

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CLIMATE EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP
HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT OFFICE TEAMS
ON 14TH JULY, 2022**

PRESENT –

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

Councillors

*David Albin
Ruby Anwar
Rosemary Carroll*

Co-optees

*Dr Caroline Spencer-Palmer
Sylvia Godfrey
John Turley
David Penney
Ben Harrop*

Officers in attendance:

<i>Gill Dickson</i>	<i>Principal Policy Officer</i>
<i>Aiden Stephenson</i>	<i>Climate Emergency Officer</i>
<i>David Walker</i>	<i>Environmental Services Manager</i>
<i>Lynne Rowland</i>	<i>Committee Administrator</i>

(Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Z. Ali.)



1. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

AGREED

That Councillor Rosemary Carroll be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Working Group for the municipal year 2022/23.

2. MINUTES

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Climate Emergency Working Group held on 6th April, 2022 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES UPDATE

The Environmental Services Manager provided an update on the work of Environmental Services.

He began by reporting on the Council's use of **Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO)** as an alternative fuel for the refuse collection vehicles. He advised that the infrastructure was now in place and HVO had been the main source of fuel in three vehicles since 1st April, 2022. This had

since increased to four vehicles, with plans to increase this to six. It was not currently being used in the smaller 3.5 tonne vehicles as the warranty implications had not yet been established.

The daily usage per vehicle, had been recorded at 50 litres per day, which was just below the figure for diesel usage. To date this had saved approximately 23 tonnes of CO².

As yet there had been no side effects, with all vehicles running well. The option of widening the trial to include fuel powered equipment was being explored.

In response to questions, the Environmental Services Manager confirmed that –

- it had not been necessary to change any injectors/filters on the vehicles, as HVO could be successfully mixed with road diesel. Marketing also suggested that HVO was easier to store than road diesel as it was not affected by water ingress.
- the vehicles continued to undergo six weekly service inspections. However, with HVO it was not necessary to regularly burn off the engines as was the case with fossil fuels, therefore putting less strain on the engine.
- the cost of HVO was approximately 10-15 pence higher per litre than road diesel.
- the Council outsourced some services and had not asked those companies to explore alternative fuel for their vehicles. However, it was something that could be considered when agreeing new contracts. It was noted that the supplier of the recently tendered litter and dog fouling service used an electric vehicle.
- trials on hydrogen usage were taking place in other areas of the UK and appeared to be a growing sector. However, the infrastructure was not yet in place. A report on this would be brought back to a future meeting.
- the use of electric vehicles had been looked at previously and would be looked at again. As with hydrogen usage, the infrastructure was not yet in place.

The Environmental Services Manager continued by providing information on the **Battery Recycling Scheme**, which was due to go live from the 1st August, 2022. The Scheme was being funded by Lancashire County Council (LCC) and was being introduced to assist with the safe disposal of household batteries.

A large campaign introducing the new scheme had taken place and disposal bags were in the process of being delivered to properties in the Borough. Residents would be expected to use their own disposal bags going forward. Following collection the batteries would be taken for recycling by Valpak. There were no ongoing revenue costs to the scheme.

A further ongoing campaign related to the **recycling of aluminium**. This was an area in which the quality of the amount recycled needed to be improved. Currently, small pieces of aluminium were being missed by the machines' lasers when going through the waste separation process. Through education people were being asked to build the aluminium into a big ball prior to disposal, to improve the chances of it being captured by the lasers.

Reference was made to the recycling of plastics and the need to improve recycling rates both locally and nationally. It was noted that one key issue affecting recycling rates was contamination,

with plastic bags being the biggest contaminant. A contaminated bin could lead to the entire load being rejected. It was highlighted that, although plastic bags could not be recycled through the doorstep collection, they could be returned to supermarkets to be recycled.

AGREED

- (1) That the Council's Communications Team be asked to relay a message to remind people of the plastic bag recycling service provided by supermarkets.
- (2) That consideration be given to further engaging with schools with a view to participating in school assemblies to educate pupils on the importance of recycling.

4. PARK AND TREE PLANTING UPDATE

The Environmental Services Manager submitted a report which informed the Group of progress made with respect to the following –

Tree Planting - It was noted that the tree planting goals as reported to the 24th January meeting had been achieved. The majority of the planting was growing well, although there had been considerable losses in some areas. Tree planting at Alkincoats, Colne and Pasture Lane, Barrowford was due to proceed in winter 2022/23 with approximately 4850 tree whips to be planted. Unfortunately the sites at Langroyd, Colne and Carr Hall Road, Barrowford could no longer be planted due to legal issues.

Preliminary discussions were starting with the Ribble Rivers Trust; Lancashire Wildlife Trust; and several East Lancashire Authorities regarding submitting a Lancashire-wide Woodland Creation Accelerator Fund bid in 2022.

The Group was asked to suggest potential sites for planting. Suggestions included –

- The 'poets estate' in Colne. It was stated that the area was envisaged as a village estate, with tree lined streets.
- The area from Byron Road Community Centre to the Cricket Club, Colne
- Laneshaw Bridge Recreation Ground
- Creating a tree corridor at either side of the canal

It was also suggested that local farmers be contacted regarding potential locations.

It was felt that it was important to tie any proposals in with the Great Northern Forest Plans and the Ribble Rivers Trust with regard to any identified sites.

Herbicide Usage – It had been established that the method of hot water weed killing had potential to be used as an alternative to Glyphosate but, due to the equipment required, could not be used in all scenarios such as terraced streets. The cost of the machine and labour element also made it inefficient in some cases.

Six other Glyphosate alternatives were provided in the report. It was noted that all of these worked in the correct environments, but to different levels of success. Currently, there was not one solution that fit all, but finding an alternative to Glyphosate was high on the agenda within the industry. An in depth analysis of the options available was due to be carried out and an update would be provided to a future meeting.

The ongoing work in finding an alternative to Glyphosate was welcomed by the Group.

Differential mowing – It was reported that differential mowing techniques were being actively expanded and accelerated across the parks and greenspaces of Pendle. A list of sites where this process was being used was included in the report. The sites would be reviewed in the autumn and plans would be made to expand further in 2023. It was noted that three LCC roundabouts on Manchester Road, Skipton Road and Netherfield Road had been sown during April with wildflower seeds as a trial to review performance and feedback. These would not be mown until October 2022.

The Group agreed with the process of allowing areas of grass to grow naturally without cutting throughout spring and summer. It was understood that town and parish councils were also in support.

As an addition to this, it was suggested that there be a 'No mow May' in 2023.

Annual bedding – this had been drastically cut in recent years. Discussions were due to be held with the town and parish councils regarding ground based areas being planted in perennial in 2023.

Landscape maintenance and machinery – physical trials of alternative equipment to the current range of petrol engine machinery were ongoing. The information gained from these trials, combined with technical statistics, would be used to recommend a way forward for the fleet of tools.

AGREED

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That the Environmental Services Manager be asked to map potential tree planting sites and report back to the next meeting of the Group.

5. ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINTS IN PENDLE

The Housing, Health and Engineering Services Manager submitted a report which informed the Group about the outcome of the procurement exercise that had been undertaken to enable the Council to develop its own electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

The Group was reminded that £30,000 had been allocated towards this project and was advised that there was a further source of funding through the Government's Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) which offered grants of up to £100k subject to at least 25% match funding. A range of proposals had been received which comprised a variety of charge speeds and quantities of charging bays. Some of the proposals required Council funding, OZEV funding or both. An overview of the proposals was provided as Appendix 1 to the report.

All tenderers had added the caveat that their proposals were subject to confirmation of the required capacity being available from the electricity network operators.

It was acknowledged that there were a number of unanswered questions. The Group was therefore asked to consider what further information was required and to confirm its objective.

Things to consider included whether the charging points should be an income generator; have low carbon emissions; be fast charging or a collection of low charging; what the infrastructure would look like; whether to use one company or a combination.

A lengthy discussion took place regarding the various proposals put forward. It was noted that three of the tenderers were not able to provide the required charge speed of at least 40kWh and was therefore suggested that these be discounted. To increase the availability of electric charging points in the Borough it was also suggested that the Council approach fuel stations and large local employers to ask if they would consider installing charging points in their forecourts/car parks.

Due to the need for further information it was agreed that a preferred supplier could not be identified at this time.

AGREED

- (1) That the Housing, Health and Engineering Services Manager be asked to seek further information on the proposals, to include –
 - The cost to the consumer.
 - The availability of the required capacity at each car park.
 - Reliability/performance details of each company.
 - References from a selection of councils, or other organisations for which the companies already provide the service.
- (2) That fast charging units be the preferred option, with the technology that the charge be adjusted across adjacent charging points depending on how many were in use at any one time.
- (3) That consideration be given to awarding the tender to two suppliers, with a view to one of these being grant supported.

6. CLIMATE EMERGENCY DECLARATION POSITION STATEMENT

The Council's Climate Emergency Officer presented a report of the Chief Executive which provided an update on actions taken on the Climate Emergency Action Plan. The report also provided information on communications and engagement, which covered engagement events, press releases and social media. To date consultation had mainly focussed on targeting young people, but also included the Council's Management Team which had agreed to establish an officer-led working group to push forward this agenda.

It was intended to use insights from the recent engagement and the 2021 Life in Pendle survey to help evaluate the Council's current Action Plan and was recommended that the potential to add themes, and to prioritise themes within this, be considered. Potential options for future action were detailed in the report.

Information on the carbon emissions for 2020/21 and 2021/22 were also included. This showed a reduction in gas consumption and fleet emissions (Scope 1) and electricity emissions (Scope 2). However, energy consumption from outsourced services (Scope 3) had increased. Observations in relation to this information were provided in the report.

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It was noted that a further report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee.

During discussion it was suggested that all planning applications should be required to include an environmental impact assessment, with reference being made to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It was also stated that the Council often did not have the powers or resources to carry out actions in the Plan and that this issue should be raised with the local Member of Parliament (MP).

The Chairman closed the discussion by reminding the Group that the Climate Emergency Officer was due to leave his post the following day. On behalf of the Group, she thanked him for all his work on the Climate Emergency Action Plan and wished him well for the future.

The Group was advised that, in the short-term, two interns would carry out a number of climate change project specific duties. This included work on a web page and supporting development of the revised action plan.

7. CLIMATE ACTION GRANTS PROGRAMME – UPDATE

The Chief Executive submitted, for information, an update on progress with the Climate Action Fund grants. It was noted that all funding had now been allocated to successful applicants and that monitoring of projects would be the main focus of future work.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

AGREED

To be held in September 2022. Date to be confirmed.

Chairman _____

