

# Climate Leadership Gloucestershire Meeting #9: 18/04/2023, Meeting Notes

## Climate Leadership Gloucestershire

### Notes and actions of the meeting

#### 1. Attendance

The following partners were in attendance:

Partner organisation	Attendees	Apologies
Cheltenham Borough Council	Mike Redman	Cllr Alisha Lewis Cllr Ed Chidley
Cotswold District Council	Chris Crookall-Fallon (standing in for Rob Weaver)	Cllr Rachel Coxcoo
Forest of Dean District Council	Nick Murray (standing in for Alistair Cunningham)	Cllr Paul Hiett Peter Williams
Gloucester City Council	Cllr Richard Cook Jon McGinty	
Gloucestershire County Council	Colin Chick Wayne Lewis (observer)	Cllr David Gray
Stroud District Council	Cllr Chloe Turner (Chair) Brendan Cleere	
Tewkesbury Borough Council	Simon Dix	Cllr Jim Mason
Hospitals Trusts	Jen Cleary	Deborah Lee
Clinical Commissioning Group		Mary Hutton
Gloucestershire Police and Crime Commissioner and Gloucestershire Constabulary	Mandy Gibbs	
GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership	Emma Hanby Sarah Danson	
Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership	Doug Hulyer Nicola Hilary (standing in for Roger Mortlock)	

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	Rachel Lenane – observer	
Secretariat	Afriqnmun Lovejoy	
Observers	Megan Land (Youth Climate Panel)	

### 2. Welcome and Introductions

### 3. Declarations of Interest

Sarah Danson and Doug Hulyer declared their roles as directors of the Gloucestershire Nature and Climate Fund (GNCF).

#### Updates from Chair

Cllr Turner raised a few updates from the Chair:

- A. **Vice Chair election:** The Chair informed the group of the decision to delay recruitment of Vice Chair until districts have completed their local elections and any new councillors have settled into their roles.
- B. **Attendance:** The Chair raised that a new member will be joining CLG from Cheltenham. Cllr Ed Chidley will in future attend these meetings on behalf of Cllr Alisha Lewis.
- C. **Maintaining attendance from all partners:** The Chair raised the importance of partners maintaining attendance wherever possible. The Chair sought the support of attendees to maintain engagement from their organisations and offered support from the Chair and Secretariat.

#### Action 23/09: Attendees to notify the Chair of any issues regarding attendance at CLG meetings.

- D. **Guest attendees:** The Chair reflected on the question of increasing the breadth of attendance at CLG. Having reviewed this she suggested the conclusion that as CLG is a decision-making body, we need the core membership of the group to be the partners that are funding the body. Therefore during CLG board meetings we can allow observers for example, Megan at this meeting, otherwise it will be the thematic working groups that allow us to share and get input from a wider group of stakeholders. The Chair sought agreement for this approach.

**Decision: Climate Leadership Gloucestershire approved the core membership of CLG and the approach to thematic working.**

- E. **Decision making as a group:** The Chair raised the need to have clarity around how we make decisions as a group. The focus on the second round of each thematic grouping, means we are developing an ever-increasing list of actions and funding

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asks. To focus and prioritise actions moving forward it will be important to be clear about how we make decisions as a group. The Chair suggested that in future we look to agree decisions through consensus. But that if a partner organisation feels they need to go back to their organisation before committing, that they should clearly state this and include the timeframe by which they will respond with their decision.

**Decision: Climate Leadership Gloucestershire partners to actively agree by consensus all future actions to be taken forward by the group.**

### 4. Approval of meeting notes: January CLG meeting and AGM (paper 2)

The Secretariat highlighted an outstanding amendment to the meeting record of the January AGM. The names of the attendees from Stroud will be corrected before issuing the final version of the minutes.

**Decision: Climate Leadership Gloucestershire approved the January meeting notes subject to correction.**

The Chair reminded attendees that the minutes of these meetings are shared via the Greener Gloucestershire web pages and therefore are available to the public, as are the thematic reports submitted by partners. The thematic reports are forwarded periodically as part for the packs for the County Council's Environment Scrutiny Committee, the papers for which are shared online.

### 5. Project bid template (Paper 3)

The Secretariat introduced the purpose of the project bid template and sought comments on the draft. The bid template and process intends to provide scrutiny and prioritisation of bids submitted to the central CLG fund, new this year. The draft bid document, with input from Cheltenham District Council, includes specific criteria to help ensure that CLG is presented with sufficient information to allow a decision on whether a project should be funded and allow for comparison against competing bids. The template includes amongst other key criteria, for the applicant to identify: how the bid relates to the CLG action plan, how the project benefits other thematic areas, any impacts beyond the project lifetime, the expected project carbon savings, and costs, and methods for monitoring and measuring the project impacts. Project bids must also be clear on both costs and opportunities and be able to clarify where they have sought out opportunities to fund, match or bolster funding from alternative sources.

The Secretariat suggested we send the template out to thematic leads to test interest and the usability. The Chair sought views from partners.

#### **Key points arising from the discussion:**

CLG members queried the mechanism and timelines for reviewing bids from thematic leads and also whether every bid should have a CLG level sponsor before being submitted?

Jon McGinty compared this process to that used by the Economic Growth Committee and suggested that we develop a similar level of senior officer group, for example Strategic

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Directors, who review bids and make recommendations to the committee/CLG. A further suggestion was that this would act as a moderation process for bids before they reach CLG.

### **Action 23/10 CLG Secretariat to seek input from Strategic Directors as to whether they are content to be the moderation panel for future CLG bids.**

The group also suggested that we seek input from the moderation panel on prioritisation of bids, recognising the limited funding pot available but also the range of important recommendations accepted by CLG so far. A further suggestion was that prioritisation through the bidding process would naturally develop a rolling pipeline of bids which could be ready to launch as new funding became available.

The discussion then moved to the likely limited amount of funds available and whether a cap should be applied initially to limit the scale of ambition for the first round of bids submitted. The Secretariat suggested that many themes were seeking support in the form of centralised expertise and that this was unlikely to be affordable within the remaining budget and post funding the Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (CRVA). The recruitment of further full-time centralised resources would require a clear funding commitment beyond this year. Therefore, it was suggested that for this first round we might seek a limited number of smaller single payment activities to test the new process and use the allocation for this year.

Wayne Lewis suggested that an alternative approach would be to develop and issue a short version of the form (an EOI type document) to gather initial ideas and filter projects at an early stage reducing work/input from partners on further scoping projects likely un-fundable this year.

### **Action 23/11 CLG Secretariat to provide a process flow description and short form bid template (expression of interest form) and list of initial interest areas at the next meeting in June.**

#### **6. CLG review, priorities, and action plan (presentation and paper 4)**

The Secretariat shared the outcomes of the January workshop and highlighted some key areas of improvement as we enter year two of CLG. The following 5 priorities were listed and discussed by attendees:

- I. Secretariat to draft a Climate Leadership Gloucestershire vision (by June).
- II. All theme leads to review recommendations to date to develop a minimum number of clear targeted actions (by September).
- III. Partners report on delivery structures and resource availability for climate action (by June).
- IV. Partners re-commit to the roles and responsibilities (today).
- V. All themes to include a communication and engagement priority and resource to join countywide climate engagement group (asap and by June).

#### **Key points arising from the discussion:**

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Attendees discussed the availability of centralised communications resource and how we might provide what is needed to both bolster ongoing work but also design and commit resources to new campaign activities. A key piece of work identified was the work that the county team are doing to launch a cross county climate engagement group and partners were asked to actively engage with this work (V).

### **Action 23/12 All partners to commit to attending the countywide climate engagement working group.**

Following a query on type of Communications work needed, the Chair noted 3 tiers where partners need to collectively capitalise on opportunities to increase the volume and quality of our communications and engagement on climate change.

1. Being better as individual organisations on our climate communications. This includes as individual Members, leaders of the Council, through our staff, core organisational activities and through prioritisation of our individual comms budgets.
2. Being better as a community. This means working through the cross-county climate engagement group discussed. This will mean actively sharing and developing consistent messaging which benefit the whole county's approach to climate adaption and carbon reduction. This is also about being joined up in our communications externally to Gloucestershire for example to through the LGA.
3. Finally, it will be about the communications specific to the themes that partners are individually leading. This will be for the theme leads to develop but for all partners to deliver.

Attendees questioned whether it is timely to undertake a full review of the number, shape and priority of themes. The Secretariat described the tension, with limited centralised resource, between a focus on delivery of actions vs a redefinition of themes. It was suggested that current centralised resources should focus on delivery of existing agreed actions to deliver clear successes following year two and to help maintain momentum into year three.

The Chair also raised the importance of finishing the sequence of the second reports on each of the themes under the current structure and before making any changes to the thematic order. The Chair then suggested that with a number of new thematic lead officers in post this could improve resourcing and progress across themes.

Wayne Lewis raised the issue of thematic resilience not only within partner organisations to bolster vacant thematic lead posts, but also within the wider partner network, to continue to move along important CLG commitments. The Secretariat acknowledge this as a priority area for the central resource to support but also encouraged partners to consider where they might work together to lead themes and thereby increase resilience.

Nicola Hilary asked about carbon baselining and whether this was a priority under any themes yet as this is a key piece which the LNP think could help to prioritise and support delivery of action on biodiversity. The Secretariat acknowledged that this is an area

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beginning to be highlighted under a number of themes and which is likely to become a priority.

**Decision: CLG agreed the reccomendations and in particular for work to urgently begin on the CLG vision statement.**

The Secretariat went on to highlight progress under each of the 10 themes:

- 1) Adaptation – funding for a CRVA has been agreed. A task force being set up to take this forward with tenders expected to be issued later this year.
- 2) Biodiversity – A full report will follow under agenda item 7.
- 3) Behaviour change (internal) – The Strategic Directors group is currently reporting on progress towards internal metrics to set all partners up as leaders/best in class on climate awareness and sustainability. This will ensure partners are both doing their part in achieving our countywide objectives but also help partners to confidently lead their themes and influence others on climate change.
- 4) Behaviour change (external) – CLG received a presentation from the theme leads at the last meeting of this group. The reccomendations have now been developed into a clear set of actions, including seeking urgent participation in the Countywide Climate Engagment group as discussed earlier.
- 5) Transport – The UK100 Statement of Shared Intent has now been agreed and work is ongoing to take forward the supporting action plan. A fuller brief will be presented to CLG in June.
- 6) Economy – It will be necessary to consider future resourcing for this theme. This is currently tabled for November – but the Secretariat suggested the potential to bring this forward.
- 7) Energy – Energy was a previously under-resourced theme. With officers now in post this is progressing well and a conversation will be held at CLG in June.
- 8) Planning – A key ask for this theme was to consider specialist sustainable planning resource. The Secretariat is working with the County Planning Officers group to scope this role whilst awaiting recruitment of the thematic lead officer.
- 9) Retrofit – Good progress under this theme though sadly the UKRI Fast Followers funding bid failed. Therefore, there is a need to source alternative routes to fund the central management of this work.
- 10) Waste – A good workshop was recently held, with clear appetite from partners to identify locally action in advance of national legislative changes. The next meeting of this group will be a scheduled to bring forward a set of reccomendations to CLG for September.

The Chair asked the Secretariat if there was a need to review the outputs of the Net Zero review and subsequent government response. The Secretariat referred attendees to the Net Zero Review slides attached to the papers for the meeting. The Secretariat suggested there was nothing to raise beyond the content of these slides, as the Government's response did not yet provide for new commitments in any of the key areas relevant to Local Government (beyond the recent NPPF consultation). It was noted that this is an important area to maintain a watching brief and a key part of the central role to track and ensure CLG partners actively participate in any future conversations.

The Chair highlighted that work to develop a vision for CLG will support all of these strands, and will provide CLG partners with a compelling narrative to support any future engagement locally but also externally with investors, central Government and others.

### 7. Biodiversity theme (presentation and paper 5)

The Chair handed over to Doug Hulyer, Chair of Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership (GLNP). Doug introduced Nicola Hilary and Rachel Lenane, he also highlighted that Roger Mortlock would shortly be stepping down from the role of CEO of the Wildlife Trust and with that Vice Chair of GLPN, to take up a role of CEO of CPRE.

Doug went on to highlight that GLNP is in fact another configuration of the partners around the CLG table, plus some others. And therefore, priorities discussed at CLG will be mirrored in discussions at GLNP board meetings and that the priorities of both groups will be consistent.

Doug presented the refined priorities of the Biodiversity theme following its initial discussion at this group last year. He highlighted the work to refine and clarify these priorities since that last discussion. He brought forward the proposal that the recommendations under the Biodiversity theme now focus on seven key actions, five of these priorities being a refinement of the recommendation presented previously under the existing priority strands of: water, green infrastructure, recreational space and carbon.

He highlighted that the two new recommendations focus on:

- Declaring an Ecological Emergency.
- Support to developing the forthcoming Gloucestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).

Doug then presented the full set of seven recommendations:

- 1) Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) - Defra has now published the guidance on development of LNRSs. The County Council will be the responsible authority and the GLNP will work closely with them to deliver this. A service level agreement between GCC and GLNP is currently being developed. Once this is agreed the ask is for partners to actively engage in the LNRS development process - and wherever possible, to look for opportunities to increase biodiversity alongside mitigation and adaptation to climate change.
- 2) Ecological Emergency – The climate and ecological emergencies are joined at the hip and there are real benefits to both themes, demonstrable within authorities who have declared both emergencies (e.g. Cotswold District Council) and thereby licensing action and resources for activity under this theme.
- 3) Green Infrastructure theme: Gloucestershire Nature and Climate Fund (GNCF) – This is a key area of current work and is linked to previous priorities under the green infrastructure strand. The development of the GNCF is the mechanism being developed locally whereby any money identified for biodiversity net gain stays within the county. Partners are already aware of the initiative and have been

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working closely with the GNCF manager Rachel Lenane to identify sites for biodiversity net gain within the county but also within each district. The County Council have already committed resource to support further development of the GNCF and the ask is for other CLG partners to consider a small amount of seed funding to demonstrate their commitment to the continuation of this work.

- 4) Green Infrastructure theme: Strategies and Standards – Doug presented the work of Doncaster Local Authority in considering green infrastructure strategy and standards to develop high biodiversity rich green spaces. The ask is to each Local Authority to ensure that their decision-makers are aware and use these as an opportunity to ensure or develop their own Green Infrastructure strategies and policies, for example there is a Green Infrastructure policy in draft Stroud District Local Plan.
- 5) Recreational Space theme: Calling for a new accessible biodiversity rich green space target – Doug noted the recent Defra Environmental Improvement Plan (February 2023) and the aspiration within this for everyone to live within 15 minutes' walk of a blue or green space. This is therefore a request that CLG partners commit to an aspiration for all Gloucestershire residents to live within 15 minutes' walk of an 'accessible biodiversity rich green space' as well as having access to large strategic-scale biodiversity rich sites.
- 6) Carbon theme: Exploring Land Use Frameworks – This focuses on the need to consider land use holistically to support effective action on increasing and improving biodiversity. Devon County Council have developed a Land Use Frameworks and GLNP are interested in exploring with CLG partners the potential for the development and use of something similar for Gloucestershire.
- 7) Carbon theme: More focus on progress for the Food and Farming theme – Doug highlighted the importance of the linkages between the Food and Farming and Biodiversity themes but also raised the need to make progress under the food and farming theme. He offered the support of GLNP in working together on these two themes to help the Food and Farming theme move forward.

Doug also re-iterated the comment from Nicola earlier in the meeting and the need for a clear understanding of our carbon baseline across all thematic areas to assist prioritisation of CLG activity moving forward.

### **Key points arising from the discussion:**

Chris Crookall-Fallon raised the importance of the Cotswold landscape in these discussions and welcomed the recommendations presented. He agreed that carbon baselining should be a priority for this and other themes and also referred to the recommendation regarding increasing emphasis on the Food and Farming theme, welcoming the offer to work more closely on this.

The Chair sought greater details on the LNRS and Gloucestershire's progress and position compared to our peers. Nicola Hilary highlighted that we are only just beginning work since Defra's guidance was issued in March. But that Gloucestershire is actually very well progressed in part due to some pre work by the County Council ahead of the national guidance. This includes work to bring partners together and to develop working assumptions in advance of the national guidance, giving a better starting framework for the development of the LNRS.

The Chair also asked about progress with the GNCF and where the work will be when the national legislation comes in November? Rachel Lenane summarised that we have already identified 15 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) schemes and that this figure is likely to increase. With at least one per district for most partner authorities. With the potential to provide 1400 BNG units. She suggested a target could be an aim to sell at least 100 of these units this year but this will be subject to a further survey of the sites and agreement of the price for these units.

Jon McGinty raised the request for the contribution from partners to work of the GNCF, and asked that further information be provided on the best mechanisms for this before councils are able to decide.

**Action 23/13 GLNP to work with each LPA partners to gain agreement for a small contribution to GNCF from within Defra Biodiversity Net Gain new burdens funding.**

The Chair sought a further clarification regarding the declaration of an Ecological Emergency, and whether the inference was that a general commitment was sufficient or whether full political support was being sought.

Doug suggested the later was more powerful and was what GLNP recommended.

Cllr Cook added that, Gloucester City Council have already declared a Climate Emergency and agreed that an Ecological Emergency sits side by side with a Climate Emergency. He agreed that Gloucester City Council should be moving towards this in due course but noted the work needed at various levels within the Authority before full commitment could be attained. There was broad agreement from other partners.

**Action 23/14 All partners to explore the steps needed to declare an Ecological Emergency and report back to the Secretariat on possible timings and information needed to support them to do so.**

The Chair thanked Doug and the LNP for their work on this and the presentation today.

The Chair drew attention to the forward look, with the transport and energy themes scheduled for June meeting of CLG. Waste and Retrofit are then scheduled for September, whilst noting the earlier conversation about bringing the Economy theme forward.

The Chair then concluded the meeting and sought any other business from attendees.

### 8. Any other Climate Business:

Two AOBs were raised:

- i. **Recruitment of second coordinator post:** The Chair reminded attendees that the interviews for the second coordinator post were being held Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April and thanked those assisting in this recruitment.
- ii. **Partner funding:** It was raised that due to the funding uncertainty within G-First LEP they have had to step back from funding the central role. The reduction in

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total funds available was noted. It was also discussed whether G-First LEP should retain a formal seat on the group. The Chair noted this and agreed to take forward conversations on the best way forward.

**Action 23/11 CLG Chair and Secretariat to work with G-First LEP to consider options regarding future LEP engagement with CLG.**