should facilitate more active travel, provide accessible and affordable public transport to reduce car use, the focus should be on incentives as opposed to sanctions (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2020a). Interestingly, on the means by which to motivate citizen's the framing of the solution adopted by the Climate Assembly was one that favoured restriction rather than financially punitive ones (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2020a). This is contrary to the framing, and actual strategy pursued by the council, this is explored further in the next section.

4.1.7 Knowledge integration: commonalities and contentions

I examined the integration of knowledge at two levels, firstly the integration of knowledge within councils and central government in the UK and secondly, the integration of the council's frames and range within the wider community of Brighton and Hove. In doing so, points of agreement and integration were identified as well as areas where the ranges and frames differed.

Across the UK there are Best Available Techniques (BAT), which are encouraged by the government to give the best environmental or health outcome (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021b). The BATs are available techniques that are the best for preventing or minimising emissions and impacts on the environment, there is a database that is produced by the European Commission (European Commission, 2022). These are the techniques employed by Brighton and Hove Council, this results in consistency and integration amongst the rest of the UK and allows the council to benefit from the latest research available at the international level, instead of requiring their own research at each stage. This means that in terms of the council's choice of practices, the range of knowledge will align broadly to the actions of councils across the UK.

The strong response to the Climate Assembly run by the council on transport, and the alignment of the recommendations with the goals and ambitions of the council indicate that there are shared frames for the city amongst stakeholders around transport. Both interviewees from Brighton and Hove Council highlighted the extent to which the framing of transport policy, i.e. the strong favourability of active travel in the city, was shared amongst the council and citizens (Brighton and Hove City County Green Party Councillor; Brighton and Hove Sustainability Council Officer).

On transport policy in particular there was concern held by an interviewee and Councillors in a committee meeting that the compromise required to integrate differing frames held by stakeholders may result in a poor policy outcome (Brighton and Hove City Council Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee 15th March 2022; Oxfordshire Labour Party County Councillor). For example, LTNs where there are so many exceptions to the limit on vehicles that you end up not being able to use that space. This then eliminates one of the key social and economic benefits to low traffic neighbourhoods (café space, markets, green spaces etc.). The integration of frames in this case would mean that the policy ends up so compromised that the end goal is unrecognisable. This is an important issue to highlight when considering integration of frames, as it is an obstacle to integration, that if overcome, could worsen the outcome.

There is a further point of contention around the framing of how to increase the number of people opting for active travel and public transport and reduce the number of car users. The council appear to be adopted an approach that favours sanctions over incentives (Brighton and Hove City Council Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee Brighton and Hove Council 15th of March 2022, Brighton and Hove City County Green Party Councillor). This stands in opposition to the outcome of the Climate Assembly which strongly favoured incentivising over sanctions (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2020a). This is of particular relevance given the cameras which were installed to catch cars that are driving in the bus gates (a division in the road that prioritises buses), have been a point of disagreement amongst the Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee. Councillor Robert Nemeth who represented the Conservative Group raised concerns that he and his constituents had over the high number of fines received by residents (Brighton and Hove City Council Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee, 15th March 2022). In October 2021 9,600 fines were issued to penalise rule breaking, importantly this seemed to be a peak with the rates falling in November (The Argus, 2022). The council has agreed to try to tackle to issue by adding new and improved signage to make it clearer to drivers (Brighton and Hove City Council Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee, 2022). However, this remains a concern amongst some members of the council and public.

4.1.8 Openness and learning

As previously outlined, the council benefits from knowledge gained through coordinating with the local universities, public and private sector organisations, these have been collaborated with in order to develop the Brighton Energy and Water Plans (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021b). The council has consistently demonstrated an openness to learning from the wider community, this can be seen in their adoption of the circular economy strategy which begun in Brighton University and has since been expanding into the community as well as the council's strategy. This openness to learning, does at times seem to come at the expense of focus. This links to the previous discussion of framing because the council is open to new angles and strategies this can result in conflicting or inconsistent framing.

One of the key lessons that has been forced upon Brighton and Hove Council is what happens when consultation processes are not given the appropriate time. This lesson was learnt through a bike lane that was removed due to poor planning and then public and media backlash (Brighton and Hove City Council Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee 15th March 2022; Brighton and Hove City County Green Party Councillor). This is in part what informed the Labour Councillor Nancy Platts' cautiousness towards compromising on Low Traffic Neighbourhoods ((Brighton and Hove City Council Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee 15th March 2022)), as she was leader of the council whilst the bike lane was rolled out. The Brighton and Hove Green Party Councillor said that they are now attempting to improve the schemes that were previously put in rapidly. The Oxfordshire Labour Party County Councillor was very clear that public consultation is key:

“policy generation done with the public not [...] decided behind closed doors and dropped on high as though it's finished. No, it's got to be this is where we want to get to [the desired outcome]. This is roughly the framework come and fill in the detail with us. Because the other key thing about that is it fills in the details better because it's lots of people's lived experience” (Oxfordshire Labour Party County Councillor, personal communication, 16 March 2022)

Not only does more extensive consultation generate better policy, but also it prevents mistakes that result in the removal of a bike lane. Particularly when creating policy around LTNs, but

also any policy that results in changes that disadvantage some groups, the only way to avoid unmanageable backlash is to conduct adequate consultation. The council used this knowledge of the short fallings to try to recommend better policy at the national level, which demonstrates capacity for institutional learning and understanding of the drivers of poor policy at the local level. It is important to note that the council is aware of this, and the short timeline was imposed by central government, this will be explored further in section 5.4.2.

Green New Deal Group Co-Author suggested that there is a real need to rebuild the knowledge capacities at the level of local government in the UK to be able to deliver the local infrastructure required for a GND (Green New Deal Group Co-Author). CLES argue that coordination between local councils through sharing and learning best practices can help in this process (CLES Employee). These two interviewees made it clear that a lot of councils are just beginning this process of learning and building capacity to deliver the ambitious climate action that they have committed to or are experiencing political demand to commit to.

4.2 Relational resources

The relational resources help us to understand how the council interacts with the wider community of Brighton and Hove. This is particularly significant in the case of this city because there is such a density of actors working on projects to advance social and environmental justice (Durrant et al., 2018). The council, therefore, has a lot to gain from the relationships they have or form with the network of actors in the city. Crucially, the relational resources here are connected to the ways in which they help to advance or could help to move closer to the goals of a GND in the city.

4.2.1 Range of stakeholders

Brighton and Hove City Council have some key organisational stakeholders with which they collaborate, in addition they have a wider pool of stakeholders who they are either accountable to via their elected councillors or they consult in processes like the online consultations and the Climate Assembly. Council meetings are accessible to members of the public, who are able to ask questions, however, it is worth noting that much of this access has been limited to Zoom during the pandemic. Although this is no fault of the council, it is worth mentioning with regards to the type of stakeholders who can be engaged. The Climate Assembly included 50 members of the public, who were selected by sending invitations to 10,000 households in the locality. Of those people, 700 applied for one of the 50 places in the Climate Assembly, the final 50 were selected based on a range of criteria to provide a representative sample of the city.

In conversation with the Council Officer: Brighton and Hove Food partnership, Green Growth Platform, Chamber of Commerce, the Universities, Climate Assembly, Business networks and Fridays for the Future and Extinction Rebellion were mentioned as key stakeholders that they engage. This was caveated by the fact that this was by no means a comprehensive list. In the council reports and meetings, it can be seen that Brighton and Hove Energy Services Cooperative, The Living Coast UNESCO Biosphere, Brighton and Hove Buses, the Coast to Capital LEP and Greater Brighton are important for the institutional functioning of the council. Although it was noted that Coast to Capital LEP has experienced funding cuts in funding and staffing in the last year (Brighton and Hove Sustainability Council Officer, personal communication, 7 April 2022).

The Brighton and Hove Green Party Councillor particularly mentioned the Climate Assembly as a form of stakeholder engagement. Interestingly, The Oxfordshire Labour Party County Councillor placed more emphasis on continuous public engagement, trying to build in and

institutionalise this public engagement. In conversations with members of Brighton and Hove Council the Climate Assembly seemed to aim at reaching agreement and integration of the range and frames shared by stakeholders in order to arrive at a consensus outcome. There was not discussion of more permanent or more institutionalised forms of deliberative democracy, as was argued for by the Oxfordshire Labour Party County Councillor.

4.2.2 Integration and collaboration of action amongst the wider network in Brighton and Hove

Brighton and Hove Council works with Greater Brighton, Coast to Capital LEP, Transport for the South East and the Greater South East Energy Hub in order to deliver decarbonisation of key infrastructure and the economy (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021b). Other key partners according to the report on the 2030 Carbon Neutral Programme are the two local universities, electricity and gas companies, and the Sussex Local Nature Partnership which launches projects aiming to accelerate climate action whilst developing green skills and jobs. The UNESCO Biosphere and has a permanent member of staff within the council who works on Biosphere projects, but who is integrated into the council. The importance of Coast to Capital, becomes apparent as they are currently funding the redevelopment of an area in the city called Black Rock. This redevelopment project includes increasing the biodiversity in the area (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021a).

Brighton and Hove had a recent long bin worker strike, so have learnt the importance of keeping unions on side (Brighton and Hove Green Party Councillor). Particularly because the public backlash towards the council in relation to the bin strike was significant. The dispute dominated local and national press and local social media groups (Atkinson, 2021; BBC, 2021; Fuller, 2021) and came up in interviews with Brighton and Hove Green Party Councillor. Echoing the sentiments of Sussex Surplus, Brighton and Hove Green Party Councillor said more direct engagement and collaboration with civil society would be positive. This being said, Brighton and Hove Council's efforts to encourage partnerships seems to have helped given this quote from Sussex Surplus:

“going in our favour is [that] there's very good coordination and networking. So [...] Brighton and Hove Food partnerships are really fantastic as a link to a lot of different food projects [...] they do play an active role in facilitating Surplus Food Network and an Emergency Food Network. And they're trying to push dynamic procurement through public sector. So, I think I think they are real assets, the foods, the city's foodscape.”
(Project Manager Sussex Surplus, personal communication, 8 April 2022)

The council encourages partnerships amongst third sector organisations, which seems to have created a strong network of actors in the city, especially in relation to food (Project Manager Sussex Surplus). The funding prioritisation for partnership projects seems to have created and maintained this strength.

4.2.3 Power to act and influence

The councils 2030 Carbon Neutral Programme aims to have influence to reduce emissions more widely in Brighton and Hove through encouraging active transport, insulation, EV charging points, food waste initiatives to name several strategies (Brighton and Hove Sustainability Council Officer). The council's power to act and influence is re complicated patchwork or direct and indirect influencing through a variety of mechanisms. Some of the outcomes of this influence will be challenging to measure and monitor, and therefore determining how much impact the council has and therefore their power to act can be complex.

4.2.3.1 Constraints on local government: political

“So, the problem is global, but the solutions are hyperlocal - it means dealing with this car exhaust, or that badly insulated house. So, we need those hyper localised solutions. We need that strong sense of local planning and of local democracy involved in that planning” (Head of Policy and Research at Common Weal, personal communication, 15 February 2022).

The interviewee from Common Weal, when speaking about what opportunities there were at the local level, acknowledged the necessity for local action and planning. They emphasised that at this current point local governments do not have sufficient powers to achieve the GND at the local level. They instead proposed that national government needs to focus on devolution of powers. This was echoed in a more specific way by Green New Deal Group Co-author in relation to financing, he recognised the restrictions placed on local government spending, originating from Margaret Thatcher, and the neoliberal worldview she advanced. The policies she introduced still inhibit the ability of local government to spend. Very frequently mentioned across the interviews is the constraints on funding and powers that create barriers to making significant changes at the local level is incredibly challenging (Brighton and Hove City County Green Party Councillor; Head of Policy and Research at Common Weal; Green New Deal Group Co-author). There was a reasonable degree of consensus that local efforts should be combined with pressuring for devolutions of power from the national to the local level (Brighton and Hove City County Green Party Councillor; CLES Employee, Head of Policy and Research at Common Weal; Oxfordshire Labour Party County Councillor). Local governments do have access to various types of funding; however, they all have quite stringent requirements on the profitability of projects to guarantee revenue streams to pay back the borrowed money (Green New Deal Group Co-Author).

In terms of the political possibility to act and influence, LTN can be illuminating as to the local government’s ability to change infrastructure to shape how people move around the city and how freely this power is given to the council or not. In relation to this the CLES interviewee stated that many councils are figuring this out and that:

“Councils haven't quite figured out to what extent how far they can be quite municipalist in the way that they implement things. And how far like how to navigate that participatory process. And I don't know if anywhere has got it right.” (CLES Employee, personal communication, 23 March 2022)

This highlights that many councils are sharing this learning process, the extent to which that can impose and if they are conducting participatory processes such as citizen’s assemblies, how these processes should play out and feed into the eventual policy outcome. This relates back to the openness and learning section. It was highlighted that many councils are currently undergoing the process of experiential education around climate action.

4.2.3.2 Constraints on local government: financial

There is consensus that local authorities can use their procurement power, however, the interviewee from CLES and Green New Deal Group Co-Author differed in the extent to which they thought that this local purchasing power could have influence. Green New Deal Group Co-Author placed more focus on finding large capital investment, whereas CLES looked at ways to generate income locally through community wealth building. They did not argue for one approach over the other and there was acknowledgement from both that doing what is

currently possible within the current constraints (Community Wealth Building) is worthwhile, whilst also recognising that further mobilisation of funds would be needed for a GND style transformation.

Green New Deal Group Co-Author mentioned that since the Conservative government reduced a subsidy for insulation, local governments have not been able to compensate for that loss of funding. The council also highlighted in evidence submitted to the council that the sudden termination of this Green Homes Grants left them struggling to catch up (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021c). This demonstrates how tightly the hands of local government can be tied by central government in the UK, because the local governments have no authority over raising taxes. This indicates how inextricably connected the power of the council to act is to the policies of central government. It also reveals how quickly the power to act can change in line with national policy.

Brighton and Hove Councillor was talking about the budget deficit facing the council and the consequences for the city as well as the consequences for the GND, the council was facing a budget gap of 18 million pounds:

“which at the time, translated into, you need to find savings of 18 million pounds, which means you need to cut 18 million pounds of services. [...] that is so much when the council is [...] already running on the bare minimum after like 10 years of those kind of cuts [...] and it's quite hard to advocate for extra things [...] when the like paper in front of you [says] need to cut this nursery or this provision for you know, refugees or disabled children.”

This presents a significant obstacle to both public investment in infrastructure, and extensive consultation required to generate good planning policy. Councillors, who are the eventual key decision makers, are confronted with choices between basic services and investment in these new ambitious political projects, that are essential but with the current constraints on funding difficult to argue for. Notably this is within a council who is largely one of the more ambitious in terms of climate action, as has been outlined earlier.

4.2.3.3 Shaping housing stock and supply chains

In terms of improving the efficiency of the local housing stock, the majority of the housing is owned by private actors. The council is able to run a retrofitting programme and a PV installation programme for their own housing stock, developed skills and jobs in the local economy (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021b). From 2021-2022 there was a plan to install 500kW of Solar PV on council buildings, saving 150 tonnes of CO₂ p.a. Additionally, as the council's energy contracts for buildings they own expire, they will be replaced with renewable ones. The council has greater power over their own buildings and therefore have an increased capacity to alter them, unfortunately this does represent a smaller proportion of the total housing stock. It is therefore key to find ways to successfully influence private actors, both occupying owners and landlords (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021b).

The council is able to request information from suppliers in supply chains and they are able to place certain requirements on them in order to reduce the environmental impact of their procurement practices. Through this practice, they can encourage suppliers to start reducing and reporting on their environmental impact. Although due to the Local Government Act 1999, local authorities are required to operate under a Best Value regime (Preuss, 2007). Although this takes into account social value and has been argued to align with principles of sustainable

development, it also requires monetary cost to be balanced which requires stringent justification (Loader, 2007).

4.3 Mobilisation capacity

The mobilisation capacity of the council relates to how the council can and does use its knowledge and relational capacities to achieve its stated goals.

4.3.1 The opportunity structure in Brighton and Hove

One of the main things that was raised during interviews and council meetings was that the national government plays a big role in facilitating the rapid roll out of bike lanes during COVID (Brighton and Hove City Council Environment, Transport and Sustainability Committee 15th of March 2022; Brighton and Hove City County Green Party Councillor; Brighton and Hove Sustainability Council Officer). Central government set up funding schemes to encourage active travel (Department of Transport, 2020). These funding schemes encouraged councils to roll out plans rapidly and made them compete for limited pots of money (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021c; Brighton and Hove City County Green Party Councillor). This is what allowed the council to quickly develop and execute plans for new bike lanes in the city, partially resulting in the removal of one bike lane due to the public backlash and inadequate execution. This again reiterates how tied the actions of the council are by the policies of central government.

In terms of the physical opportunity structure for active travel infrastructure this is an insightful quote from the council officer:

“Because we're sort of old city and a congested city, we don't really have the options of having separate bike, bus lanes, throughout the city, like, you know, if you go to Rotterdam or, you know, some of these other cities, they have this beautifully segregated lanes that prioritise the public transport and the active travel modes, and make it a really pleasant experience, you know, we actually just didn't literally don't have space for that.”
(Brighton and Hove Sustainability Council Officer, personal communication, 7 April 2022)

The limits imposed on the city by age, and lack of space also apply to real estate. Sussex Surplus mentioned that one of their key challenges was a lack of available and affordable commercial space. As a solution to this, they proposed that the council could act as a proactive landlord to provide some real estate to help build some sustainable local food infrastructure (Project Manager Sussex Surplus). This would also provide them with a revenue stream from rent payments. Brighton & Hove Food Partnership, which the council supports and works with, are working on many projects to build local food supply. This includes the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation land bid (Brighton and Hove Sustainability Council Officer, personal communication, 7 April 2022). Brighton & Hove Food Partnership were successful with their funding application for a ‘Demonstration project for landscape scale nature friendly agriculture on the chalk grassland surrounding Brighton & Hove, alongside the partnerships, engagement & wider food systems work that will underpin success’ this work links to efforts towards carbon capturing regenerative agriculture and decarbonised food supply chains. (Brighton and Hove Sustainability Council Officer, personal communication, 7 April 2022).

The council’s budget allocation recently has provided new funding to the Sustainability Team to provide staff and other resources required to expand activity in climate change mitigation and biodiversity protection and enhancement. This additional funding, with the extra staff

resources has been aimed at the development of citywide initiatives such as food waste collection, district heat installations, renewable energy development, biodiversity enhancement in the urban and rural estate and green infrastructure work (Brighton and Hove Council Policy and Resources Committee, 2019). This demonstrates the priority that is being given to climate action, which indicates there is effort being channelling into mobilisation resources and capacities. This allowance, the Sustainability and Carbon Reduction Investment Fund is included as part of the 2030 Carbon Neutral Programme to accelerate carbon reduction activities in the council. There was further investment in citywide projects that will advance the decarbonisation of the economy, which are outlined in table 9.

Table 4-1: Funding allocation for carbon reduction projects

Amount	Investment
£190,000	Investment in the Sustainability team for additional staff and other resources to expand climate change mitigation, biodiversity protection and enhancement
£500,000	Investment project citywide that help to advance the goals of sustainability and carbon reduction
£565,000	Money was borrowed under the Capital Investment Programme, this was to invest in the installation of solar photovoltaic panels on several corporate buildings, which will subsequently give the financial savings to the council

Source: (Brighton and Hove Council Policy and Resources Committee, 2019)

Further funding will be made available from the Sustainability and Carbon Reduction Investment Fund for projects. These projects aiming to achieve carbon reduction will be commissioned strategically by the city council, and assessed according to an evaluation matrix that includes (Brighton and Hove Council Policy and Resources Committee, 2019):

- The extent of the contribution of the project to carbon reduction, reduced surface water flooding, or protection biodiversity and habitat creation.
- How well the project aligns with existing strategies and policies (such as the Economic Strategy, the refreshed Biosphere Management Plan, Food Strategy, and emerging Greater Brighton Water and Energy Plans)
- The Value for Money under the Best Value Regime alongside a cost benefit assessment of the business case
- The business case incorporates the extent to which the funding is used to gain multiplier effects from other funding sources to leverage other public or private sector funding
- If the project will facilitate partnership working across the city, accounting for the track record and experience of the delivery partners
- The deliverability of the project
- The resulting wider community benefits, social value and community wealth

LEPs are a form of public-private partnership, which in the case of Brighton and Hove has been included as key to access funding for development projects. LEPs also coordinate closely with the Government Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy. The inclusion of collaboration with LEPs was an amendment made by the Labour Party to the Green New Deal motion proposed by the Green Party. This provides greater opportunities for council and non-council actors to develop and execute projects, such as the Black Rock rejuvenation mentioned previously. Although as previously mentioned, the capacity has been reduced in

recent years (Brighton and Hove Sustainability Council Officer, personal communication, 7 April 2022).

4.3.2 Arenas of discussion and decision making

Arenas in this context refer to both a physical space and to the style and characteristics of the institutional space where discussion and decision making occurs (Healey et al., 2003; Scott, 2004). In the case outlined by Lindseth & Reitan (2007) they also defined this as the forum within which the public has access to politicians.

In Brighton and Hove, the elected council is the only body that is legally allowed to make the decisions with regard to the city's governance via local authority. However, these are not taken in isolation, as has been discussed previously (Brighton and Hove City County Green Party Councillor). Discussions occur primarily in Hove Town Hall in a forum style, during the course of the COVID pandemic they have occurred online, or the meetings have been possible to attend online. All meetings are webcasted and recorded. Within the council the discussions and decision-making processes use a committee structure, with committees such as Environment, Transport and Sustainability and Policy and Resources being of particular importance to the development of the GND as they discuss the design and funding of the climate strategy in the city. Additionally, the full council forum is important for passing key decisions such as the GND motion itself.

Members of the public can enter these arenas and raise their concerns and thoughts on the council's work through asking questions in council meetings, presenting petitions or making a speech. Furthermore, the council lists open consultations for proposals on their website which people are able to provide feedback too via an online form (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2022b). This then helps to inform the council's decision-making process.

4.3.3 Repertoire

The council intended to conduct public consultation and discussion around a GND but due to the pandemic this was placed on pause (Brighton and Hove Sustainability Council Officer). This places a limit on the measurable response from the wider community. However, it is possible to look at the public response to the LTN policies for example. Which has been touched on before, as a particular point of contention. The following policy interventions were proposed by the council for public consultation (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2022c):

- Local neighbourhood mobility hubs
- Strategic mobility hubs
- Liveable City Centre
- Expanded Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ)
- Low Traffic Neighbourhoods
- School Streets
- Behaviour Change programmes

In response to the consultation survey, it was found that in the wider community of Brighton and Hove survey 60% of respondents stated that they strongly agree or agree with all of the policy interventions outlined above, with support for School Streets (71.6%) and Liveable City Centre (70.5%). Fewer than 20% either disagree or strongly disagree with all measures except Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (23.8%) and the expanded Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) (25.5%) (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2022c).

It is also worth bringing attention back to Oxfordshire Labour Party County Councillor's thoughts that the GND as a policy framing does not garner support from the public due to the complexity and abstractness of the concept. They argued that it is instead beneficial to use direct reasoning that constituents can understand immediately. However, the public in the UK, particularly campaigning sections of the public have mobilised around this particular policy framing. It is therefore perhaps useful to see a distinction between the policy framing to engage the public and the policy framing to garner support for the suite of policies proposed under the framing. In the interview with the Brighton and Hove Councillor, they mentioned that they had been surprised by the unanimous support for the bill across the parties (Brighton and Hove City County Green Party Councillor). This indicates that the framing adopted in the GND motion for the council was framing that has cross-party appeal.

In addition to mobilising people, the council must be able to mobilise resources. As has been outlined in section 4.4.1, the council has recently demonstrated its willingness to mobilise funds for the sustainability team and project in the community providing they meet the assessment criteria outlined. The GND framing aims to combine carbon reduction, environmental harms and risks as well as creating benefits for citizens in Brighton and Hove such as insulated housing and well-paid jobs. This fits into the framing criteria adopted by the council for projects that generate community benefits, social value and community wealth outlined in section 4.4.1. It could then be inferred that the GND policy framing has the potential to mobilise financial resources.

One further method that the council could work synergistically with local partners would be to direct public procurement to mobilise and support projects that advance the climate and biodiversity goals of the council. Sussex surplus mentioned that the council could support them through using procurement money to buy catering for local institutions (schools, hospitals, prisons) from the local producers and waste food processors (Project Manager Sussex Surplus). This is a way that the council could encourage the wide range of efforts towards GND style transformation led by civil society, whilst ensuring an income for themselves.

4.3.3.1 Public engagement for mobilisation

According to the Oxfordshire Labour Party County Councillor, public engagement is a key way to build and sustain momentum. For them, this started with an open space for citizens to come and engage in thinking about transport in the county. This was done in a high street shop front, where people were invited to join and see plans for the county, as well as being encouraged to provide ideas and input themselves. This was followed by a consistent and strong online campaign presence to keep people informed. The Oxfordshire Labour Party County Councillor also stated that this helped to foster trust, they were able to establish themselves as a source of reliable and up to date information, which reduced backlash around a perceived lack of transparency.

A strategy that seems to be pursued by Brighton and Hove Council is to release information and new plans via the press, this can be seen from recent stories such as the proposal widespread transformation of areas of Hove in favour of active travel being shared first to news website Sussex live (Graves, 2022). This was not announced on the council's social media, nor on the social media of the councillor who was quoted in the piece, nor is it visible on the council's website. This suggests that the council could improve how widely publicised information about important developments in the city.

4.3.3.2 Employment and Ownership as mobilisation

“So the overlap between economic democracy and political democracy is a circle to me. So there's something in terms of how you use this as a way to reengage people in [...] democracy because there's such a [high] level of distrust and apathy.” (CLEES Employee, personal communication, 23 March 2022)

This quote from the CLEES employer raises a point about extending the discussion on public consultation and engagement to include economic democratisation. They are arguing that to meaningfully engage in local democracy, there must be more democratic control over the economy. They use this perspective to argue for expanding public and community ownership. They suggest that this will both engage people and result in greater wealth in the local economy. I think the central point here is that the goals of community wealth building to expand the democratic ownership of the local economy. This is seen as a way to realign the economy to prioritise people and planet and to foster more engagement with local democracy. One proposal was to identify family businesses, or small businesses that the owners intend to sell and instead converting them into worker owned businesses. They argue for this as a key method through which to build an economy that delivers for people and planet for a GND:

“you cannot achieve a generative[...] economy that works for people and the planet rather than profit if you don't question ownership and community wealth building directly, questions ownership.” (CLEES Employee, personal communication, 23 March 2022)

Sussex Surplus emphasised employment at the Real Living Wage as the goal of the project. This is both to secure funding in the name of social equality (from an EU funding scheme) and to contribute to the local economy. This is a strategy within the repertoire of local institutions to develop to deliver green, well-paid jobs that serve to connect people's material interests to the decarbonisation of the economy, or the reduction in food waste. By connecting jobs, particularly Real Living Wage jobs to projects that advance reduce emissions or waste or cultivate biodiversity you both create wealth within the community and attach the interests of the community to the goals of the GND.

When talking about the UNESCO Biosphere's role within the city's sustainability strategy Brighton and Hove Green Party Councillor mentioned that

“they do lots of work in the city, with schools in particular. So they'll do school trips and working with young people” (Brighton and Hove City County Green Party Councillor, personal communication, 14 March 2022).

This is one way that the council builds and sustains momentum, through having education in schools. This is in addition to the wider engagement with the community through their central three objects: ‘conserve and enhance nature and culture; support sustainable human development; and to share environmental knowledge, learning, awareness and engagement’ (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021a, p.13).

4.3.4 Who is driving change?

In the framework they note that institutional capacity depends on the presence or absence of critical change agents at different stages (Healey et al., 2003). In the case of Brighton and Hove, it was possible to see the constellations of change agents through interviews and document review. Due to the diverse influences and actors, and the council's reliance on a wide range of external actors I have focused mostly on those change agents who are present and were identified as driving forces behind the climate action. Although, it did emerge that there could be key roles within councils that should exist if they want to pursue community wealth building.

Brighton and Hove Local Council and particularly some councillors are driving forward a GND. Additionally, the council has been spurred on and influenced by civil society, the council officer highlighted the pressure from Extinction Rebellion and The Youth Strike for Climate as key driving factors (Brighton and Hove Sustainability Council Officer). Furthermore, the interviewee from CLES mentioned that there is a trend of young people working in councils, who bring new knowledge and new framings to sustainability teams and to the active council. This is reflected by the two councillors who I was able to interview, who were both young and had a connection to GND framing. The Brighton and Hove Green Party Councillor, who explicitly advocates for a GND at the national level and in the city and brought the motion to the council. The Oxfordshire Labour Party County Councillor, who draws from GND principles to tie together social and climate justice in relation to transport policy in Oxfordshire.

Within local councils it was suggested that in order to “deliver [...] Green New Deals” there needs to be a way to combine sustainability teams within councils to the resources available within the economic development teams.

“the role of climate and sustainability teams is quite interesting, because in some places, we've seen them sit alongside [...] economic development [...] I think, because that resource is needed to deliver on climate commitments and action plans. But there's a question mark for us at the moment of how we draw those two sorts of officers together economic development and climate because that's what's needed to deliver those Green New Deals.” (CLES Employee, personal communication, 23 March 2022).

In Brighton and Hove Council the Carbon Neutral Members Working Group sits within the Policy and Resources committee and is therefore closely aligned to the strategy proposed by the CLES employee.

4.3.4.1 National Government as a change agent

The national government was recognised by multiple participants to shape and drive the work of local councils, particularly once they clearly prioritise particular things i.e. active travel (Brighton and Hove City County Green Party Councillor). This highlights how great an influence central government can have in terms of agenda setting and resource availability. This demonstrates the role of central government as a change agent in relation to local government. The interviewee from CLES mentioned that having a driving force from the national level is helpful as this provides more consistency for the local level, if transformation is being driven by one councillor at the local level there is a high level of vulnerability to change once this change agent leaves (CLES Employee). However, the inverse is also true, that the local level is vulnerable to inconsistencies and policy fluctuations at the national level (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021c, 2021c).

Having investigated the existing institutional capacity in Brighton and Hove, I turn to the national level of government. In the UK the actions of local authorities are in a large part bound to the policies and principles of central government. To understand local government as a political actor in the UK, it is essential to both look at the opportunities within the current limitations whilst also examining how these limitations could be overcome by changes to national policy.

As was mentioned across interview, funding is a key constraint for local councils. It was proposed to address this in several ways:

- Directing pension funds (Green New Deal Group Co-author)

- Altering ISA rules so that savings can be used for GND investment (Green New Deal Group Co-author)
- Councils borrowing money from other mechanisms that require guaranteed revenue (Green New Deal Group Co-author)
- Using LEPs (as the council does) although this seems to be a departure from the GND style of funding i.e. publicly driven
- Using community wealth building as a strategy to generate local money to then reinvest (less tangible/measurable) (CLES Employee, Green New Deal Co-author)

Interviewees additionally mentioned the devolution of powers to the local level from central government. The UK has a patchwork of local government with varying levels of power. Interviewees (CLES, Head of Policy and Research at Common Weal, Brighton and Hove Green Party Councillor, Green New Deal Group Co-Author) highlighted the need for greater powers at the local level over planning and transport in order to deliver the local climate action necessary. Central government, in this way could act as a change agent by empowering the local level to deliver action on climate and biodiversity challenges.

Alongside the pressures of inconsistency, the central government could eliminate need for cities to compete for pots of funding (i.e. for bike lanes) this encourages rushed planning and reduced public consultation (Brighton and Hove City County Green Party Councillor) (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021c). As was outlined in section 4.4.1, the competition for funding places limits on the opportunity structure available to local councils. This was highlighted by Brighton and Hove City Council, despite them being acknowledged for being “really successful with getting [awarded funding and] we have been in some of the top rankings in terms of design” (Brighton and Hove City County Green Party Councillor). This suggests that even when councils are able to meet and succeed with this time pressures, they still produce worse policy outcomes than could be possible with more extended time for consultation.

5 Discussion

Following the detailing of the findings that emerged from the data collection and analysis, I turn to the literature to contextualise said findings. This is also crucial for this research to arrive at useful and meaningful policy recommendations. Firstly, I look at the efforts pursued in Brighton and Hove in relation to the GND plan as outlined by Common Weal. Subsequently, I will discuss some of the key outputs from this study to arrive at some proposals for the city and other local governments in the UK. These recommendations will be outlined in more concrete detail in section 6.1 however, they must emerge from the combination of my findings and academic literature.

5.1 GND Framing in Literature as compared to Brighton and Hove

Framing was one of the largest points of contention amongst interviewees. Although I adopted an intentionally limited framing of the GND from Common Weal for the purpose of this study, it is useful to place the disagreements in the context of the literature. The framing of the GND in practice shares its variety with the academic development of the idea of a GND. It emerged from the data that the framing of the GND, is something that although not explicitly disputed, is a source of disagreement between council actors. This perhaps partially reflects the wider contestation present in academic definition of the GND. To engage with this further, and to provide context to these differing conceptualisations I will explore some of the academic debates around what a GND should be. This is also crucial to contextualise this research, as the advancement of the goals of a GND at the local level will, through practical policy commitments demonstrate alignment with one or more of these perspectives.

The arguments stem from a wide range of ideological commitments from Eco-Socialism to strict Keynesian, to both Green Growth and Degrowth perspectives. The concept is a disputed one that is in the process of being shaped by the actors that are advocating for it, both academically and practically. Firstly, in Brighton and Hove, it seems that primarily the council as an institution views the GND as a means to prioritise good local employment whilst decarbonising the economy. This seems quite far from the GND promoted by Common Weal which understands it as an expansive plan to transform of society and the economy. However, the framing of the GND varies from the council's decarbonisation plan which includes but is not limited to their understanding of a GND, this will be discussed further in section 5.2.

Under the more Eco-Socialist perspective of the GND strategies relevant to the local level are the increase in worker ownership, municipalisation of electricity and water supplies, creation and maintenance of decentralised solar power, food, creation of energy, and farming cooperatives (Schwartzman, 2011). The paper arguing for a GND from an Eco-Socialist perspective proposed that the connection between emission reduction and job creation would help to align the labour movement with the decarbonisation of the economy, this supports the findings in 4.4.3.2. Additionally, they argue that if these green jobs are organised in a formalised labour movement it would facilitate an increase in the achievement of non-market regulation, similarly to the regulations that were achieved in the 20th US.

The Eco-Socialist view of the GND has been criticised, particularly the version outlined by Labour for a Green New Deal, for reading too much like a list of demands than like a comprehensive vision (Bloomfield & Steward, 2020). This ties into the framing debates, as to whether a GND can be grasped by the general public or whether it gets lost in its complexity and comprehensive nature. Interestingly, aligning with the GND framing adopted in the 2030 Carbon Neutral Programme, Bloomfield & Steward (2020) argue that the GND should primarily emphasise environmental and employment benefits.

Another dynamic and ongoing disagreement amongst academia and civil society around the direction of a GND, is the plan's commitment to growth or degrowth. The Brighton and Hove GND and 2030 Carbon Neutral Programme demonstrate a firm commitment to growth. A large component of the GND framing is the importance of significant public investment in the decarbonisation of the economy, for example investing in renewable energy infrastructure. It has been argued by Pollin (2018) that this investment in the infrastructure, particularly renewable energy will result in the stimulation of the wider economy. This stands in contrast to the degrowth argument that favours a contraction of the economy overall. Degrowth perspectives argue that GDP growth of any kind will make reducing emissions more difficult (Mastini et al., 2021). Bell & Bevan (2021) outline that the GND has been criticised both from right and left of the political spectrum. From the right for including issues, it deems irrelevant to climate change. From the left arises the belief that a GND represents nothing more than greenwashing and fails to address unlimited growth. However, the Eco-Socialist perspective offers an alternative left-wing view in support of the GND (Schwartzman, 2011). This points to a key point of contention which is some of the GNDs more flexible stance on growth, with several articulations including scope for growth in some areas. Other GNDs are fundamentally opposed to economic growth (Mastini et al., 2021), others still are indifferent (Raworth, 2017 in Bell & Bevan, 2021).

One useful reflection on frames can be drawn from the application of the institutional capacity building framework to Newcastle. In this case they suggested that some conscious reflection of frames within the council and with other partners could be really helpful to align the vision of stakeholders (Healey et al., 2003). It seems in Brighton and Hove that there has been some unconscious reflection on framing both in favour of Carbon Neutral framing and perhaps moving away from seeing the GND as the overall plan. This seems to have occurred in the process of writing the reports requested in the motion. Perhaps a conscious reflection within the council about the framing would help to integrate the perceptions of the shared goals amongst stakeholders. The debate on growth and degrowth seems to be beyond the reach of council discussions given their legislative and political restrictions outlined in relation to funding. However, it is helpful to see how the GND in practice in this case aligns more to the versions that see it as a means to stimulate the economy.

5.2 Brighton and Hove GND in comparison to Common Weal

In order to see the further opportunities for a GND in Brighton and Hove, I have conducted a comparison of the policies included within the GND policy framing adopted by Brighton and Hove Council and in The Common Home Plan (McAlpine et al., 2019). For the purposes of this analysis, I have included activities of Brighton and Hove Council that they themselves may not include under GND framing but that are synchronous with the proposals in The Common Home Plan. This will allow a more accurate description of the strategic opportunities available to Brighton and Hove, rather than insisting the policies should be included under GND to be considered.

Interestingly, despite the disputes and contentions around the framing of the decarbonisation of the economy, it is revealed in Table 5-1 that there is a very high degree of similarity between the policy proposals included under Common Weal's GND as there are in the 2030 Carbon Neutral Programme (McAlpine et al., 2019) (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021b). There are some areas that are not mentioned in the Brighton and Hove plan, however, one of them is the transition of carbon intensive industries which is not relevant in the city. In Brighton and Hove the jobs in the economy are in the following sectors:

- Public sector

- Professional and financial
- Tourism and visitor economy
- Retail
- Business support
- ICT and digital services
- Higher education
- Creative services

This means that unlike the GND outlined by Common Weal, there is less need to think about how to transition workers from carbon intensive industries. Although there will be carbon emitting activities associated with all sectors outlined above, it will not require the same level of reskilling and transitioning as would be necessary if Brighton and Hove had a coal power plant. In relation to business and industry the circular economy priorities as well as the reduction in consumption priorities are more relevant for Brighton and Hove due to the dominance of retail, services and tourism. Additionally, the emphasis on decarbonising electricity and heating makes sense due to the office-based nature of the other industries that contribute to the city's economy.

A further area that contrasts is the expansion of agroecology. Brighton and Hove Council do outline that they intend to explore agricultural practices that encourage greater biodiversity, but the specifics are not mentioned. However, the council report also does not specify any rules around pesticides. Finally, a point of departure is the absence of a policy to price in the externalities of products. I would infer that this is something the council is unable to implement from this level of local government as it would require legal changes at the national level. There are other areas where the council does not have the authority to implement the proposals in their entirety. For example, the council can strive to supply all their buildings with renewable energy, and they can aim to expand renewable energy in the city through funding and partnerships. However, the council is unable to replace all non-renewable electricity generation because households make their choices around which providers to choose. We can see a theme emerging that the council is able to increase the ease and availability of alternatives that align with GND transformation they often cannot mandate them.

One area where the council has more control is transport, because the council is a unitary authority has control over planning, they are able to introduce policies such as the bus gates, which they are also able to enforce. Again, the council cannot force households to get rid of their cars, but they have powers to make the city an inconvenient place to have and drive a car whilst making it convenient to use active travel or public transport. This is also the area that has experienced the greatest public backlash, and which will be discussed more in detail in section 5.3.2.

Table 5-1: Comparison of the Common Weal GND with the actions pursued in Brighton and Hove, actions from Brighton and Hove are taken from the 2030 Carbon Neutral Programme, issues that are either not mentioned or not relevant have been highlighted in grey

Focal Issue	Solution suggested by Common Weal	Solution utilised in Brighton and Hove
Carbon emissions and climate change	Replace all non-renewable electricity generation	Expand renewable energy suppliers to council owned buildings, expand renewables in the city
	Replace all non-renewable heating sources.	The city has said it will explore the decarbonisation of heat including looking at options for gas boiler replacement, district heating and heat pump installation incentivisation (Brighton and Hove Council

		Policy and Resources Committee, 2019; Brighton and Hove Sustainability Council Officer, personal communication, 7 April 2022)
	Adapt agricultural practices.	The council intends to review how council owned land is being used with the goal of encouraging uses that promote biodiversity and mitigate climate change, this includes food growing practices. Additionally, they aim to encourage and facilitate tree planting, green corridors, and restoration of hedgerows.
	Reforest	Plan to maintain the biodiverse and unique downland chalk grassland, with some natural regeneration of woodland, and some planting where appropriate
	Move to zero-carbon transport	Over 1/3 of the city's emissions come from transport (includes estimation for shipping and flights). The plans include expanding infrastructure for and encouraging active transport. In addition to increasing public transport use and switching from petrol and diesel to electric and hydrogen.
	Improve energy efficiency and reduce energy usage	Retrofit council buildings, and encourage private sector to retrofit their buildings
	Move to zero-waste	The council is pursuing several projects to reduce waste: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership with Tech Take Back – which provides end of life collection for small electrical equipment • Assessing possibilities for a food waste collection service • Review current waste collection bin system, and how to improve • Expanding garden waste collection • School food waste collection • Minimise waste sent to landfill • Increase furniture reuse from bulky collection • Conduct feasibility study on the expansion of the types of plastic that can be recycling Communications campaigns
	Adapt carbon intensive industries or reduce their volume.	Not relevant
	Change diets	The council states that it will build on its existing work on food that encourages more plant-based diets.
	Shorten supply chains	Develop and localise supply chains
	Move to an agroecology system of agriculture	Not mentioned explicitly
Species extinction and biodiversity loss	Rewild – allow some land to revert to an unmanaged state	Rewilding is planned in Brighton and Hove to improve biodiversity, including the wilding of a former golf course and greening the urban environment in the city
	Change diets and greatly reduce food waste	Work on encouraging plant-based diets as well as reducing food waste through Brighton and Hove Food Partnership

	Tackle climate change	Other measures address this
	Continually strengthen and police regulation on pollutants	The key source of pollution in Brighton and Hove is transport pollution, this is in addition to waste pollutants.
Pollution	Move to a zero-waste economy	Circular economy strategy in addition to measures outlined to address waste
	Adapt agricultural practices	Pesticides and fertilisers are not mentioned, not is organic agriculture
	Reduce and eventually end the use of plastic	There is the intention to create a scheme to encourage businesses to end the use of single use plastic. Additionally, the council aims to develop a plan to particularly tackle single use plastics in the tourist economy
	Put in place effective water shortage planning	Continued maintenance of The Aquifer Project, thereby protecting and improving the quality of groundwater in the Brighton chalk aquifer – this is the maintenance of the public water supply.
Water shortage	Improve household and industrial water use efficiency	Included in the Greater Brighton Water Plan (Water Working Group, 2020)
	Adapt agricultural practices	Included in the Greater Brighton Water Plan (Water Working Group, 2020)
	Deconsumerise – reduce the amount people consume in the first place	Aim to develop a flow analysis for the production and consumption of goods in the city to promote reduced consumption
Resource drain	Use a hierarchy of borrow, reuse, repair, remanufacture and recycle	Seem to adopt hierarchy of reduce, reuse, repair. This does not seem to include borrow and remanufacture at the current moment.
	Move to a zero-waste economy and end landfill and incineration	As outlined above they aim to minimise waste sent to landfill
	Price-in the externalities of products	Not mentioned
	Shorten supply chains	Develop and localise supply chains
	Change diets and stop felling forestry for agriculture	Encourages more plant-based diets, trees that are felled are normally diseased Elms. The council is attempting to address to find a strategy to avoid losing this tree stock altogether. Furthermore, Ash dieback is a threat (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2017)
Deforestation	Replant forests and establish new forestry	Plan to allow some natural regeneration of woodland, and some planting where appropriate
	Move to a zero-waste economy and deconsumerise	Outlined previously
	Move to a system of agroecology	Not mentioned in agroecology terms but soil health is highlighted throughout the 2030 Carbon Neutral Programme
Soil degradation	Move to a zero-waste economy with composting	Expansion of food waste collection and community composting
	Change diets	Encourages more plant-based diets.

Source: Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021b and McAlpine et al., 2019

Despite, the similarity with the CLES GND in terms of policies pursued, and issues intended to be addressed there are some subtle but important differences. The 2030 Carbon Neutral Programme does not emphasise the publicly led aspect as much as the Common Weal iteration. The inclusion and reliance on LEPs and the lack effort to increase the number of forms of alternative ownership present in the economy. The shortcomings of LEPs and the possibilities for expanded public ownership as part of Community Wealth Building will be explored in sections 5.3.3 and 5.3.4 respectively. To refer back to the city GND by Lawrence et al. (2019) outlined in table Table 2-2, the plan in Brighton and Hove has much less emphasis on decentralisation and democratisation of the economy. This demonstrates that the Brighton and Hove plan for decarbonisation of the economy departs from the principles of economic democratisation held in common by other conceptualisations of the GND.

5.3 Strategic possibilities for Brighton and Hove

Having established the similarities and departments of Brighton and Hove's decarbonisation plan from Common Weal's plan in combination with the institutional capacity available to advance the plans outlined I turn to the specific strategic possibilities available in the city. This is where the lessons drawn from the present and missing institutional capacities can be applied to help to turn the planning commitments to a GND style transformation into an institutionalised reality.

5.3.1 Low Traffic Neighbourhoods

The issue of integration of framing with reference to LTNs is a particularly interesting one, as it creates the need to integrate opponents to a particular policy framing. This must be done to a sufficient extent to continue the development of active travel infrastructure. LTNs also represent one of the more significant challenges at the local level because they are one of the areas where arguably the council is able to shape you live to the greatest extent. Despite the framing of LTNs and active travel infrastructure as a contentious issue, as the Oxfordshire County Councillor mentioned the majority of people are in favour of or indifferent. You therefore need to aim to maintain the position of the indifferent people or converting them in favour. In order to do this, communication and consultation must be carefully managed, this will be explored more in the next section.

5.3.2 Communication and Consultation

Communication is a key area where improvements are possible with relatively low effort. For example, avoid announcing new projects that might be explored in local media outlets with no further information, as was outlined in section 4.4.3.1. To minimise the opportunity for members of the public to speculate in the presence of uncertainty, announcements should be made clearly, and from reliable council sources rather than exclusively to the local media pages. Example could be taken from the Oxfordshire County Councillor, who established themselves as a trustworthy source of information. This was aided by the then face-to-face discussions that are possible with a person subsequently, rather than a faceless media outlet.

From personal experience trying to navigate the website of Brighton and Hove Council, I would recommend improvements to their ease of access to information. There is an abundance of information and reports are presented well but finding them on the website is difficult. The website is geared towards services offered by the council and has less emphasis on information. The Oxfordshire Labour Party County Councillor placed a lot of emphasis on good, clear, and reliable information through mediums that can reach all demographics (paper newsletters,

emails, social media, in person engagement). The successful roll out of bus gates in Oxford perhaps suggests that investing more energy into communication could help Brighton and Hove. This is something they are investing in with a specific communications officer, with this role starting it would be good to improve the design and accessibility of information.

Discussions with the local organisation Sussex Surplus (an organisation who process food waste to feed a large section of the community and provide jobs for neurodiverse people), made it clear that they were keen to have greater engagement with the council. Of course, this may often be the case and cannot always be fulfilled but it was demonstrative of the appetite amongst civil society for further engagement. As an actor that provides cooked food that would be wasted for many constituents who might otherwise struggle, they are an actor worthwhile engaging with. They have only been interacted with under the umbrella of the Brighton and Hove Food Partnership, it would be useful to engage more meaningfully with partnerships such as Sussex Surplus.

Bell & Bevan (2021), having explored the differences and points of contention between GND projects they interviewed people to investigate support for the policies that constitute a GND and then see whether the messaging about said policies as a GND package had reached through. Importantly, they found that the policies that form the GND were popular when explained to people. However, the GND policy suite and 2019 election messaging in the UK from the Labour Party and Green Party had not spread sufficiently or remained littered with misunderstanding. This could either suggest that the messaging has not spread sufficiently, or that the messaging is too abstract for people to grasp. Following from this, it may be helpful to include some reflection on framing both externally with the general public as well as the internal reflection proposed in section 5.1.

5.3.3 Local Enterprise Partnerships

LEPs are worth focussing on in more detail as the inclusion of them in the Brighton and Hove GND motion was a condition to the motion passing. They also relate very closely to how the GND is funded, and how local supply chains are developed. LEPs were introduced in 2010, amidst the financial recession and the shift from a 13 year long stretch of Labour Government to a Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government (Britton & Woodman, 2014). Since their introduction LEPs have undergone a process of development but they were created with a mandate to spur on private sector growth to create jobs. This was one aspect of the shift in focus to localism that was pursued by the coalition government (Britton & Woodman, 2014). The LEPs originated at a time where the UK Government was aiming to advance its efforts to decarbonise the economy, and therefore they have a history of being attached to the decarbonisation of local economies to meet the countries emission reduction targets (Britton & Woodman, 2014). Interestingly, LEPs were rolled out as a response to increased calls for devolution of power to local areas (Britton & Woodman, 2014), which were still present in my interview findings.

It is important to note that LEPs are a departure from the GNDs normal emphasis on public funding. One paper that conducted research into eight different LEP case studies from a range of institutional background conditions looked at the role of LEPs in local governance (Newman & Gilbert, 2022). The paper provided an unfavourable account of their impact on knowledge flows, transparency, and democratic accountability. LEPs were meant to improve the connections between public and private sectors in subnational governance. However, Newman and Gilbert (2022) argue that have failed to do so in three ways. Firstly, the unrepresentative nature of many LEP boards has led to a focus on large, established businesses rather than smaller local ones. Secondly, it was suggested that LEPs would help to yield collaborative networks,

however these networks were often found to be created around the interests of individuals and lacked transparency. Finally, they have undermined democratic accountability due to the leading role of the private sector in LEPs and that they are supposed to be modelled on business structures. This is because although they could be argued to be accountable to the local community, they are only democratically accountable via the members from the local authority (HM Treasury, 2013). Furthermore, it has been argued that because they are ‘driven by a traditional economic development emphasis on key sectors’, they tend to focus on isolated ‘big ticket’ proposals and project, which can end up sacrificing the goals of long-term transformations such as the GND which aims to ‘deliver multiple economic, environmental, and social objectives’ (Britton & Woodman, 2014, p. 631). Newman and Gilbert (2022) argue that businesses cannot be seen as the sole solution to galvanising local economic knowledge, developing partnerships, and ensuring capable leadership. Therefore, reverting exclusively to the private sector to solve the aforementioned problems facing local governance results in compromises on representativeness, transparency, and accountable governance. The need to find alternative funding models is exaggerated by the recent funding cuts that have been experienced by LEPs (Brighton and Hove Sustainability Council Officer, personal communication, 7 April 2022).

5.3.4 Community Wealth Building for a Green New Deal

Community Wealth Building was framed by two interviewees to achieve a local economy aligned with GND values. This was also in relation to the limited funding available to local authorities like Brighton and Hove. In contrast to the public-private type of economic partnership included under the LEPs, Community Wealth Building emphasises collective and co-operative ownership.

To see evidence of the success of this method and co-operative forms of ownership to build Community Wealth I turn to the frequently referenced case study of Preston City Council as summarised by Webster et al. (2021). The council utilised Community Wealth Building using local anchor institutions, who reduced the size of their contracts and committed to choosing local suppliers. The reduced size of the contracts meant that the pieces of work were less attractive to larger corporates in the private sector who sought economies of scale. The council directed significant efforts to encouraging the co-operative sector and linked this sector to meeting to procurement needs of the anchor institutions. This built strength into the co-operative sector, which also brought local income at a high level. The reason the Preston case has gathered so much attention and is so frequently referenced is that it was able to produce demonstrable improvements to the local economy and society. The value of procurement from anchor institutions rose from £38.3m in 2012 to £112.3m in 2016. This has also translated into the provision of a Real Living Wage to over 4,000 people as well as increased economic diversity. It was also named the UK’s most improved city in 2018 (Partington & correspondent, 2018).

5.4 What can be done at the national level to enhance the ability of local governments like Brighton and Hove to advance the goals of a GND?

To address my second research question, I turn the discussion to the options available at the national level that would facilitate improved or increased climate action at the local level. This takes the form of funding and policy consistency. I have not included devolution of power as this then requires a far more detailed analysis on the current financial and legislative powers available. This knowledge would then need to be complemented with an understanding of which

levels of devolution would be helpful and necessary which goes well beyond the scope of this paper.

5.4.1 Funding

In the findings section I detailed the nature of competitive funding and that councils are often required to compete against one another for limited quantities of money for projects such as planning and implementing active travel infrastructure. I suggested in the findings, and it was demonstrated by the removal of a bike lane in Brighton and Hove that this competition, particularly with short timescales attached results in poor planning and insufficient consultation. Furthermore, it perhaps instinctively seems counter intuitive to put the success of one council above another to facilitate the decarbonisation of the economy. As has been outlined previously in section 1.1, the scale of this task is immense and requires coordination and collaboration on a mammoth scale, including the local level. The importance of the local level in the UK is itself recognised by the Climate Change Committee (2020). It could be and has been argued according to public choice theory that this competition will result in the better and therefore more efficient allocation of resources towards projects that result in the best use of money (Boyne, 1996). However, when councils are already operating at levels where they have to choose between investing in the decarbonisation of the economy and keeping nurseries and disabled support, it seems that competition and funding constraint will not result in the desired efficient allocation in resources (Brighton and Hove City County Green Party Councillor, personal communication, 14 March 2022). Instead, it will result in council's inability to invest meaningfully in the decarbonisation of the economy.

The need for councils to choose between providing basic services and climate action highlights the interlink between funding and institutional capacity, because the underfunding of councils prevents them from exploring and therefore learning and developing the capacity to pursue bolder more ambitious plans. Unfortunately, in many ways, greater access to funding would alleviate a lot of the barriers to institutional capacity building in local government in the UK. However, this links back to the earlier section in which I outlined the possibilities for councils in the absence of increased expenditure from the central government. There are still innovative ways for councils to generate wealth, but it is important to note the significance of the absence of funding from central government. In terms of the framing around who should be creating and implementing the GND, which links into the discussions of scale of action and power to act. Bloomfield & Steward (2020) argue that the state driving as a centralised force pursuing down methods is not appropriate for transitions in this timespan. National governments should only specify the broad direction, and execution should be done at local and city level with budgets allocated by central government. This execution would rely heavily on increasing availability of capital.

5.4.2 Consistency of policy

In addition to the difficulties associated with lack of financing, the competition and short timelines attached to the funding that does exist inconsistency of national policy can also make it more difficult for local authorities. Consistency in national policy can facilitate action at the local level, this can be simple things like continued support for the SCATTER project or more complex things like transport policies (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021c). In evidence submitted by Brighton and Hove Council to Parliament to highlighted the short timelines for funding bids as a key obstacle for retrofitting social housing (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021c). This in addition to the scrapping of the Green Homes Grant, which subsidised insulation, left councils struggling. When the limited capacity of councils is directed towards implementing a policy from central government which is then revoked, councils have a reduced

capacity to direct elsewhere. The trend seems to apply broadly across the board, that government should reduce the unpredictable fluctuations in national policy and guarantee continued support for successful policies such as the SCATTER project.

5.5 Reflection on my study

This study has, through the thorough investigation of Brighton and Hove illuminated how the wider framing debates around a GND are reflected at the local level. The focus on the GND has brought new insights to the policy debate in Brighton and Hove, which has not yet academically been investigated using this framing. This application offers further insights as to the difficulties and opportunities that arise in this local scale pursuit of policies that align with GND objectives. Furthermore, it allows this local level transformation to connect to a mobilising force within civil society. There are some clear limits that exist at the local level, primarily financial and legislative. However, there are also the key questions that face transformative policies around how to bring political consensus and public opinion along with you. This study has been shaped by the methodological, theoretical and analytical choices made throughout, the following paragraphs highlight some of the key ways that these choices have impacted the study. I then turn to the legitimacy of the research questions that shaped this study before looking at how widely the conclusions can be applied.

5.5.1 Methodological, Theoretical and Analytical Choices

The advantages and limitations associated with the data collection methods I adopted are outlined in table Table 5-2, these have been adapted to those relevant to my particular case study and data collection. In my methodology chapter I outlined the advantages and disadvantages in theory according to Tellis (1997). Here I outline the actual impacts of the data collection methods encountered.

Table 5-2: *Advantages and limitations that emerged due to the data collection methods used*

Data Collection Type	Advantages	Disadvantage
Interviews	<p>Allowed me to obtain historical information about the council's work since the GND motion passed</p> <p>Allowed me to guide the line of questioning specifically around the GND to answer my RQ</p>	<p>The information will be filtered through the opinions of the interviewees, which may not accurately capture public opinion for example</p> <p>My presence and questions may impact the interviewees responses in a biased way</p>
Observations	<p>I was able to watch council meetings as they happen normally</p> <p>It allowed me to capture aspects of meetings and political agreement/disagreement that councillor's may not have been comfortable discussing</p> <p>The limitations do not apply as the council meetings are public and recording so my presence or</p>	<p>Time consuming as the meeting minutes did not have timestamps attached so I had to watch significant proportions of the meetings to capture relevant moments</p>

	absence has no impact on participants. Furthermore, meetings are recorded so I was able to re-play particular moments	
Documents	<p>In the case of the council, documents represent the written and shared knowledge and guidance within the institution as well as to the public</p> <p>Participants from the council often referred to documents when speaking, so document review was necessary to capture their full meaning</p>	Documents sometimes referred to internal council information that required lots of background knowledge to understand

Institutional capacity building provided structure and shape to my investigation, guiding my questions, data coding and analysis. However, the broad nature of the framework, and my adaptation of it allowed analysis of this case study that fit the reality rather than rigidly remaining faithful to the framework. Using qualitative analysis, I was unable to answer some aspects of the framework as they were originally intended and instead, I had to adapt it for the purposes of the study. This was only the case for the extent of integration in the network which can be answered quantitatively.

5.5.2 Legitimacy

Through conducting the research my questions gained legitimacy as I discovered there aligned with the questions the council themselves were asking but had not yet been able to answer due to the pandemic. In the GND motion, the request and intention were laid out to investigate the possibilities for a local GND. This was then absorbed into the wider strategy for the council, however, as I have outlined the GND framing seems to garner public support. This public support is either implicitly through support for the types of policies that emerge from this framing (Bell & Bevan, 2021) or explicitly as can be seen by the national and local mobilisation in support for it.

My research questions have been partially answered, the questions would benefit from being explored over a longer time which was not possible in this case. The institutional capacity will be revealed in more concrete ways as the plans for action in Brighton and Hove evolve into reality over the coming years. Given the council has such high ambitions and align closely to the principles and plans of the GND, they make a fruitful case study for academics and practitioners that are interested in seeing what possibility exists to advance this type of transformation from the city level.

5.5.3 Generalisability

The key points that will be generalisable are the limitations that the city faces. Many unitary authorities, and even many local governments of other legal definition will encounter similar challenges when pursuing similar levels of ambition. However, the extent of the challenges shared will be influenced by the level of ambition in other local governments. The angle provided by institutional capacity building may provide useful insights for other local governments and institutions attempting to advance climate action. In this way the lessons from

this study could help to guide and shape analysis of other councils' institutional capacity, and some useful focus areas.

6 Conclusions

This research developed around a curiosity about the possibilities available to local governments in the UK. My inquiry stemmed from an understanding of the need for urgent action, the stagnation at the national and international levels and the recent surge of energy that has been seen in local climate politics in the UK (Gudde et al., 2021). The lack of progress at the national level was also observed in relation to the GND, an idea that has mobilised civil society in the UK. In this paper, I have combined these two ideas, local governance and the GND as a means to achieve the societal transformation required to meet the necessary emission reduction targets. To investigate the potential that exists at this level of strategic action I utilised the concept of institutional capacity directed towards achieving the goals of a GND.

I adopted the GND as defined by the think tank Common Weal (McAlpine et al., 2019) as the standard that should be aimed for. I found that the framing used by Common Weal and the framing adopted by the council differed. Crucially, they contrasted in whether they saw the GND as the plan for decarbonisation, or whether it was one aspect of a plan that emphasised green jobs. Perhaps more importantly, I found that they differed in the commitment public institutions and public funding as the drivers of the GND. Common Weal is firmly committed to a publicly led transition. Whereas the council included more public-private financing like LEPs. Additionally, it became clear that the council does not have the regulating power that a central government has and therefore cannot enforce the proposals such as ‘replace all non-renewable electricity generation’ (McAlpine et al., 2019, p.17). In areas such as transport where local authorities have greater ability to regulate, they have plan and execute enforcement carefully with extensive public consultation to avoid backlash.

A key outcome of this research is that, despite the differences outlined above the council’s 2030 Carbon Neutral Programme aligns with a GND to a great extent. There are a few areas of departure, that they could explore, these occur particularly around ownership and funding sources. However due to the large degree of similarity, the important lessons arise in relation to implementation. To begin concluding this research I provide some final thoughts more expanded thoughts on framing and ownership as two important areas that emerged from the findings and discussion. I do this before providing an overview of the recommendations that have emerged in response to my research questions.

6.1 Reflection and research on GND framing

As outlined in my findings and discussion, there is a degree of variation between the frames held by different actors present in the city as well as in wider civil society and academia. A specific recommendation for the city would be to have some more conscious reflection on the framing used for policies to address climate change. These discussions could opinions from wider civil society, particularly given the GND has been demanded from campaigning groups in the city. Importantly, the council can reflect on whether it sees the GND framing as a plan to reach the 2030 target or whether it sees it as one aspect of the plan to decarbonise the city that links this effort to job creation. Once this is established the council can explore the extent to which they want to lean into the emphasis on a publicly led transformation.

6.2 Ownership

Building on the framing discussions, councils should pursue some active efforts to increase the alternative ownership models in their localities. Given the economic and social benefits

seen in Preston this is an avenue worth exploring. In Brighton and Hove, it is an area that is less explored in relation to their climate strategy. They are however committing to Community Wealth Building, which includes a strong emphasis on democratising the economy. This reaps economic benefits but also expands the democratic spheres to include the financial aspects of the city.

6.3 Answers to research questions and practical implications

In answer to RQ1: What institutional capacity exists in local government to support a Green New Deal style transformation in Brighton and Hove? I have established that institutional capacity exists in Brighton and Hove that can and is being directed towards the goals of a GND. This is despite the varied interpretation and commitment to GND framing. I have also highlighted that institutional capacity, in Brighton and Hove and in other local authorities in the UK is shaped to a large degree by the constraints on funding and power put in place by the central government. Which has illuminated some useful changes that could be made to national policy (Table 6-1). Despite these constraints, local councils can pursue the goals of a GND without changes to national policy and legislation (Table 6-1).

In Table 6-1 below I summarise the answers to SRQ1: How can the goals of a GND be advanced in Brighton and Hove local authorities using this institutional capacity? And RQ2: What can be done at the national level to enhance the ability of the local level to pursue a GND style transformation?

Table 6-1 Practical recommendations for actors aiming to advance the goals of a GND

Level	Focus	Audience	Details of Recommendation
Local	Framing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council - GND advocates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal council reflection on the agreement and application of GND framing - External wider community reflection on GND framing <p>This should include the breadth of the plan and the emphasis on a publicly led transition</p>
Local	Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council - GND advocates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve council’s release of planning information, even if the plans are still exploratory and speculative - Improve the user interfaces of the website so that information is more accessible - Depending on the outcomes of the framing reflection, the GND could be better communicated to the community in Brighton and Hove
Local	Ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council - GND advocates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow the success of Preston and demonstrate a commitment to the

			ownership diversification principles of Community Wealth Building
Local	Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council - GND advocates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage more closely with partners in the wider community such as Sussex Surplus - Aim to have more comprehensive consultation (although I acknowledge this is tied to national policy and funding rules) - Consider a more permanent Climate Assembly/citizen's jury utilising resources from the universities
Local	Buildings	Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider providing commercial space to projects that advance the goals of a GND by providing cheap spaces to rent, thereby aiding the projects, and guaranteeing revenue
National	Funding	National government and policy makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Remove competition requirement to facilitate decarbonisation of local economies across the country - Remove short funding timelines to prevent inadequate planning and consultation - Provide more funding for councils to play the role that central government acknowledges they have in meeting the county's emission reduction targets
National	Consistency	National government and policy makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commit to SCATTER project funding - Avoid scrapping national policies once they have been rolled out such as the Green Homes Grant, allow councils to direct their limited capacity

6.4 Contribution to academic and suggestions for further research

This research has revealed that local authorities in the UK are an exciting area of study, given the emergence of high levels of ambition for climate action. However, the recent energy in local authorities does not yet have the fully developed institutional capacity to support the translation of ambition into practice. The continuation of this research on a longer time scale would be important as it would allow researchers to capture the process of institutional capacity building more accurately as it happens. Given the years of cuts to local authorities in the UK, the rebuilding of these public institutions in pursuit of climate action provides a unique historical moment to conduct further study in this area.

This research suggests that further research would be useful around whether GND framing is helpful when translated into practice. This could be investigated at the local level and the national level. Furthermore, studies could investigate the benefits of having a framing that connects the two, given how closely the function of local government is to central government

this research would be highly relevant in the UK. As was outlined in section 5.1, framing around a GND is still being debated within civil society. However, my results indicate that despite variation in framing, the plans that emerge as a result of pursuing climate action can look remarkably similar. The crucial point of departure arises around the degree of public funding and ownership. It is therefore worth investigating this specific issue when the GND gets translated into practice. Future research could focus on whether the GND maintains its commitment to public funding and ownership when translated into practice. A further comparison would be possible when looking at the GNDs translated from theory into practice at the national and local level.

Appendix

Interview guideline

I followed the following procedure when conducting my interview:

Inform participant of the purpose of this research: I am conducting a case study on Brighton and Hove to investigate the opportunities, obstacles, and strategic possibilities for the development of a GND style transformation. I am interviewing you because your work on x relates to this x/I am interviewing you due to your work/position in Brighton and Hove.

Use of information from interview: I might use the information from this interview in my thesis, are you okay if I record the audio of this interview to transcribe.

Personal information: If the interviewee is an individual, I will ask if they are okay to have their title included (i.e., GND advocate and researcher, Green Party Councillor). If they work for an organisation, I will ask to include the name of their organisation.

All interviews finished with the snowballing question, asking if there is anyone else, they think I should I speak to.

I used the questions below to guide the research, however, when follow up was necessary or would help to answer my research questions I asked follow up questions freely.

1. Ask specifically about the work that made me contact them in the first place (i.e., council GND, campaign GND, researcher)
2. Whether and why the Green New Deal policy framing was important for them?
3. How do you see the Green New Deal being enacted at the level of Brighton and Hove/local (both at present and in the future)?
4. How connected is the work of the x on x to allied networks?
5. What are the sources of knowledge/research used to inform the strategy for a Green New Deal in x?
6. How does the work of the x relate to the work of x parties?
7. What is the response like from the community to Green New Deal policy framing? How does the x currently and intend to in future bring people on board?
8. Who is/should be involved in the Green New Deal development and implementation?
9. What powers exist at the local level?
10. How can actions at the local level be linked to wider national pressure for a GND?
11. Funding constraints exist at the local level – how could they be overcome?

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