

Climate Leadership Gloucestershire AGM Meeting #20 13/02/2025, Meeting Notes

Climate Leadership Gloucestershire

In advance of the formal meeting attendees were invited to gain insight into projects being delivered by partners on the ground, all of which directly link into CLG thematic priorities. This included guest representatives showcasing projects related to nature, transport, retrofit and community engagement.

Notes and actions of the AGM

Attendance

The following partners were in attendance:

Partner organisation	Attendees	Apologies
Cheltenham Borough Council	Cllr Iain Dobie Frances Crick	
Cotswold District Council	Cllr Mike McKeown (Chair) Rob Weaver	
Forest of Dean District Council	Cllr Chris McFarling Simon Richards	Nigel Brinn Andy Barge
Gloucester City Council	Cllr Sebastian Field Jon McGinty	
Gloucestershire County Council	Cllr David Gray David Owen	Colin Chick
Stroud District Council	Cllr Chloe Turner Brendan Cleere	
Tewkesbury Borough Council	Cllr Cate Cody (Incoming Chair)	Simon Dix
Hospitals Trusts		Jen Cleary
Integrated Care Board	Dan Corfield	Mary Hutton, Catherine Leech
Gloucestershire Police and Crime Commissioner and Gloucestershire Constabulary	Mandy Gibbs	
Gloucestershire Local Nature Partnership	Nicola Hillary	Stephanie Sargeant
Gloucestershire Youth Climate Group	Polly Gannaway-Pitts Rebecca Fulford	

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Secretariat	Afriqnmun Lovejoy David Sharman	
Observers	Kelly Osborne, GCC Chloe Brazier-Sant, South West Net Zero Hub	

1) Welcome, apologies and Introductions

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and noted the benefits of these in-person meetings, and in particular today's opportunity to gain insight into the projects happening around the county as part of the showcase that took place prior to the formal meeting.

The Chair confirmed that this was the end of his tenure in the role, and would be handing over the Cllr Cate Cody later in the meeting. He reflected on some of the CLG highlights from 2024, and suggested CLG should perhaps be most proud of the recent work on retrofit initiatives. In addition to the new retrofit platform, retrofit engagement officers across three of the districts are focussed on grassroots engagement. The 'Drive and Thrive' event which is being supported by Cotswold District Council's own Retrofit Engagement Officer will follow the very successful Cheltenham Borough Council Retrofit event earlier this month.

The Chair concluded by considering the English Devolution White Paper, and how it may be an opportunity, ahead of reorganisation, for CLG to prepare and collaborate even more—particularly around waste fleet decarbonisation and planning policy. Work on fleet decarbonisation should not be derailed as it remains the biggest source of direct transport emissions from Local Authorities and tackling this will be crucial to meeting councils' own internal net zero goals. There is a big opportunity to work together on this now, and CLG proposed work on waste fleet decarbonisation should be considered in the context of a unified Gloucestershire. It's clear though that external help needed to pursue that fleet decarbonisation planning, and this will be covered in today's meeting.

Planning policy similarly represents an opportunity for CLG to prepare the ground for a transition to a unitary council. The partnership, using the expertise of our officers to work together, should ensure that there is the basis of a great green plan ready for a future unitary authority to immediately progress.

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

2) Declarations of Interest

No declarations.

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

Meeting notes approved by members as a true and accurate record.

Decision: Climate Leadership Gloucestershire approved the November meeting notes.

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4) Election of Chair and Vice Chair for 2025

As per the Terms of Reference the Chair confirmed that the Vice Chair, Cllr Cate Cody, would automatically assume the position of Chair for the next six months.

The incoming Chair began her tenure by extending thanks to Cllr McKeown for being a very calm and supportive Chair. She stated that Cllr McKeown has had a huge influence on the retrofit work pursued by CLG, and has also given great focus to EV transition, and the need for equitable on-street charging. He has also improved communications between CLG members.

All members joined the incoming Chair in their appreciation of Cllr McKeown.

The Chair then reflected on the philosophical and psychological emergencies that could be seen to accompany the climate emergency which we face-

She outlined that Climate Leadership Gloucestershire should be seen as the county's representatives and leaders on climate change. However, by way of example of this, Cllr Cody queried if all attendees used sustainable transport to travel to this meeting. She outlined the wider benefits of this sustainable behaviour- the local economy often benefits when people use public transport, in terms of businesses that are frequented, and individuals engage more with their community. The Chair also made a plea to those who had to drive- to support the development of lift share and car club schemes within their areas. She concluded by asking all attendees to fully consider future transport options, as we, as leaders, need to be the change, and champion further behaviour change. Collectively we can improve the psychology and philosophy around this change, as well as the climate itself.

The Chair then moved to the election of a new Vice Chair. It was confirmed that one nomination had been received prior to the meeting- Cllr Sebastian Field.

No further nominations were made from the floor.

A vote was held for Cllr Field's nomination as Vice Chair, which was passed unanimously.

Decision: Cllr Sebastian Field elected as Climate Leadership Gloucestershire Vice Chair for February-September 2025 after which he will take on the role of chair from September 2025-February 2026.

5) Action Plan and Funding update

Action Plan review

The Secretariat noted the key updates from the Action Plan-

Adaptation - 0102	Recommendation: County Level Climate Risk & Vulnerability Assessment (CRVA) Action: Develop a county-level assessment to support and inform climate adaptation planning.
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	<p>Progress: Kick off meeting has been held – the next meeting of the group (10/03) will focus on stakeholder engagement plans and key data input requirements.</p>
Biodiversity - 0201	<p>Recommendation: Local Nature Recovery Strategy</p> <p>Action: Gloucestershire to develop a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)</p> <p>Progress: Draft maps now live as demoed during the showcase session earlier today.</p>
Behaviour Change - 0306	<p>Recommendation: Community Fund</p> <p>Action: A climate change fund for community groups for projects that demonstrate robust emissions reductions through behaviour change</p> <p>Progress: 24/25 scheme money to be spent by applicants by March 2025. GCC funded the 25/26 scheme and applications opened 02/02 and will be long listed by the CLG engagement group in March</p> <p>https://www.goucestershire.gov.uk/climate-change-community-fund</p>
Planning - 0703	<p>Recommendation: A central climate planning officer</p> <p>Action: A shared resource focused on sustainable planning with experience in climate change and planning.</p> <p>Progress: Draft Strategic Economic Development Fund bid to be submitted on 17/02, for review by City Region Board (CRB) officer group 24/02, and then to full CRB 06/03.</p>
Planning - 0704	<p>Recommendation: Sharing work on evidence and best practice</p> <p>Action: Local best practice sharing to extend to proactive engagement in national forums seeking to both learn from others and share our own best practice.</p> <p>Progress: A shared learning event focused on best practice planning policies will be held on the 02/04, the first part with a talk Town and County Planning Association.</p>
Retrofit - 0901	<p>Recommendation: Development of Retrofit website</p> <p>Action: Continue district development of retrofit platform to make it suitable for a full launch in 2024.</p> <p>Progress: Platform now fully launched with Furbnow on 27/01 with associated media releases. Can be viewed at furbnow.com/Gloucestershire</p>

Questions and discussion

It was asked whether it was too early to get a read-out of engagement rates and number from the new retrofit platform? It was confirmed that it was too early to give a useful report on this; the platform only fully live for the last three weeks, but that the provider Furbnow

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would be reporting on engagement numbers on a quarterly basis, and that an initial appraisal should be available for the April CLG meeting.

There was some discussion of the in-person retrofit event at Cheltenham- The Cheltenham Retrofit Show. This was held within a community space, in collaboration with the community group 'From the Ground Up'. The event saw over 500 residents attend, and provided access to experts on retrofit topics such as ventilation and home energy assessments, including our partners at Furbnow.

It was queried whether Furbnow would be open to running similar events in other districts? It was confirmed that Furbnow would certainly be open to supporting further events across the county, but that some resource would likely need to be provided by the district council. Cheltenham's recent event was supported by the Retrofit Engagement Officer that they are partially funding, and has been developed under the UKSPF-funded work they have progressed around retrofit. The Secretariat will ensure that Furbnow consider the potential of further events in the three districts without Retrofit Engagement Officers.

Funding update

The Secretariat outlined The Greener Gloucestershire Action Fund spend on four projects:

- Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (Action 0102) - cost £62k: underway
- Green Skills Coordinator (Action 0401) - cost £70k: Now in post
- Shared bid writer - cost £65k: Now in post
- CCRI Net Zero Food & Farming project (Action 0601) - cost £30k *inc. £27k external funds*

Alongside actions in progress which have been financed outside of the Action Fund:

- Local Area Energy Plan stages 1-3 (Action 0501) - cost £30k *inc. £10k external funds: on agenda today (see Item 6)*
- Retrofit platform (Action 0803) - cost £85k for initial 3-year contract provided by the District Councils.
- Retrofit engagement officers (Action 0804) - cost £150k *inc. £75k external funds: Good progress to date with over 500 people attending the Cheltenham Retrofit Show.*
- Round 1 Community Fund (Action 0306) - cost £50k: now progressing to Round 2.

It was noted that the above projects had secured over £100k additional external funding.

The Secretariat also summarised potential future funding opportunities:

- Strategic Economic Development Fund bid of up to £200k for a shared planning and climate officer (Action 0704) to be submitted to City Region Board (CRB).
- National Lottery £1.5m Climate Action Fund bid (Action 0602) to expand farmer clusters across the county.
- Forest of Dean specific Climate Action Fund bid of up to £1.5m bid centred on community engagement in alignment with Behaviour Change and Energy themes.
- Gloucester City and University of Gloucestershire EU Horizon Fund bid of £610k for a Gloucester 'Living Lab for energy generation and potential heat network projects (Action 0503).

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- Further early-stage development of bids in the areas of: An access to nature greenspaces project; EV charge point roll out for community spaces and maintenance teams; and support for community energy development.

In response to the point on future work around EV charging sites- Dan Corfield confirmed that the NHS are undergoing their own procurement for a rapid assessment of the EV charging infrastructure across all NHS sites, including community, assessing current capacity and future need. He confirmed that NHS colleagues would be very happy to discuss collaboration at any shared sites, or sites which neighbour each other, and that they would be keen to discuss this with partners.

6) Energy theme: Local Area Energy Planning update

Jacob Hall introduced himself as the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) Project Manager for communities for this work on Local Area Energy Planning (LAEP) in the South West.

- The South West Net Zero Hub have commissioned CSE and Regen (both not for profit entities) to take forward the initial three stages of LAEPs in Devon, Wiltshire and Dorset alongside Gloucestershire.
- Jacob will be the lead contact for Gloucestershire; he is joined today by his colleague Alex North.
- Jacob began with an introduction to CSE- formed in 1979 and focussed on tackling the climate emergency & ending the suffering caused by cold homes, with 120+ staff across three teams on 100+ projects. Based in Bristol but work UK wide supporting a variety of stakeholders.
- CSE, and the team working on this, have previous direct experience of working on Local Area Energy Plans. Jacob himself developed an LAEP when working for Somerset Council.
- 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.
- Jacob outlined the further benefits that can be realised from LAEPs- economic: keeping energy local, attract investment and supporting job creation; and social: further support of retrofit, improving social housing, and communities having a say in what the local energy system looks like.
- 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-

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- 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.
- Jacob outlined the key timeline and milestones for the project-
 - Engagement Plan; breaking down key stakeholders- by end of February
 - Baseline energy representation; visualisation of current system- start of April
 - Local Area Characterisation – start of April
 - Local area vision; considering respective political, social and economic contexts – end of May
 - Forward Plan; steps on what we want to deliver, and who to engage and empower – end of August
- Jacob outlined key upcoming dates-
 - W/c 24th or 31st March- Visioning workshop, for all to consider what they want a Gloucestershire energy system to look like
 - Early May- local area workshops; engaging key local stakeholders to identify plans and ambitions.

Questions and discussion

It was asked what kind of proportion of the full process will this tender actually cover? It was confirmed that this would cover the first three of seven stages. However, the costs and shape of further stages have a lot of variables given that there are multiple pathways and approaches to the later scenario planning, so it's hard to put a percentage of how much of the full project this represents. Funding for the further stages will be sought by the Autumn of 2025.

It was asked what time period is covered by the LAEP? And would it include and account for emerging opportunities such as geothermal energy? It was confirmed that it should be a long-term plan, for example working towards 2035 and 2050 as key dates. It will be a model that should also be actively used, adapted, and regularly reviewed and updated to account for changing circumstances and to stay current and useful. The detailed work on opportunities such as geothermal would be covered in Stages 4-7 and would involve detailed scenario planning, so not in the scope of these stages of the project. This project will focus on getting governance structures in place and preparing authorities for work of detailed scenario planning.

The point was made that energy system planning was highly complex with many variables, not all controlled locally. Would our focus on a local system be rendered unnecessary or contradict the work of those considering this complex landscape at a national level? It was confirmed that the new national strategic roles around NESO and RESP have already stated

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that they are receptive to LAEP data, and ensuring their engagement in the project development will be key to aligning with strategic energy planning at a wider level. The regional approach of this project- across four counties, also means we will be engaging wider networks- as well as all DNOs and stakeholders across the region; and each participating authority will benefit from this wider learning, as well as the local focus in Gloucestershire.

The point was made that there is a lot of crossover with other themes- planning, transport (including waste fleet), and community energy. Planning in particular is key in terms of identifying commercial opportunities and potential heat networks. How do we ensure inclusion of stakeholders such as developers? It was confirmed those elements will be in the scope of the project, and will be included. Further details on how they will input into the LAEP will emerge as the project continues.

It was asked if community engagement and involvement would be ensured from the outset of the project. CSE confirmed they will not be able to do individual community engagement within the scope of the project, but we will look to ensure that LA stakeholders identify and community stakeholders. The Forest of Dean District lead officer on the project confirmed that they will ensure there is clear guidelines for districts to feed community engagement into this project.

The South West Net Zero Hub representative confirmed their role in commissioning the project, and the support they will offer in terms of ensuring the regional approach and sharing of best practice.

7) Waste theme: Fleet EV infrastructure strategy

The Secretariat outlined the likely revisions to the wider theme actions given changing policy, priorities and potential Local Government reorganisation. They then went on to outline the proposal for a waste fleet EV infrastructure strategy, recently presented to the Gloucestershire Resources & Waste Partnership (GRWP), which would-

- Consider the full infrastructure requirements needed for a transition to an EV waste fleet.
- Provide in-depth consideration of solutions to current grid capacity and constraints.
- Provide a costed timeline for a phased transition to EV fleet.
- Consider collaborative solutions, at unified Gloucestershire level, such as super depots for mass charging, or shared private wire hub (direct charging from solar farm).
- The point was made on the pressing nature of this work- with most depots close to reaching grid capacity, and national policy meaning that EVs will need to be procured moving forward.
- The Secretariat confirmed that the GRWP had acknowledged the need for this work but were unable to confirm a funding route to take it forward.
- Other funding routes will be considered, such as that previously suggested in this meeting- of seeking private sector partnership.

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- The Secretariat requested CLG members' views on whether this was the correct approach for the theme, and if they could support its progression with waste service colleagues.

Questions and Discussion

The point was made that it should be ensured that the strategy covered all considerations beyond the wider infrastructure requirements- including ownership arrangements and costs of vehicles. An alternative view on this was given- that there may be merit in considering grid capacity and infrastructure as a discreet project- to deliver urgent progress in this area and avoid further delays related to reviewing the scope of the work. Increased urgency to get this over the line would also empower Ubico as our waste contractor to move forward with further procurement as quickly as possible.

The urgency of the transition was noted by the group, with millions of pounds being invested by partners to procure new fleet which could be significantly detrimental to our chance of hitting net zero targets if not addressed urgently.

The potential risk of reduced ambition from a new unitary authority was highlighted- with some collection authorities considering measures, such 3-weekly residual collections, which might may not progress under a new unitary authority.

Similar concerns were referenced regarding the potential removal of effective recycling collection methods at individual districts. Conversely, the potential benefit of a unitary, in providing a straightforward single method of recycling for all in Gloucestershire, and potential to increase efficiency of collection routes, was highlighted.

There was considerable discussion on the rapidly changing technology and market of EV for waste. Previous concerns and comments on range anxiety and the ability of EV to carry out the specialised functions of waste vehicles was flagged. The Secretariat and others confirmed that recent developments in other parts of the country, and the technology now on offer, suggests that EV would be a suitable transition for all collection authorities to consider.

Members also noted the continued need to maintain a focus on reduction as well as collection, and that the focus for the theme should be on how we move waste up the waste hierarchy – from increased recycling to increasing reuse and reduction of waste. This should be done via an increased focus on education of residents and businesses on reducing waste generation.

Decision: Members supported the development of the strategy as the main focus within the waste theme, with some small revisions to the specification, and will support its progression with colleagues responsible for waste services.

Action: Secretariat to continue pursue the waste fleet EV infrastructure strategy via waste officers and Members of the GRWP.

8) CLG feedback workshop

The Secretariat facilitated a workshop, dividing attendees into groups to consider the following questions:

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Q1. What about CLG has worked well over the last year?

Q2. Which thematic actions should we prioritise?

Q3. How can we improve the CLG partnership?

Q4. How does CLG respond and remain relevant in the face of changing regional and national structures?

Q5. What should be CLG's community action and engagement priorities?

The Secretariat then brought attendees together to feedback on these questions:

Q1 Discussion highlights - what about CLG has worked well over the last year?

It was confirmed that attendees appreciated that:

- Recognition of the fact that CLG is now more delivery-focussed towards true climate action.
- Further reference to the benefit and effectiveness of the biannual in-person meetings.
- Pride in the fact that the initial CLG aims- of more strategic working and better sharing between districts is clearly being delivered.

Q2 Discussion highlights - which thematic actions should we prioritise?

- The point was made that the thematic focus should be on areas where CLG can swiftly deliver, moving forward away from strategies and plans.

Q3 Discussion highlights - what should be CLG's community action and engagement priorities?

- The point was made to reconsider CLG partnership governance and voting rights as some non-voting members felt at a disadvantage.
- It was suggested that the behaviour change theme should be considered for restructuring to tailor to specific change mechanisms for certain communities, schools etc.
- Furthermore the theme should consider how we incorporate businesses and the private sector into CLG more actively.

Q4 Discussion highlights – how does CLG respond and remain relevant in the face of changing regional and national structures?

- Local Government Reorganisation was raised as is an opportunity to encourage Local Authority members to delegate climate delivery work to CLG, as we already act successfully at a countywide footprint.

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- This is an opportunity to build on, rather than disregard the collaboration built over the last 4 years.
- CLG work should progress regardless of devolution as we need to meaningfully progress towards 2030 targets.
- CLG should therefore press forward with work needed, and remain visible over the coming years.

Q5 Discussion highlights - what should be CLG's community action and engagement priorities?

- It was suggested CLG could utilise citizens' assemblies building on the experience of assemblies in Stroud.
- CLG could consider further MP engagement and advocacy of local priorities.
- Resident engagement more broadly should continue to be an area of increased focus, and potentially seeking of their direct views on what CLG priorities should be.
- Partners should consider more engagement events- such as recent retrofit event, and partners should look to recruit more specific engagement officers, such as the Retrofit Engagement Officers.

9) Any Other Climate Business

Mandy Gibbs of the Gloucestershire Constabulary confirmed that unfortunately the Constabulary would be withdrawing as CLG voting members from the start of the 25/26 financial year due to significant budgetary pressures. This will therefore be the last CLG meeting at which the Constabulary are formally represented.