

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CLIMATE EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP
HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT OFFICE TEAMS
ON 19th JANUARY 2026**

*PRESENT –
Councillor Sarah Cockburn-Price (Chair)*

Councillors

*David Cockburn-Price
Ash Sutcliffe*

Co-optees

*Sylvia Godfrey
Angela Moran
David Penney
Stephen Sykes
Jane Wood
Sue Fairweather*

Officers in attendance:

<i>Iftikhar Bokhari</i>	<i>Head of Economic Growth</i>
<i>Rebecca Ferguson</i>	<i>Committee Administrator</i>
<i>Don Gamble</i>	<i>Projects and Programmes Officer</i>
<i>Clare Rainsford</i>	<i>Climate Programme Manager</i>
<i>Phillip Spurr</i>	<i>Director of Place</i>

Also in Attendance:

<i>Ollie Mackrill</i>	<i>Senior Ecologist - Nature Recovery Lancashire County Council (LCC)</i>
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(Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Chris Church and Yvonne Tennant)



1. MINUTES

AGREED

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Climate Emergency Working Group held on 15th December 2025 be agreed as a correct record.

2. GUEST PRESENTATION

Nature Recovery Lancashire County Council

A presentation was given by Senior Ecologist, Nature Recovery Officer, Ollie Mackrill from LCC on nature recovery strategies.

The presentation covered the following topics: -

1. *Local nature recovery strategies (LNRS)*

It was explained that the Making Space for Nature, commonly known as the Lawton Report 2010, looked at wildlife sites where nature hadn't been allowed to recover. The report made a series of recommendations based on the Lawton Principles, which advised that wildlife sites need to be bigger, better, increased in volume and joined up. It became apparent that species had become isolated. The report advised green corridors throughout counties would aid the movement of species between landscapes. Following this, several State of Nature reports continually evidenced the decline in species movement. The Environmental Act 2021, devolved duties on all to enable nature's recovery. Since the Act was passed, an Environmental Improvement Plan had been produced which outlined National Environmental Objectives. The Working Group was informed that all Local Authorities would be working towards this. Ollie continued to discuss other Acts such as the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC), which required every Local Authority to report on biodiversity duty every two years. The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has appointed 48 authorities across the Country to become responsible for LNRS. The aim was to stitch all 48 LNRSs together to form a National Nature Recovery Network.

2. LNRS development process

The development process involved discussions with landowners, land managers and environmental non-government organisations (NGOs) to produce a strong governance structure. This then allowed various stakeholders to provide feedback, which LCC built on, allowing for a finalised LNRS to be completed. A diagram of the governance structure was presented at the meeting which illustrated strong communication channels between the Core Project Team, Local Nature Partnerships, Land Management Groups and Wider Engagement Stakeholder Groups. The Working Group heard how the LNRS development process involved vigorous evidence gathering. This was done via thematic habitat groups which provided knowledge, understanding and expertise. As a result of this, a Task Specification report was produced which served as a blueprint for key practitioners such as Ribble Rivers Trust and Lancashire Peat Partnership. Species groups were formed which allowed information from all over the county to be shared. To gain wider stakeholder involvement, a public consultation was held before the nature recovery survey was published, and, in addition, four roadshows took place across the county. The final step in the development process was to complete a strategic document review which led to the final version of the Lancashire LNRS being produced.

3. Lancashire LNRS

The Lancashire LNRS consists of the Statement of Biodiversity Priorities and the Local Habitat Map. The Statement of Biodiversity Priorities included a description of Lancashire in a geomorphologic way which breaks down the county into distinct areas. Outcomes had been identified for habitat types and species which led to

practical actions being undertaken. Ollie advised the Local Habitat Map stems from national and local data as to where species are found and what habitats they occupy which provided suggested opportunities.

4. Opportunities

To illustrate the value of the Strategy, Ollie focussed on opportunities around Colne. He advised habitat restoration, enhancement and positive conservation management within Biological Heritage Sites would vastly improve the area. A map was presented that highlighted these areas. A team of three ecologists at LCC intend to survey these areas every 10 years, to produce management plans. Ollie advised if the aquatic and wetland area west of Kelbrook was re-meandered and expanded upon, the environment and nature would thrive. It was also said that the grasslands along Colne Water could be improved and enhanced. Ollie explained that 24 target species had been identified; Atlantic Salmon had been highlighted as a priority. Working with land managers to reduce sheep dip would aid the conservation of the salmon. A member advised fish passages had been put into place by River Ribble Trust to aid this species. Ollie presented a map which showed areas which are connected via wildflower rich habitats. This map was provided by Nature North, working with linear infrastructure organisations, such as the National Grid Electricity Northwest Network, which could mean work conducted in this area could be fully/partially funded. Another map showed a watercourse running through Primet Bridge and the Working Group heard that the naturalisation of the water course would benefit the area. A member advised this concept had been included in the Colne Master Plan. It was said creating wetlands, aquatic habitats, biodiverse grasslands, wooded areas, habitats and trees would all significantly improve the environment.

5. Next steps

Ollie briefly talked through the next steps and advised that delivery is of high importance. DEFRA had funded the delivery, provided that the following objectives were met: -

1. Leading and convening a partnership focused on LNRS delivery.
2. Embedding LNRS delivery into decision making.
3. Identifying and developing a project pipeline.
4. Monitoring and reporting on LNRS delivery.

Ollie concluded his presentation and welcomed questions.

A member raised concerns regarding Glyphosate use by the Council. Ollie advised that areas had been identified and mapped in the Grassland Network which should be moved away from pesticide use. This aim was included in LCC's universal priorities. Both the Environment Agency in Natural England and the Forestry

Commission had approved this strategy, once LCC had moved towards delivery, a plan would be put together on how to combat this issue.

A member asked if LCC had considered the problems caused to biodiversity which had been caused by the Climate Emergency? Ollie agreed that the Climate Emergency had caused devastating effects, but that priorities had been put in place to reduce flood risks, improving water quality and building climate resilience.

Ollie was also asked if LCC had considered the new Planning and Infrastructure Planning Act 2025 which would allow authorities to build on green spaces? It was also questioned whether the principles of rewilding had been investigated and whether LCC could stop the burning of peat and aid in their restoration? Ollie advised that the Land Use Framework would tie into the Planning and Infrastructure Act and aid in the assistance of protecting the environment and delivering Council objectives. He further added that LCC had been in consultation with United Utilities regarding the improvement of water quality.

It was asked if there anything that members could do to support the project? Ollie asked that members champion the project and that when local plans are done, the strategy be considered.

A member asked if LCC had been in contact with Yorkshire Water to assist with the strategy? Ollie advised that although he had not done this, he would consider doing so.

AGREED

- (1) That the content of the presentation be noted and sent round to all members.
- (2) That thanks be given to Ollie Mackrill for addressing the Working Group with his detailed and informative presentation.

3. CLIMATE PROGRAMME MANAGER

A brief update on her first 10 days at Pendle Borough Council (PBC) was given by the newly appointed Climate Programme Manager, Clare Rainsford. Clare had looked at the Council's carbon footprint, climate scorecard, retrofit of Council owned buildings and biodiversity. She advised at the next meeting of the Group, she would present and discuss the proposed framework.

AGREED

That Climate Programme Manager, Clare Rainsford present at the next meeting.

4. LOBBYING OUR MP AND H.M. GOVERNMENT ON CLIMATE EMERGENCY ISSUES

It was said, as the Group was quorate, the approval of the letters drafted to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Emma Reynolds, and

the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Steven Reed, could go ahead. Members did not have any further amendments to make.

AGREED

(1) The draft letter on behalf of the Working Group to Emma Reynolds 30by30 Treaty be approved and sent out.

(2) The draft letter to Steven Reed, on behalf of the Working Group on Permitted Development Rights for impervious materials be approved and sent out.

5. NATIONAL EMERGENCY BRIEFING

It was advised the briefing had valuable information and all members were encouraged to watch.

AGREED

The Group asked that the Executive sign a letter to Sir Keir Starmer and media heads calling for a televised National Emergency Briefing, along with signing the Plant Based Treaty, which was agreed at the meeting of the Working Group in September 2025.

6. UPDATE FROM THE ECONOMIC GROWTH TEAM

Verbal progress on providing EV chargers in Pendle Car Parks

A brief update was provided. Iftikhar Bokhari, Head of Economic Growth, who advised that the EV charging scoping document was still under consideration and that this would be shared with the Group following any amendments required after review by the Executive. The Working Group heard that since 2020 the sale of EV vehicles had gone from 100,000 to a projected 600,000 for 2026. Charging points within Pendle, their availability and type had been considered. The next stage of the project would be to look at how LCC's LEVI scheme could be integrated into Pendle. The priority would be to gain the best deal for Pendle. A member raised concerns regarding Local Government Reorganisation and the impact on the sale of Council owned car parks and ensuring that Pendle residents could afford to charge their cars for an affordable price. It was agreed that this item would be presented at the next meeting of the Group with hopes that the report would be approved and ready to share.

AGREED

That the progress be noted.

7. TO BRAINSTORM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN 2026

It was suggested that certain demographics, particularly young men, could be potentially difficult to engage with regarding Climate Change. A member suggested advertisements in local gyms. Another member asked if schools and colleges could

be contacted and suggested an educational programme, encouraging students to take the message of the Climate Emergency to other demographics. It was felt that there would be opportunities through existing/ new mechanisms to influence the business community. It was put to the Group that Pendle Education Trust might be able to assist with the message on Climate Change. Stephen Skyes advised that the St. Helens Climate Change Commission had been split into three divisions, the Youth Commission, Community & Voluntary Sector Commission and the Business Commission. This allowed targeted local champions to be recognised and pass the message onto others.

Made possible through Government funding, the Nelson Town Deal Board had been able to fund private businesses to install solar panels and more energy efficient equipment contributing towards a reduction in carbon. In addition to this, the Board would also be considering the installation of renewable energy systems.

AGREED

That members continue to share ideas before and at the next meeting of the Working Group.

8. CLIMATE CHANGE SECTION ON THE PENDLE COUNCIL WEBSITE

It had been confirmed with PBC's IT department that videos could be uploaded to the website. Members agreed that a range of videos could be uploaded, some of which could have a humorous aspect to engage younger generations. The Group discussed the possibility of running social media accounts such as Facebook, Instagram & TikTok. It was said that as there would be no site administrator, the feasibility of this could be difficult.

AGREED

- (1) That photos, videos and links be added to the Climate Change section on the Pendle Council website.
- (2) The Chair would conduct research into other authorities' Climate Change website sections to generate ideas for the Group.

9. LOWERING GLYPHOSATE USAGE BY PENDLE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Members were concerned with finding a practical way in which lowering glyphosate use could be achieved. It was felt that the Government would need to be lobbied to change the law.

AGREED

Item be added to the agenda of the next meeting of the Group, enable Phil Riley to provide an update on his discussions with other authorities, especially Brighton and Hove.

10. ITEMS FOR NOTING

The Working Group was told that the Peat Policy for town and parish councils had not yet been reviewed, by the new Climate Programme Manager, but that an update could be provided at the next meeting of the Group.

AGREED

Item be added to the agenda of the next meeting of the Group, so that an update could be provided.

11. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

- LCC's Safer, Greener & Healthier Streets Project implementation update.
- Potential rewilding projects in Pendle.
- Reflection on LCC's Nature Recovery Strategy.

Other potential for guest speakers to invite

- Lancashire Peat Partnership
- Guest Speaker from Lancashire County Council's (LCC's) Active Travel Team
- Recycle IT
- Inviting the LCC officer responsible for Street Trees

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

That next meeting of this Working Group be held on the following date:

Monday, 16th March 2026 at 6.00 p.m.

Chair _____