

Climate Leadership Gloucestershire Meeting #8: 31/01/2023, Meeting Notes

Climate Leadership Gloucestershire - Annual General Meeting

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
Cotswold District Council	Chris Crookall-Fallon (standing in for Rob Weaver)	Cllr Rachel Coxcoon
Forest of Dean District Council	Peter Williams Nick Murray (observer)	Cllr Paul Hiett
Gloucester City Council	Cllr Richard Cook Jon McGinty	
Gloucestershire County Council	Cllr David Gray (Chair – outgoing) David Owen (standing in for Colin Chick) Wayne Lewis (observer) Emily Woodger-Smith (presenter) Kelly Osborne (presenter)	
Stroud District Council	Cllr Chloe Turner (Chair – incoming) Brendan Cleere Georgia Spooner (observer)	
Tewkesbury Borough Council	Cllr Jim Mason Simon Dix	
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	Sarah Danson	Emma Hanby
Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership	Doug Hulyer Roger Mortlock	

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Secretariat	Julian Atkins (outgoing) Afrignmun Lovejoy (incoming)	
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2. Welcome and Introductions

Cllr Gray chaired the first part of the meeting and welcomed everyone to the first in person session and first Annual General Meeting of Climate Leadership Gloucestershire (CLG). Apologies were noted (see above).

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair for 2023

Cllr Gray thanked the group for their engagement over the past year and noted that he had now come to the end of his term as Chair and that the task therefore fell to him to seek nominations for the roles of Chair and Vice Chair for year two.

Cllr Cook nominated Cllr Turner and was supported by other members. No nominations for Vice Chair were received. Cllr Turner agreed to work with the Secretariat to seek nominations outside of the meeting.

Action 23/01: Cllr Turner to work with the Secretariat to source a Vice Chair for the coming year.

Cllr Turner takes over as Chair, thanking Cllr Gray and asks to bring forward an early item on budget approvals (not currently on the agenda).

Cllr Turner thanked partners for agreeing to increase their contributions to a centralised resource and budget and sought endorsement for a key portion of this budget to move towards development of a countywide Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (CRVA).

Decision: Climate Leadership Gloucestershire approved budget to be provided for a CRVA.

Cllr Turner also requested that the Secretariat urgently look to develop a process by which future projects might apply for funding from this limited fund.

Action 23/02: Secretariat to provide a proposal for bidding into the centralised CLG fund in advance of the next meeting.

4. Approval of meeting notes: November CLG meeting (paper 1)

Decision: Climate Leadership Gloucestershire approved the November meeting notes.

5. Economy (Business Support) Theme (Paper 2)

Sarah Danson (Director of Strategic Growth, GFirst LEP) led the Business Support presentation and discussion.

Her presentation highlighted the importance of funding certainty to encourage businesses to make long term investments and to accelerate business action on climate change.

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She set out the risks associated with the current landscape of business support in Gloucestershire, some of which is currently set to end in March.

She highlighted that the recurring message from Government, business representatives and stakeholders, was that businesses do want to decarbonise but need financial and advisory support to do so.

GFirst LEP's Growth Hub and existing programme of business engagement has been crucial in supporting many Gloucestershire businesses to take their first step towards becoming Net Zero. And there is strong appetite from business to do more, with 46% of business in the Southwest keen to move forward on decarbonisation – the highest percentage nationally.

Drivers for business action include:

- Risk to business operations is a common driver for climate action. Businesses are becoming increasingly aware of impacts from disruptive weather events alongside regulatory and market changes and the reputational risks associated with unsustainable business practices.
- Government's requirement for businesses to commit to net-zero emissions by 2050 and publish credible carbon reduction plans before bidding for government contracts.
- The pursuit of net zero has the potential to drive investment, innovation and increase earnings.
- Collaboration is also key, businesses now recognise that working together by sector and across themes will benefit all participants in the transition to net zero.

Key barriers include the timescales for action. Sarah highlighted that talking about decarbonisation by 2050 is often unrealistic especially for SMEs. To move forward with this agenda, it will be important to identify shorter more tangible timeframes for action, to be able to effectively engage businesses. Clarity on what makes the largest difference to a businesses' decarbonisation journey will also be key, future support needs to focus on helping with energy purchasing and efficiency. She also noted that the benefits from business transition to net zero will be huge and include talent attraction, good business profile, cost savings, and an increasing competitive edge locally, nationally and even globally.

Recommendations:

Sarah Danson completed her presentation with the following recommendations:

- 1) Develop and secure funding for a medium term (2-3 year) programme to support 'green-growth' with short, medium and long term actions. Revise current KPIs for business engagement to those that reflect sustainable growth.
- 2) Develop a green economy supplier-to-consumer matching platform and provide support to grow the green economy sector by raising demand for its services.
- 3) Build a forum of local 'sustainable' business leaders to help to develop business support activities and act as role models and mentors.
- 4) Build a forum of business support providers and business membership organisations to maximise benefit from available resources.
- 5) Align with the 'Anchor Institutions' work in the public sector and pilot project in the private sector to support business adoption and employee behaviour change.

She asked that participants note that in her experience even small 'nudge' awards of £1,000-£3,000 can have a significant impact for businesses.

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Key points arising from the discussion:

CLG members discussed how the breadth of businesses carbon usage and the associated economic costs is one of the top drivers in helping businesses want to reduce their carbon. Key gaps highlighted were the lack of resources and tools to help businesses assess their carbon usage and therefore how to best reduce this. It was noted that this issue will become increasingly challenging as we encourage businesses to include Scope 3 emissions within their accounting.

It was recognised that Government is already leading the way in requiring better carbon accounting through their procurement guidelines. It was suggested that some form of carbon audit tool could also help businesses identify and move forward with their decarbonisation journey.

A question was asked around the levels of funding that GFirst LEP believes is needed to continue business support in this area beyond March 2023.

Action 23/03 Sarah Danson to provide estimations of the costs of the support needed, for consideration by CLG at its next meeting.

It was also highlighted that any local support options need to be viewed alongside the Skidmore review, and other national tools such as the 'help to grow business' campaign, to ensure that we are not duplicating efforts.

Action 23/04 Sarah Danson to work with the Secretariat to identify national support mechanisms and the timings of these to ensure local business support is designed to complement not duplicate national efforts.

The Secretariat raised the issue of a lack of current funding availability for business support via CLG and suggested more work was needed on exploring income streams to support this.

Participants also noted that any new business advice facility needs to work alongside existing the advice to homeowners and businesses so that we aren't duplicating effort and getting best value for available resources.

The Chair thanked Sarah Danson for her presentation and sought the support of CLG to endorse the recommendations.

Decision: CLG agreed the recommendations and to commence further work to explore costs and mechanisms to deliver net zero business support in Gloucestershire.

6. Onshore Wind consultation and potential changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (Paper 3 & Presentation)

The Secretariat set out Government's proposals on onshore wind as part of the NPPF consultation closing on 2 March. It was highlighted that these changes broadly set out to give local authorities more flexibility to work with local communities to identify sites for onshore wind deployment.

Key points arising from the discussion:

The secretariat identified that the County Planning Officers Group (CPOG) are already working on wider response on the full suite of planning reforms within the NPPF consultation and that they are ready to include a response from CLG on the proposals regarding onshore wind. He then sought the approval of the group to produce a draft letter of support for the proposed changes on behalf of CLG.

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Decision: CLG agreed a common response to be included in the CPOG return, with a view to support the recommendations whilst recognising the need for further consideration around the mechanisms for empowering of local communities.

Participants further noted the linkages with potential recommendations within the Skidmore review and directed the secretariat to future proof where possible the response regarding onshore wind to include where relevant the wider objectives of CLG.

Action 23/05 CLG Secretariat to draft a letter in support of the onshore wind proposals for inclusion in the Gloucestershire's response to the NPPF consultation.

7. Workshop – Year in Review and Where do we go from here?

The Secretariat introduced the session.

Participants were asked to highlight positive aspects of CLG in year 1.

Participants also noted potential areas of improvement moving forward.

Finally participants highlighted potential priorities for year two.

The Secretariat closed the session summarising that the outputs of the workshop would be captured and shared back with CLG before being fed into agenda setting and thematic work for year two.

Action 23/06 Secretariat to share outcomes of the workshop with CLG for consideration in the future work programme.

8. Behaviour Change (Countywide Engagement) (Paper 4)

Emilie Woodger-Smith and Kelly Osbourne introduced the session and proceeded to highlight the range of initiatives already provided by the County Council's climate engagement team.

They highlighted the key fact that 74% of emissions come from households nationally, and that 30% of what we in Gloucestershire need to achieve net zero as a county will come from individuals changing their behaviours. Conversely studies have shown that individuals do not fully understand the contribution needed from them, and that many believe that the majority of the changes needed will come from national Government interventions.

The County Council has recognised the importance of external engagement to change individual behaviours and have been expanding their team to accommodate this. This team now run a range of campaigns including on waste reduction, supporting initiatives such as tree planting and delivering a range of door-to-door engagement activities. More recently the team have supported the recent net zero transport symposium and initiated the Trusted Voices and Food Waste campaigns.

The Engagement teams' broad strategy has so far focused on 4 key themes: 'food', 'energy and home', 'travel', and 'waste and stuff'. They highlighted that their Trusted Voices campaign is reaching a wide audience group and that these groups were often previously hard to reach or unengaged. This work also links to a particular behaviour change mechanism which the team were focused on called 'Social Norming' which can help promote and normalise desired action E.g. Campaigns such as the Wear Not Waste Not campaign, highlighted that 1/3 of people in the UK already wear second hand clothes.

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Another live campaign via which councils and others can share examples of good practice is via Greener Wednesdays – where Emilie gets online and talks about stories which engage directly with residents on sustainability & waste topics.

The team went on to highlight the remaining gaps and opportunities on behaviour change for Gloucestershire:

- All behaviour change work is more effective when reinforced with meaningful and considered **policy**.
- In depth targeting of work to address the **barriers** to behaviour change.
- There are more opportunities to **collaborate** across the county.
- Identifying and targeting specific **high carbon socioeconomic groups** within Gloucestershire.
- A wider range of **methods** could be used to encourage behaviour change.
- Stronger and more transparent **leadership** that role models individual behaviour changes to residents.
- The work is limited by staff time and financial **capacity**.

The team noted that a recent House of Lord's paper highlighted the importance of policy to influence behaviour change. An example of this is the forthcoming changes to waste policy which will change the way that we and residents manage our waste. The team also highlighted another strong theme from central government around incentives for improving home insulation and advice centres to encourage residents and homeowners to act on energy efficiency.

The team highlighted that to facilitate increased external engagement on climate change we need better sharing of information and best practice between partners. It was suggested that this be initiated via a **cross county engagement group** (similar to that under the Waste and Resources Partnership, which should include all CLG members, whilst online platforms for information sharing between partners also be taken forward as a priority.

Further recommendations included development of a **joint engagement strategy**, coordinated communications, shared and consistent messaging and shared budget for public engagement including exploring creation of a community access fund for behaviour change projects.

The presentation also recommended that **future action on engagement be prioritised** according to the highest carbon emissions and areas that will be most impactful. Targeting of audiences will also be a key part of this. For example, work will need to focus on areas with highest emissions, e.g. earners in the top 10% are likely to have emissions 3 times greater than those of the bottom 10%.

To ensure that we are maximising our effectiveness across all partners it was also suggested that **existing resourcing on behaviour change, and engagement is assessed** to understand gaps, and that further shared resources be sought to deliver engagement across all partners and alongside external groups.

The presentation concluded with a request that, all CLG members:

- Review the actions suggested, identify those which have already been completed, and consider how best to implement the remaining actions where possible.
- Agree to explore the development of a joint engagement strategy, formal engagement group and shared budget for public engagement with climate related behaviour change. Share consistent messages for the public across all organisations in line with the engagement strategy.
- Explore the creation of a community fund for behaviour change projects.

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Key points arising from the discussion:

There was broad support for an increased emphasis on engagement and a pooling of resource to achieve consistent aims and messaging.

The discussion focused on other potential levers for behaviour change including messaging to young people and through identification of value driven socio-economic groups.

The effectiveness of charges and forfeits vs incentives was raised alongside a suggestion that we will need to explore both to achieve the magnitudes of change needed to make Gloucestershire net zero. The point around the unpopularity but effectiveness of this approach was emphasised e.g. the plastic carrier bag charge.

It was noted that messaging can focus on economic and monetary savings rather than primarily about climate outcomes. For example, messaging focused on 'Green Economy' seemed to unite our key aims and be attractive to all. Sarah Danson raised the crossover between this theme and work on business engagement and the likely opportunities to collaborate in future.

CLLr Turner offered CLG Members as a resource to help share messages around positive case studies and to target behaviour change.

Action 23/06 Engagement team to share communications and campaign messaging with CLG members to help increase audience reach.

The Engagement team also recommended that CLG look to increasingly use the voices of youth. The youth group work was recognised as being really positive. It was noted that youth representation on CLG is to be discussed under AOB.

Decision: Participants agreed the recommendations in lieu of the draft engagement plan coming back to CLG.

The group recognised the challenges around how we measure our success and how we ensure sufficient change to meet our Net Zero ambitions and that this will need to be a key consideration in the development of the forthcoming plan.

9. Any other Climate Business:

The secretariat asked to bring forward two AOBs:

i. A recommendation from GCC's Environment Scrutiny Committee re Gloucestershire Climate Youth Panel representation on CLG

This was raised at the last Environment and Scrutiny panel. The Panel suggested that this might be appropriate for CLG membership to consider.

The Chair agreed that this was good suggestion and directed Secretariat to consider alongside a wider review of membership and report back to CLG.

Action 23/07 Secretariat to consider as part of wider review of CLG membership and present to the next CLG meeting.

ii. Innovate UK: Net Zero Living Programme Fast Followers Competition

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The Secretariat highlighted the background to the fund which was announced on 18 January 2023 and closes on 1 March. The aim of the competition is to support local authorities in up to 20 places providing up to £300,000 per place over 2 years through funding a dedicated Net Zero Innovation and Delivery officer role. If successful bidders would be required to contribute 50% of the resources allocated to them to support the central management and delivery of the fund.

Discussion focused on the benefits of a shared and stronger bid vs the limited capacity from a centralised role covering the whole county whilst inputting 50% back into the central programme.

The Chair endorsed the approach of a single bid to avoid duplication and competition, and hopefully increasing our potential for success. The Chair tasked the Secretariat to convene partners and propose a way forward.

Action 23/08 Secretariat to convene partners and propose a way forward on the UKRI bid.

iii. A third AOB was raised celebrating the news that Government have announced a national deposit return system.

A new cash incentive system, placing deposits on drinks bottles and cans, will boost recycling from 2025. The consultation response announced on 20 January will mean that recycling plastic bottles and drink cans becomes easier for tens of millions of people in the UK.