

Climate Leadership Gloucestershire Meeting #21, 10/04/2025 Meeting Notes

Climate Leadership Gloucestershire

Notes and actions of the meeting

Attendance

The following partners were in attendance:

Partner organisation	Attendees	Apologies
Cheltenham Borough Council	Cllr Iain Dobie Tracey Birkinshaw	
Cotswold District Council	Cllr Mike McKeown	Rob Weaver
Forest of Dean District Council	Cllr Chris McFarling Alastair Chapman	Nigel Brinn Andy Barge
Gloucester City Council	Cllr Sebastian Field Jon McGinty	
Gloucestershire County Council	Cllr David Gray Sarah Danson Kelly Osborne	Colin Chick David Owen
Stroud District Council	Cllr Chloe Turner James Brain	
Tewkesbury Borough Council	Cllr Cate Cody (Chair) Adam Spokes	Simon Dix
Hospitals Trusts	Jen Cleary	
Integrated Care Board	Dan Corfield	Mary Hutton, Catherine Leech
Universities	Jackie Jobes (Hartpury University)	
Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership	Nicola Hillary	Stephanie Sargeant
Gloucestershire Youth Climate Group		Polly Gannaway-Pitts
Secretariat	David Sharman	
Observers	Jon Hickman, Gloucestershire County Council	

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1) Welcome, apologies and Introductions

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and noted that there were several senior officer apologies for this month's meeting due to a clash with a Leadership Conference.

The Chair began with a briefing on waste:

The Chair reflected on the need to improve and increase engagement on recycling and waste reduction. Food waste in particular, can be reduced with thought, planning, and a willingness to experiment with meals. The Chair went on to give examples of ways to reduce waste via clever use of food. The Chair urged all to compost if they can, and consider purchasing a wormery.

The Chair also made a plea for increased use of food waste collection service, along with continued best practice with recycling collection.

The Chair then moved to the formal business of the meeting.

2) Declarations of Interest

Alastair Chapman and Sarah Danson confirmed that they were (unpaid) Directors of Gloucestershire Nature & Climate Fund.

3) Approval of meeting notes: 28th November CLG meeting (paper 2)

Cllr McFarling highlighted that he was incorrectly noted as Chair for the February meeting.

Meeting notes approved by members as a true and accurate record, once the above error has been rectified.

Decision: Climate Leadership Gloucestershire approved the November meeting notes.

4) Action Plan and Funding update

Action Plan review

The Secretariat noted the key updates from the Action Plan-

Adaptation - 0102 & Energy – 0501	Recommendation: County Level Climate Risk & Vulnerability Assessment (CRVA); Local Area Energy Planning Action: Develop a county-level assessment to support and inform climate adaptation planning; Develop a county-wide approach to LAEP which baselines current activities and capacity across the county. Progress: Engagement with stakeholders underway. Officers wish to consider an in-person event at Guildhall for a large stakeholder event to cover both projects. Additional budget required: £3,000 .
Biodiversity – 0201	Recommendation: Local Nature Recovery Strategy Action: Gloucestershire to develop a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

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	Progress: Pre-consultation period with DCs underway. Councils have until 15 th April to respond. Public consultation in May/June to follow. LNP presenting on LNRS at June CLG.
Economy – 0405	Recommendation: ‘Green Economy’ matching platform Action: Develop a ‘one stop shop’ of suppliers that districts, organisations, and individuals can have access to, replicating Manchester’s Green Economy platform. Progress: Long term stalled project. Suggest consider removal from Action Plan
Planning – 0703	Recommendation: A central climate planning officer Action: A shared resource focused on sustainable planning with experience in climate change and planning Progress: Funding obtained for this role from the Strategic Economic Development Fund. Job evaluation/recruitment process now underway.
Waste – 1002, 1003 & 1004	Recommendation: cross-boundary collections, improved driver training, move to HVO Progress: These actions are now already in train or will proceed independent of CLG Suggestion: Waste actions are reorientated to encompass further collaborative reuse and reduce initiatives.

Questions and discussion

On the proposal for in-person stakeholder engagement workshops for the CRVA and LAEP-

It was asked what the outputs from the sessions would be. The Secretariat and the representative from CSE confirmed that the main function was to receive feedback on the project plans from a wide cross-section of stakeholders across sectors, to ensure that any knowledge gaps, further information, or concerns were captured.

The Chair commented that in-person events represented a better means of engaging with stakeholders. The Chair also suggested that in the interest of saving money and reducing food waste attendees could be encouraged to bring or purchase their own lunch. The Chair also requested a breakdown of costs from AtkinsRealis for the costs to facilitate the in-person CRVA workshop.

Action: Secretariat to consider requesting attendees to provide their own lunch, and to request a breakdown of costs from our CRVA contractors, in order to make the workshops as cost-effective as possible.

The majority of attendees expressed a preference for the in-person proposal.

Decision: Secretariat to pursue the in-person workshops proposal for stakeholders for both the CRVA and LAEP projects on the 22nd May 2025.

On Biodiversity 201-

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It was queried whether it should be District Council officers reviewing the draft LNRS only, or if Members should review. It was confirmed that the suggestion was that the LNRS should be an officer-level decision at this stage, and brought to Members during full consultation.

It is likely that the public consultation will be towards the end of the suggested timeline, due to a need to consider changes suggested by Natural England.

On Economy 405-

It was asked what impact removing this action would have on local economies. It was confirmed that other work from the Growth Hubs, such as the Together Gloucestershire initiative, and the Furbnow supplier network, should provide similar support to that which was intended from the platform. It was commented that we should continue to promote and consider the impact of the Furbnow network and Together Gloucestershire as alternatives to this platform; with a view to any future need for this action to return based on the progress of these alternatives.

Decision: There were no objections to removing the action, subject to review of it's potential need again in the future.

On Waste 1002, 1003 & 1004-

Members agreed that a strategic realignment of this theme would be a sensible approach.

A query was raised on recent concerns regarding the provenance/sourcing of HVO fuel. It was confirmed that Ubico had earlier today issued a response on these concerns which waste officers should have copies of, and which should allay concerns.

There were no further queries or concerns expressed on the Action Plan and all were happy for it to be published on the CLG webpages.

Action: Secretariat to ensure that the April Action Plan tracker is published as the updated Greener Gloucestershire Action Plan on the Climate Leadership Gloucestershire webpages.

AGM workshop feedback

The Secretariat thanked all members who had contributed to the workshop at the recent AGM, and outlined the four key priorities that had been drawn from the feedback-

Further profile raising of Climate Leadership Gloucestershire

- Continue to share the work of CLG – i.e. LGA Sustainability Action Network
- Continue to engage and present to Cllrs, Committees, and officers

Continue to widen the range of partners involved and included within CLG

- Consider further potential CLG members, for example –
 - Severn Trent Water; Thames Water; Wessex Water; Welsh Water
 - Active Gloucestershire
 - Chambers of Commerce

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- Ensure relevant community partners and representatives involved in delivery projects

Continue to act as a unitary precursor – and collaborate on action at a countywide footprint

- Further joint funding bids
- Influence the vision of LGR
- More proactive and advanced join up of partners' individual climate plans and strategies

Focus on priorities most likely to tangibly deliver

Questions and discussion

Potential of new CLG members-

There was much discussion on the merits of new members and a general agreement that it should be further considered. Attendees agreed that further consideration should be given to CLG aims and Terms of Reference when considering suitability of new members. There was some concern expressed on the idea of including water and utilities companies as potential members, and it was asked that implications on extending voting rights be considered further. It was confirmed that new members who contributed to CLG funding would receive two votes; further 'non-voting members' could also be considered.

The Gloucestershire Voluntary Sector Alliance was suggested as a further potential member.

The point was made that private companies don't have the direct democratic representation or the public accountability of other CLG partners.

The point was also made that the current system of voting and non-voting members did not seem satisfactory or fair to the organisations who were 'non-voting'. A request was made that any further consideration of new members should also include a fresh consideration of governance and voting rights.

It was suggested that further learning on criteria for membership could be gained from the Devon Climate Partnership.

It was queried whether the Environment Agency would be a further potential partner; it was confirmed that they were indeed members of the Devon Climate Partnership.

In conclusion it was agreed that the Secretariat put further consideration to further new members, which encompassed and analysed the above points further, and present this back to CLG.

Action: Secretariat to consider further and produce a paper on a proposal for new CLG membership, and ongoing governance, whilst also recirculating the CLG Terms of Reference.

Funding update

The Secretariat outlined the proposed 25/26 contributions to CLG as reviewed by Chief Executives at their January meeting. This would see a reduced Greener Gloucestershire Action Fund, totalling a maximum of £90,000 (contributions from all partners still to be fully confirmed).

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The Secretariat went on to consider the future of the Shared Bid Writer role in light of this Action Fund.

The Secretariat confirmed that the postholder had not been successful in obtaining significant funds, likely due to a number of factors:

- A difficult national funding landscape for climate action
- Difficulty in confirming and allocating needed roles for CLG partners on bids.
- Some difficulty for the postholder to acclimatise to Local Authority ways of working.

It was confirmed that the bid writer had a number of bids open, or in process of submission:

- £1.5mill Food & Farming bid into TNL Climate Action Fund; Cotswold DC as lead
- £50,000 Retrofit bid into MCS Foundation;
- £250,000 bid to Heritage Lottery Fund for access to nature project in process

Lessons could be taken from this contract:

- A need for upfront commitment from partners to collaborate on bids
- A need for varied partnerships to support bids
- A need to think creatively, particularly around bids primarily geared to different sectors
- A need for regular sharing of funding opportunities and better comms on this between partners

It was confirmed that the position at this point (given the lack of success and the reduced Action Fund available) was to not renew the contract of the bid writer.

Decision: The Shared Bid Writer contract will not be extended.

5) Planning theme: Update on Actions 0702 and 0703

The theme lead, Tracey Birkinshaw, Director of Community and Economic Development, Cheltenham BC, began the item with a presentation on the climate and planning workshop that took place on 2nd April 2025.

It was confirmed that this was a successful event that generated in-depth engagement on the potential of planning, and collaborative work across other CLG themes. The intention was to reinvigorate the theme as a whole, and stimulate the discussion, which was aided by TCPA providing a headline address.

There were three core themes covered over the day: Policy; Evidence; Skills & Training.

Policy-

- Time was given to define what 'sustainable' actually means for Gloucestershire. It was also considered how this could be branded and reflected in documents across LPAs going forward.
- The need to build consistent policy across LPAs was also discussed, with the incoming Climate and Planning Manager role integral to developing that consistent

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approach. It was confirmed that SEDF funding had been secured for the recruitment of this role and the draft Job Profile was provided today as Paper 5.

- The need to define community energy benefits was also discussed.

Evidence-

- The need to build up good case studies and a shared evidence base was considered.
- How capacity could be built, collaboration fostered, and knowledge extended through a repository of core datasets and open access to data across the LPAs.
- Exploration of a heat map of sustainable locations

Skills & Training-

- A skills audit recognising skills sets gaps, and identifying existing skills that can be maximised.
- Mentoring to build officer capacity and confidence.

The key asks of CLG as a result of this workshop:

- To ensure a consistent clear mandate on sustainable planning is communicated through all forums, bodies, groups and partners.
- An assessment of each council on how climate resource is considered, and how that resource could be maximised- how these roles inter-relate with planning colleagues and other service areas. Climate action needs to be further un-siloed and absorbed into 'business as usual' activity of Local Authorities.
- Nominate named officers within each Authority's planning policy, planning development, and climate change teams to deliver a climate change and planning action plan.
- Need a consistent and agreed approach to datasets, i.e. not all authorities have maintained access to Maiden.
- Further budget is needed for officer and Member training. IT was asked whether CLG members could consider pooled training budgets and shared training.
- The theme lead would like to refresh all theme actions and return to CLG with updated Action Plan.

Questions and discussion

It was suggested that training Planning Committees was increasingly important, in addition to offering further training to officers. Increasing awareness and support for small-medium sized developers was also cited as a useful action.

It was noted that planning enforcement was not included as a best practice area, which should also be addressed.

Action: Theme lead to consider inclusion of the training and education points into the Action Plan which will be brought back to CLG at the next Planning update.

It was noted that resource across climate teams is currently stretched, and many climate officers aren't including CLG objectives within their workplans. CLG members could again consider including a contribution to CLG objectives within their climate officers' Job Descriptions and appraisals.

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The issue of the lack of 5-year land supply was raised. Officers confirmed that Planning Committees can be effective in addressing that through soft negotiation, highlighting the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Local Plan policies not related to housing would also still have full weight regardless of land supply.

There were also comments on the Job Profile for the Climate and Planning Manager, and that it would be preferable for the climate policy experience and knowledge detailed to be listed as 'essential' rather than 'desirable'. It was confirmed that the job market for planners is extremely competitive so 'essential' experience will have to be carefully judged, but it should be possible to include this experience as essential.

Action: Secretariat and theme officers to explore the viability of moving further climate and planning policy experience to the essential requirements of the Climate and Planning Manager Job Profile.

6) Energy theme: Local Area Energy Plan – Local Area Energy Vision exercise

Jacob Hall introduced himself as the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) Project Manager for communities for this work on Local Area Energy Planning (LAEP). He then outlined the background to the LAEP and the exercise for today:

- A LAEP can be defined as the change required to transition an area's energy system to net zero over a given timeframe. The process is also about ensuring local people inform how we plan the pathways and scenarios for future energy system design.
- At a national level the National Energy System Operator (NESO) and Regional Energy Strategic Planner (RESP) roles are coming online to inform strategic national energy planning and will require LAEPs to feed into this work to align local and national priorities. It is therefore likely an ideal time to be pursuing a LAEP.
- CSE have worked in collaboration with Energy Systems Catapult to develop and deliver the seven stages of LAEP. This project will focus on Stages 1-3 and set the baseline of where we want to go next in terms of a locally developed energy system.
- There are four phases to this project-
 - The Discovery phase- data identification: understanding where you are in Gloucestershire- energy baselining and current and planned energy projects.
 - The Definition phase- confirming who are you partners and projects, and carrying out gap analysis.
 - Development phase- developing forward plans on what do you want to deliver in your county over the next few years.
 - Delivery phase- Implementing potential actions and pathways on how to do that (moving towards stages 4-7 of the process). Stakeholders and governance structures will be in place advise on this stage as the project moves forward.

Visioning exercise

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The exercise is designed to inform CSE of what Authorities see as their role within the energy system and the development of renewable generation.

It was confirmed that climate lead officers had previously undertaken the exercise and ranked technologies and energy options based on complexity, and whether it was an area Authorities wished to own (deliver directly), influence (support partners and heavily influence projects) or empower (removing barriers for companies and communities to deliver).

It was confirmed that Climate leads had put the majority of technologies (such as domestic heat pumps, heat networks, domestic rooftop solar, small scale wind, battery storage) under the 'influence' category, and had suggested a range of complexities.

Jacob requested views on these results, and whether there were tool or resources that members thought were needed to enable Authorities to deliver or influence more:

Comments received:

- Public transport, though a function of the County Council, has very little Local Authority influence regarding rail transport and so Authorities can only partially directly deliver on goals there.
- It was queried why battery storage was seen as particularly complicated by climate leads; it was confirmed that the technology was perhaps not that well understood.
- Members felt that behaviour change should be moved from 'Empower' to 'Influence' given our service functions, track record, and our large employee base.

Action: Further views and comments would be sought from CLG members via correspondence following the meeting.

7) Behaviour Change theme: Community Climate Fund update

The theme lead, Kelly Osborne, Sustainability and Engagement Officer, Gloucestershire County Council, began with context as to why behaviour change is crucial to reaching net zero. A third of the action needed to reach targets will require some level of behaviour change within communities, as per the most recent Climate Change Committee Carbon Budget.

Community Fund update:

- The first £50,000 round of this funding was awarded in 2024 to 12 projects across the county; these projects have now been completed.
- The projects were chosen on their ability to embrace behaviour change- encouraging wider community to make changes.
- The projects have delivered a cumulative 20-60 tonnes of emission savings, and represent a good return on investment, with a cost of £55-160 per tonne.
- The theme lead outlined some of the excellent work that has taken place across the 12 projects, more information on these can be found [here](#).
- A 25/26 second round has now been launched, with a further 12 projects receiving £50,000 in total, offered to a range of organisations- charities, sports clubs, museums, parish councils and community hubs.

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- This year has seen a large amount of energy and waste reduction projects.
- There will be a further round of funding this year, with applications likely open from May-June 2025.
- It was requested that all CLG colleagues share and promote this future round.

Questions and discussion

The theme lead was asked why energy project applications have increased. It was suggested that this may well be due to rising energy prices.

It was asked if further promotion of existing projects could be achieved to expand this best practice. It was confirmed that County Council would be putting a press release together and consideration would be given as to how that could be shared more widely.

8) Any Other Climate Business

Kerrin Wilkinson, from the Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils, noted the launch of their climate toolkit for parish and town councils. It is now live on their [website](#).

It's a comprehensive resource for these councils to tackle the climate emergency through case studies and advice. It's been peer reviewed by a number of bodies and climate networks, but will be updated quarterly.

Feedback and new content can be added to the toolkit during these updates.

Action: All to consider future useful content for the toolkit for updates and submit this to GAPTC.