

REPORT FROM: DIRECTOR OF PLACE

TO: CLIMATE EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP

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PENDLE CLIMATE FORUM TASK GROUP ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide Members of the Climate Emergency Working Group with an update on projects and activities.

RECOMMENDATION

That the information within the report be noted.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

Members are aware of options for engagement around climate change issues and proposed or planned activities.

ISSUE

1. The Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019 with the intention of becoming carbon neutral by 2030, and in line with UK commitments achieving Net Zero by 2050. While the Council has made progress towards these goals, in order to meet the scale of the challenge, it has been recognised that activity will need to be scaled up, and that additional resource will be required.
2. Following a report to the Executive in November 2023, it was agreed that a dedicated Climate Change Officer would be recruited, subject to funding, in order to support the Council's ambitions. The decision around resource and funding of the role will be made by the Full Council as part of the annual budget setting process, after which it will be known if a dedicated officer will be appointed.
3. Pendle Borough Council has been undertaking work to update its Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP), with a view to finalise this by March 2024 once decisions on resourcing have been made. The initial Action Plan was due to end in 2025, however PBC has recognised the need to update this before the current action plan comes to an end, due to the current progress towards the 2030 goal and in light of delays due to the pandemic.

4. In addition to being central to meeting PBC's 2030 and 2050 goals, and delivering on the CEAP, the need to engage with different audiences across the borough extends further and forms part of the Council's duty to support its residents, particularly more vulnerable groups. It is evident that the most vulnerable in society are most likely to be negatively impacted by the effects of climate change. Therefore engagement on climate issues is not only required as part of efforts by the Council to decarbonise and meet targets, but also to protect, equip and support the residents, communities and businesses in Pendle.
5. Additionally, improved engagement with different groups on climate and related issues will support many of the current and new statutory requirements, particularly around issues such as biodiversity, and changes to waste collection.
6. The Climate Emergency Action Plan centres around the seven themes listed below. While some themes, and specific actions within the plan, are primarily concerned with the decarbonisation of the Council's estate and environmental impact, many of the themes and actions require the support and engagement of the public, particularly: Supporting communities to take action; and: Supporting future generations to find solutions. Outside of these themes other actions within the plan also require engagement and consultation with different audiences, including businesses and schools.
7. Climate Emergency Action Plan (2020 to 2025 version) key themes:
 - supporting and enabling sustainable travel
 - reducing carbon emissions and energy demand from the built environment
 - reducing the harmful impacts of waste and water consumption
 - supporting our communities to take action
 - supporting our future generations to find solutions
 - making sure we consider climate change in everything we do
 - supporting biodiversity and the natural environment to help local carbon off setting opportunities
8. According to the Climate Change Commission, more than half of the actions required for the UK to meet its climate commitments require people and businesses to make changes and take up low carbon solutions. It is recognised that much of the change needed relies on structural change beyond a local level, however the role that local authorities play in influencing and supporting change is crucial.
9. Since the declaration of the Climate Emergency by the Council in 2019 there has been activity, involving or led by the Council, engaging on climate issues, notably the successful Pendle Schools Climate Movement and events, and the associated small grants scheme. With the onset and impact of the pandemic, engagement activity stalled and a renewed programme of activity is required to deliver the CEAP, and to fulfil the proposals put forward by CEWG.
10. Current actions within the 2020-2025 draft of the CEAP include engagement with:
 - Young people and schools staff on travel choices
 - Businesses to reduce their impact
 - Households and communities on energy issues
 - Engaging with developers
 - Landowners on biodiversity issues
 - Residents and communities on issues such as waste and recycling, food and other climate issues.
11. There has been extensive research into how best to communicate and engage with different audiences on environmental issues. In order to be effective, the approach and messaging

needs to be centred around people, rather than from a top-down, information-led approach. Messages should focus on the human-centred benefits of taking action, or on what each audience values and feels is important, for example taking care of nature and the local environment.

12. As part of the work to review and update the action plan, consideration has been given to engagement to the different audiences identified. Based on the profile of the area and needs, the climate engagement strategy will focus on the core groups, or audiences as outlined below:

13. Target groups for engagement on climate issues

Internal

- PBC staff
- Councillors

External

- Schools and young people
- Businesses
- Communities – residents, families
- Landowners

14. Work is still underway to develop and refine detailed plans for each group and will be finalised by March 2024 when the level of resource available is known. Some of the proposed and planned activity for each of the groups is listed below:

Internal target group:	Engagement activity	Timescale
PBC staff	Carbon literacy training – the format of this is still to be decided, with the aim of increasing understanding of wider environmental issues as well as the action PBC is taking, and the opportunities and benefits of taking individual action	From Apr 2024
	Promotion of measures to increase active travel and reduce car use	Ongoing – scale up from March 2024
Councillors	Carbon literacy training – the format of the this is still to be confirmed (as above)	From Apr 2024

External target groups:	Engagement activity	Timescale
Schools and young people	Re-convene a schools network building on the previous Pendle Schools Climate Movement to support schools on environmental issues and foster collaboration. This is likely to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network meetings for school staff • Developing and/or signposting to resources and funding opportunities 	From Jan 2024

	<p>for schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organising events and competitions for schools 	
	Enabling the participation of young people in the borough on climate and other related issues such as health.	TBC
	Working with partners to deliver climate-focussed activities, for example arts and culture projects working with young people	Ongoing – potential for additional funding and activity
Businesses	Developing a programme to engage with businesses to raise awareness of funding opportunities and support available for them to reduce their own impact. This will involve working with partners including business forums and organisations in Pendle, making use of existing networks and relationships, and showcasing examples of best practice in the area.	From May 2024
Communities	Supporting households on energy issues, promoting services and funding to improve energy efficiency and reduce energy costs. Working with partners to signpost and cross-refer to help meet the needs of residents, particularly those most vulnerable.	Ongoing – potential for additional funding and activity
	Developing and maintaining projects which encourage and support communities to take action around health, food and physical activity, recognising the holistic benefits realised which include making lower carbon choices.	Ongoing – potential for additional funding and activity
	Taking a joined up approach across PBC services to maximize the impact of activities and messages around environmental and behavioural issues	Ongoing – potential for additional funding and activity
	Developing and delivering an engagement and consultation programme with communities and residents on environmental and climate issues to enable residents to have their say and tell PBC what matters to them. Specific details of this programme will be finalized by March 2024 and will complement and be coordinated alongside any other public facing activity.	TBC – Apr/May 2024
Landowners	Developing connections and conversations with landowners in Pendle to support them in reducing environmental impact and making the most of available and upcoming	TBC

	funding opportunities, particularly around Biodiversity Net Gain etc.	
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NEXT STEPS

15. Confirmation of available resource and Climate Change Officer post in February budget.
16. Updated Climate Emergency Action Plan to go to CEWG once finalised.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy: None arising directly from the report.

Financial: None arising directly from the report. The Climate Emergency Action Plan and the scale of engagement activity and actions will be impacted by the budget decisions for 2024/25.

Legal: None arising directly from this report.

Risk Management: None arising directly from the report.

Health and Safety: None arising directly from the report.

Sustainability: None arising directly from the report.

Community Safety: None arising directly from the report.

Equality and Diversity: None arising directly from the report.

APPENDICES: None.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS: None.