

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CLIMATE EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP
HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT OFFICE TEAMS
ON 14th SEPTEMBER, 2021**

PRESENT –

Councillor S. Cockburn-Price (Chairman – in the chair)

Councillors

*David Albin
Zafar Ali
Karen Howarth
Carlo Lioni
Tom Whipp*

Co-optees

*Sylvia Godfrey
David Penney
Jane Wood*

Officers in attendance:

<i>Gill Dickson</i>	<i>Principal Policy Officer</i>
<i>David Walker</i>	<i>Environmental Services Manager</i>
<i>Lee Johnson</i>	<i>Principal Environment Officer</i>
<i>Neil Yates</i>	<i>Principal Engineer</i>
<i>Jane Watson</i>	<i>Head of Democratic Services</i>

(Apologies for absence were received from Caroline Palmer and John Turley).



1. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

AGREED

That Councillor K. Howarth be appointed Vice-Chairman for the Working Group for the municipal year 2021/22.

2. MINUTES

AGREED

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Climate Emergency Working Group held on, 2020 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. REDUCTION OF EMISSIONS FROM PBC FLEET

The Environmental Services Manager submitted a report which provided an overview of the investigations which had taken place regarding the use of hydrated vegetable oil and gas to liquid fuels. The report also included the associated costs the use of alternate fuels would bring.

It was reported that following the completion of vehicle demonstrations and the investigation into cost comparisons of electric powered street cleansing vehicles against diesel fuelled counterparts the Council was currently not in a position financially, or through current infrastructure to introduce electric vehicles for street cleansing or waste collection purposes at this time.

Investigations had turned to Hydro Vegetable Oil (HVO) and Gas to Liquid (GTL) both of which were described as being a cleaner burning alternative to standard diesel that could be used in both road and off road applications.

Go Plant had expressed an interest in providing two tanks to enable the Council to fully investigate the benefits of both HVO and GTL.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Policy and Resources Committee be recommended –

- (1) To approve the introduction of alternative fuels for the Council's fleet of vehicles and subsequent increases in costs for both fuel and infrastructure.
- (2) To approve further investigation into the benefits of HVO and GTL through accepting the offer of support from Go Plant Fleet Services.
- (3) To approve the use of alternate fuels as required.

4. TREE PLANTING UPDATE

It was reported that over the last planting season the Council had planted 6,370 trees which considerably exceeded the target of 3,000 trees. This had been achieved with the help of funding secured from the Local Authority Treescape Scheme. Additional funding of £158,000 had also been secured from this Scheme for further planting. This had been a joint bid with Blackburn-with-Darwen, Rossendale, Ribble Valley and Pendle and the funding would be split between the four authorities.

In addition, over the same period, the Ribble Rivers Trust had also planted 800 trees on private land and 19 schools had carried out planting schemes.

The Group discussed the need to encourage more private land owners to plant trees as, in a few years, there would be little or no Council owned land available.

Gib Hill was discussed and it was reported that the ecological survey on the site had recently been received and it was agreed that this be circulated to the Group. There was also a discussion regarding re-wilding on Boulsworth Hill and its possible designation as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Group were advised that this area was already designated as a Triple Site of Scientific Interest and was considered to already be an important site and should not be altered.

5. ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINTS IN PENDLE

The Housing, Health and Engineering Services Manager submitted a report on a proposed procurement exercise to enable the Council to develop its own electric vehicle charging infrastructure. Management Team had already agreed this but wanted the views of this Group before proceeding.

In addition to the £30,000 allocated from the Climate Emergency Budget for this project additional funding could be sought from the Government's Office for Zero Emission Vehicles which offered grants of up to £100,000 for this type of project, subject to at least 25% match funding.

A summary of offers received from EON, BP Chargemaster and ECC was included in the report. Management Team had agreed that proposals be sought from a supplier who would supply, install, operate and manage rapid (min. 40kWh) charges in the Council's car parks detailed in the report. A procurement process was proposed and a proposed specification submitted for comment.

It was reported that further information had been received from EON, BP and ECC expanding on a number of issues included in their offers. Discussions had been held with a total of six suppliers and all provided different information on aspects that they could supply.

The Group discussed the need to ensure there was sufficient electricity supply at the locations of the proposed charging points; the need for rapid charging points and an acknowledgement that currently there was little demand for these charging points but that this was a changing market. It was noted that the tender process would encompass all town centre car parks in the Borough.

AGREED

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That the tender specification attached to the report be agreed and in line with Management Team's decision the procurement exercise proceed to seek an appropriate supplier to help deliver charging facilities in the Council's car parks.

6. CLIMATE EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN UPDATE

The Principle Policy Officer submitted a report which outlined progress to date on the Climate Emergency Declaration and associated action plan.

It was reported that due to the Covid-19 pandemic and additional lockdowns and restrictions experienced over 2020/21 it was deemed uncondusive to encourage school and community activities. As such there had been limited progress and the £100,000 budget had been carried forward into 2021/22.

The Working Group were advised that it was becoming more apparent that there was a need for a dedicated climate change resource to focus on the significant scale of work not only for the Council but also within the wider community. The Policy and Resources Committee had therefore approved utilising the time limited Climate Emergency Budget to fund a dedicated part time Climate Emergency post to lead and co-ordinate the Council's climate emergency response.

Climate Emergency Working Group (14.09.2021)

Therefore, the revised Climate Emergency Budget was:

£50,000 capital programme

- £30,000 to support the electric vehicle infrastructure.
- £20,000 for the Home Energy Programme (match funded by £20,000 DFG).

£50,000 revenue support

- £25,000 (including on-costs) for a part time Climate Emergency Delivery Officer to lead on Climate Emergency Declaration planning and implementation.
- £25,000 Climate Action Small Grants Scheme for schools and community groups. To be launched during the Big Green Week (18th to 26th September).

AGREED

(1) That progress on the Climate Emergency Action Plan be noted.

(2) That the revised Climate Emergency Budget programme be noted.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

AGREED

That the next meeting be arranged for December, 2021.

Chairman _____