

Climate Leadership Gloucestershire Meeting #11: 12/09/2023, 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 Ed Chidley (standing in for Cllr Alisha Lewis) Mike Redman	
Cotswold District Council	Cllr Mike McKeown Rob Weaver	
Forest of Dean District Council	Nick Murry (standing in for Andrew Grant and Cllr McFarling)	Cllr Chris McFarling
Gloucester City Council	Jon McGinty	Cllr Richard Cook
Gloucestershire County Council	Luisa Senft-Hayward and Orlagh Stoner (presenting) Ben Watts (presenting)	Colin Chick Cllr David Gray
Stroud District Council	Cllr Chloe Turner (Chair)	Brendan Cleere
Tewkesbury Borough Council	Cllr Sarah Hands Peter Tonge (presenting) Simon Dix	
Hospitals Trusts		Jen Cleary
ICB	Catherine Leech	Mary Hutton
Gloucestershire Police and Crime Commissioner and Gloucestershire Constabulary	Mandy Gibbs	
GFirst Local Enterprise Partnership	Sarah Danson	
Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership	Nicola Hillary	Doug Hulyer

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Secretariat	Afriqnmun Lovejoy David Sharman	
Presenters	Beth Broughton – Managing Director of Ubico	
Observers	Maizy McCann – Climate Emergency Support Officer – Cheltenham Borough Council Nathan Hine – Gloucestershire County Council	

1. Welcome, apologies and Introductions

The Chair welcomed members and asked all to introduce themselves for the benefit of newly joined Countywide Climate Change Coordinator David Sharman.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations.

3. Approval of meeting notes: June CLG meeting (paper 2)

The Chair sought agreement to the minutes of the June meeting of this group.

Decision: Climate Leadership Gloucestershire approved the June meeting notes.

4. Vice Chair nomination

The Chair proposed that Cllr McFarling should resume this role, continuing his previous tenure that was interrupted. The Chair duly nominated Cllr McFarling as Vice Chair.

Decision: Cllr Chris McFarling elected as Climate Leadership Gloucestershire Vice Chair.

5. Vision Statement; name of fighting fund; EOI update (Paper 3)

Afriqnmun Lovejoy presented the updated Vision that had been revised with the assistance of theme leads. There were no objections to the revised Vision but further comments can be made to the Climate Change Coordinators.

Two names have been suggested for the 'CLG Fighting Fund': The Greener Gloucestershire Action Fund; and The Climate Action Gloucestershire Fund. A vote on the name to use on this Fund and subsequent action plan was held.

Decision: The majority voted for 'The Greener Gloucestershire Action Fund and Greener Gloucestershire Action Plan' and these name will therefore be adopted.

Afriqmun outlined the Fund's process - this will see EOI submissions going to Strategic Directors for their meeting on 28th September 2023, after which a number of submissions will be invited to submit fuller bids. These will then be reviewed again by Directors with recommendations coming to the November CLG meeting. The initial list of EOIs that will now go to Strategic Directors was shared at the meeting.

It was confirmed that Directors will have a set of criteria to judge EOIs.

6. Transport Statement of Shared Intent: Progress update

Orlagh Stoner and Luisa Senft-Hayward presented progress on the sign off for the Annex to the Statement of Shared Intent. The Statement of Share Intent was agreed in November 2022 and commits to an 80% reduction in transport emissions by 2030 and net zero by 2050 for Gloucestershire. The Annex was previously not agreed pending Leaderships requests for amendments which have now been made. Four authorities have now formally signed off at Leadership level the updated Annex. Forest of Dean have signed off at senior officer level, Cllr McFarling has committed to obtaining Member sign off. Cheltenham and Gloucester City are the authorities still to sign off.

The hope is to bring the Statement back to the October CLG meeting with agreement from all seven authorities.

There will be an Action Plan that will follow the Statement of Shared Intent. A proposal of how the Action Plan will be taken forward will be presented in October.

7. Economy theme (Papers 4 &5)

Sarah Danson of GFirst LEP presented the item, outlining the revisions that have been made to the theme's recommendations.

a. Business support: Update and recommendations review

Sarah introduced the GFirst Net Zero Programme funded by the County Council. 280 businesses have engaged with this programme to date. This offers support on brand positioning, energy efficiency, procurement pressures, interest in life cycle assessments, and long term business planning.

The Net Zero Conference will take place on the 29th November 2023 at the University of Gloucester campus. Last year over 100 businesses attended and similar uptake is expected again this year.

Recommendations previously agreed have now been refined and consolidated down to two (please refer to Paper 4 for recommendations in full):

- i. Continuation of a Net Zero programme for another 2-3 years, and to consider increasing that offer to provide additional specialist advisor support, and a potential grant scheme.

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- ii. Provision of a green economy supplier platform to promote a quality assured green supplier network.

b. Skills: Update and recommendations review

Sarah outlined the advancements made by Further Education institutions in the county and the development of the LSIP by Business West. The findings of the GFirst LEP/South West Net Zero Hub Green Skills Report were summarised - providing a skills gap analysis for Gloucestershire. The report provides the clear gaps across insulation, solar PV and heat pump installers within the county. Addressing this will be largely dependent on national policy and central government funding. The county can though join the dots between supply and demand, coordinate work of training providers and employers, provide information campaigns, and encourage training providers to bid for available funding.

Recommendations have been consolidated down to one (please refer to Paper 5 for the recommendations in full):

- i. Creation of a Green Skills Coordinator role within the county, to develop a strategy for all green skills development, with an initial focus on retrofit skills.

Key points arising from the discussion:

Supplier platform

The idea of taking over vacant shop units as a physical supplier to consumer marketplace was raised - which could be a lower cost delivery model. It was agreed a physical marketplace would be beneficial, there may be difficulty in obtaining the staff time and resource required to man this on an ongoing basis though. It was agreed that appetite should be tested for this with businesses.

It was confirmed that most districts have a climate change business offer, and these should be coordinated and should not duplicated through the theme's activity. The Net Zero Programme needs to join up these initiatives more fully, such as CheltenhamZero initially through work through the Growth Hubs.

A query was raised on how the platform may differ or overlap with the Retrofit Centre platform. Officers will look to ensure that the platform is wider than retrofit, and aligns with any activity to provide a supplier network as part of the Retrofit Centre.

Green Skills Coordinator

It was confirmed that FE Colleges and other private training providers are certainly supportive of this recommendation. There is not current funding for FE Colleges to co-fund this role but this may come through the Local Skills Improvement Fund at a later date.

The Royal Agricultural University should be included in further conversations around skills development given their Innovation Village proposal.

Action: Suggestion for a further conversation on a shared resource on transport planning, and how this could work as a collaboration with GCC and districts.

Decision: Revised recommendations were accepted by CLG.

c. Economic Strategy update

Ben Watts ran through the content that has been provided in the Strategy as part of the current public engagement exercise. The rationale for taking this forward is that there are a number of economic challenges that requires a strategic long-term vision: To address the aging population; transition to a low carbon economy; address high housing costs; and increasing job vacancies. 7.6% of residents also currently live in deprivation.

The Strategy vision clearly states the intention to move to a net zero economy. The current two key themes of the Strategy are:

Place: Development of the Spatial Development Strategy; a countywide infrastructure needs assessment; building on inward investment and strengths in cyber, agritech, advanced manufacturing, energy and tourism. It also places Biodiversity and Environment as topics under this theme.

People: Identifying existing skills gaps; supporting digital accessibility; ongoing business support and business groups; and establishing an Innovation Loan Fund.

Stakeholder interviews have been carried out. A seven week public engagement process is now underway. This will be followed by a range of stakeholder workshops that will take place at the end of September 2023.

Feedback should be provided on the strategy by 15th September via the engagement portal.

Ben also encouraged the group to sign up to attend the workshops at the end of the month.

Key points arising from the discussion:

There were comments encouraging the Strategy to have much more of a future economy focus - looking at circular economy, climate resilience and an equitable transition to a new net zero economy. It was suggested this could be achieved by a cross-cutting 'planet' theme to address these issues. Ben confirmed that an Environment theme was previously included in the draft and that this may be revisited in the final strategy.

It was asked when the next strategy draft may be available to review. Ben confirmed that the aim was to have a final draft completed at the end of November, for approval by the GCC in the new year.

Action: The Chair requested that the next draft be brought to the November meeting, or failing that circulated with the CLG group ahead of its final approval.

8. Waste theme update and recommendations (presentation and paper 6)

Pete Tonge outlined the work the Resources and Waste Partnership have done to create an interim Waste Strategy, which has proved difficult given the delays in central government reform on national waste reforms.

The theme has also created a new waste and climate change working group which includes both waste and climate change officers, and which has made progress on priority areas of focus for the theme:

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Reduced bin sizes

The aim will be to reduce bins to 140litre across the county where possible. Some districts may consider reducing residual collection frequency as an alternative. To replace all bins will have a high cost so it's suggested that this is done in a staged approach - replacement bins and bins for new developments.

Key points arising from the discussion:

It was queried whether there might be an invest-to-save proposition using the waste minimisation incentive payment to purchase new bins? Pete confirmed that we can make the case to use these payments to contribute to costs.

It was noted that alignment should be sought across all authorities on this as soon as possible to aid in the rollout across new properties, replacements and any other key areas. Communications on this size reduction will also need to be carefully considered. It was suggested that these need to be as clear and open as possible.

Cross-boundary collections

Pete Tonge and Beth Boughton of Ubico emphasised the complexities of cross-boundary collections and the technology required to confirm from which council waste streams originate, which has a cost and waste data implication.

Driver training and telemetry

Tewkesbury and Cheltenham have committed to improved training and practices. The group will encourage other partners to adopt this as well.

Vehicle refurbishment and move to Hydrogenated Vegetable Oils (HVO)

Other collection authorities, such as Wyre Forest and Bromsgrove in Worcestershire are following a refurbishment programme of older vehicles. A number of officers will visit Worcestershire to explore further. Retrofitting older vehicles to take HVO fuel will also be explored. There is a 30p per litre higher cost to diesel for this, though this is likely to fluctuate.

Electric Vehicles

Unfortunately, the technology for EV HGVs is not where it needs to be for rural districts. The technology does work for smaller fleet vehicles but not HGVs. The working group and partnership will continue to monitor the potential and feasibility of waste fleet EV.

Key points arising from the discussion:

There was some discussion of fleet ownership, and the potential for Ubico to take control of a shared fleet, which would make EV/alternative fuel transition more practical and efficient. This proposal has been supported at previous Shareholder Forums. An outline business case will be taken to the next Shareholder Forum in October to discuss.

The Chair confirmed that Stroud had done some further modelling on EV and alternative fuel vehicles. This will be shared with the group if possible.

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It was asked whether there were options to not lock in to 7 years of new diesel vehicles that will mean that districts miss the net zero targets for their councils. Beth confirmed there are less long-term possibilities: refurbishing vehicles to electric, HVO conversion, or buying or leasing second hand.

These options should be brought together for all partners, and this should be taken through the Waste Partnership/waste and climate change working group.

Hydrogen vehicles

A Growth Hub consultant will be meeting the Climate Change Coordinators, Beth and Pete to explore how we might be able to develop and fund hydrogen for transport infrastructure and bring about a consortium of interested partners for this. This will also be linked into engagement with the Western Gateway hydrogen working group.

Key points arising from the discussion:

There was some concern expressed on running costs of hydrogen vehicles and their efficiency. There was some discussion of the merits of hydrogen fuel cells as the future for Heavy Goods Vehicles.

There is a hydrogen demonstrator in Bishops Cleeve using gas coming from the anaerobic digestion plant to create hydrogen. There may also be similar gas sources in Gloucester.

Depots and infrastructure

The theme will focus on making efficiency improvements in current depots. Cheltenham and Tewkesbury are looking for a strategic depot site and the above considerations should be factored into the decision-making process for this asset.

Key points arising from the discussion:

It was asked whether strategic placement of depots was being considered in relation to optimised routes and other partner considerations such as GCC's Highways depot. This will be factored into the process.

Incentivisation schemes

It was also suggested that incentivisation schemes to increase recycling and food waste service use should be explored and if there are any examples from across the country.

Decision: Revised recommendations were accepted by CLG.

9. Any other Climate Business:

Jon McGinty requested that a CLG partner provides a venue to physically hold the CLG AGM next February; this needs capacity to host up to 30 attendees.

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Action: Please contact the Climate Change Coordinators if you have a venue available.
Stroud DC have since offered a venue for the meeting.