

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
CLIMATE EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP  
HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT OFFICE TEAMS  
ON 16<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2026**

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

**Councillors**

*David Cockburn-Price  
Ash Sutcliffe  
Yvonne Tennant  
Lola Whipp*

**Co-optees**

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

**Officers in attendance:**

<i>Iftikhar Bokhari</i>	<i>Head of Economic Growth, Pendle Borough Council (PBC)</i>
<i>Rebecca Ferguson</i>	<i>Committee Administrator, PBC</i>
<i>John Halton</i>	<i>Principal Planning Officer (Policy), PBC</i>
<i>Clare Rainsford</i>	<i>Climate Programme Manager, PBC</i>

**Also in Attendance:**

*Michael Powell      Programming and Partnerships Lead at In-situ*

*(Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Chris Church, Phillip Spurr and Philip Riley.)*



**1. MINUTES**

**AGREED**

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Climate Emergency Working Group held on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026 be agreed as a correct record.

**2. GUEST PRESENTATION**

**In-Situ**

A verbal presentation was given by Programming and Partnerships Lead, Michael Powell, from In-Situ, on the four-year National Lottery-funded programme, building

on the pilot project delivered with PBC's support. He provided a comprehensive update on In-Situ's successful National Lottery "Reaching Communities" funding bid. Key points included:

### **Overview of the Programme**

- The programme would run for four years, with alternating cycles of six months of delivery and six months of reflection, training, and evaluation.
- The methodology blends:
  - Climate Fresk (a structured, facilitator-led, card-based climate workshop)
  - Talkaoke (In-Situ's community-conversation format using a doughnut-shaped table, encouraging open discussion).

### **Year 1 Delivery (2026)**

- Activity would initially be focused on Nelson.
- Delivery was due to begin in April–July 2026, with a major public launch at the Festival of Culture.
- A social event for previously-trained facilitators would be held on 20<sup>th</sup> April, followed by five Fresk workshops taking place at community venues, including Hodge House Community Centre, Good Life Project (Nelson), Building Bridges Pendle and 3B Systems (training venue).

### **Years 2–3 (2027–2028)**

- The project would expand across Pendle into pubs, mosques, workplaces, informal community spaces, and youth groups.
- The aim was to support conversations with hard-to-reach demographics, e.g. men in their thirties, young adults, and communities less traditionally engaged in climate issues.

### **Year 4 (2029)**

- Year 4 will see the focus on consolidating learning, producing toolkits and resources, embedding best practice into the work of local authorities and partners, and supporting onward sustainability beyond the end of Lottery funding.

### **Facilitator Training**

- Opportunities would be available for new facilitators to join the programme and train in Climate Fresk facilitation.
- A specific request was made by a member regarding opportunities to re-take facilitator training, and reassurance was given that this would be available.
-

## **Schools and Colleges**

- While not initially designed to meet statutory sustainability duties, both Climate Fresk and Talkaoke had been increasingly requested by schools in other districts.
- Future alignment with new sustainability curriculum requirements was identified as a potential growth area.

## **Broader Themes of the Programme**

The project intended to situate climate issues within wider community concerns, including inequality, misinformation, health and wellbeing, local environmental change, the cost-of-living crisis, the concept of “polycrisis” and circular economy and doughnut economics.

## **Leadership Model**

Michael explained that In-Situ operated a flat, cooperative-style structure, with staff paid equally and responsibilities shared. The project would develop a collective leadership group, incorporating In-Situ staff, community partners, residents involved in the “This is Nelson” collective and creative practitioners.

The Chair highlighted her experience with a sceptical participant at a Fresk session and emphasised the importance of targeted engagement strategies. The Chair invited In-Situ to work with Colne Youth Action Group. The Group discussed the potential role in supporting schools’ sustainability obligations.

## **AGREED**

That the Working Group welcome further updates from In-Situ as the programme progresses and supports efforts to integrate the projects activity with local groups and Council priorities.

## **Climate Programme Manager**

Clare delivered a detailed presentation outlining initial findings from her first weeks in post.

To establish the context and remit for the Climate Change Strategy. It was reported that climate targets for PBC were carbon neutrality by 2030 and that Pendle-wide emissions would seek to progress to Net Zero by 2050. The Terms of Reference for the CEWG was also to support carbon neutrality. Clare emphasised that 2030 was only 209 weeks away, underlining the urgency of structured, measurable planned trajectory and delivery.

Trajectory models indicated a need to reduce Scope 1 & 2 emissions (based on 24/25 data) to approx. 1,473tco<sub>2e</sub> by 2030 and 254tco<sub>2e</sub> by 2050.

For Scope 1&2 emission reductions to progress towards the interim and longer-term targets, it was key that the approach followed the energy hierarchy, to first identify opportunities to reduce energy before considering other hierarchy measures. A focal point for investigation would be energy usage across key PBC buildings and operations to identify opportunities to reduce gas and electrical consumption.

A graph was shown illustrating gas usage for key PBC buildings, including Nelson Town Hall, which appeared to be an outlier compared to some other buildings. This would need to be investigated further and compared against occupancy/ weather data etc. to reveal “anomalous” energy use.

Scope 3 emissions, which represent 82% of PBC’s CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, would need to be addressed through supply chain and other downstream initiatives to reduce from 11,368tCO<sub>2</sub>e (extrapolated data) to 6,593tCO<sub>2</sub>e 2030 to 1,137tCO<sub>2</sub>e by 2050 (ultimate residual for offset).

Clare identified Scope 3 as a significant challenge for Council operations. She would seek to develop an approach to obtain carbon data from suppliers, alongside other social value measures. This approach could be applied to progressively embed PBC social/environmental and economic priorities into procurement specifications, supplier onboarding protocols, and performance standards, concurrently avoiding duplication of multiple policies by creating one integrated Sustainable Procurement Policy.

The Salix PSDS4 grant (£2.6m) received as part of the Retrofit Programme for Pendle Wavelengths and West Craven Leisure Centre was progressing, with measures proposed including heat pumps and fabric efficiency improvements.

Turning to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions across the Borough, it was explained that transport (30%) and domestic heating (28%) dominated local area emissions. Hence, these were the areas that should be proactively targeted across the Borough.

In the case of transport relating to cars, modelling showed potential EV uptake by 2035 between 7,600–15,000 vehicles. This would significantly contribute to a reduction in carbon emissions from transport and concurrently help improve air quality. A more detailed EV charging strategy was being developed, which would consider residential access to charging facilities, grid capacity, aligned with Lancashire County Council’s (LCC) LEVI and wider funding opportunities.

Focussing on carbon emissions across domestic properties, Clare went on to report space and water heating was likely to account for 64% of household energy use attributed to gas use for hot water heating. PBC is working across the Borough to support householders to access funding adopt energy saving measures to increase the affordability of energy and reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, with enforcement of MEES standards for rental properties.

To support PBC's transition to a low carbon economy, A Local Area Energy Plan was currently being developed to identify PBC's road map to a low carbon / non fossil fuel dependent Borough. With the aim to identify energy needs for the whole of the Borough and mapping these against opportunities for low to zero carbon (LZC) energy generation, the focus would be on the opportunities presented from the Borough's natural and existing building / infrastructure assets to include solar potential from roof tops, clean heat, and heat networks etc., alongside retrofit pathways and future EV demand.

The potential could be significant, heightening the resilience of the Borough to withstand energy shocks, by supporting a proportion of current and future electrical demand for the Borough. Early solar mapping models indicated that rooftop solar capacity across both domestic / non- domestic buildings could supply the electricity equivalent to meet the needs of 65,000 homes. Implementation of a solar strategy alongside other LZC measures could help support domestic property transition to clean heat, reducing reliance on gas and oil (e.g. heat pumps) concurrently helping to reduce energy costs through use of renewable energy.

PBC's food waste collection service, due to commence early April, would also contribute to the Borough's carbon reduction programme, potentially saving as a conservative estimate 892tCO<sub>2</sub>e p.a. This in terms of sequestration of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, broadly equates to around 42,000 trees. Public participation would be key to the success of this initiative and work was continuing with PBC's Waste Services on public engagement and operational rollout to further enhance participation rates.

Clare outlined that she would be assessing climate risks using 2050 and 2100 scenario modelling, to evaluate the implication of changes across the Pendle area. An assessment had been undertaken for a PBC waste depot in response to a standard operational request from the Environment Agency.

Carbon sequestration was also a vital component of the Borough's transition to net zero. With opportunities to absorb CO<sub>2</sub> through Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), coupled with proactive support for the LCC Nature Recovery Strategy and adoption of nature-based solutions, concurrently offering heightened resilience to changes in climate e.g. SUDS, tree shading etc.

Members praised the clarity of Clare's framework. It was suggested that there was a need for a holistic sustainability approach, not solely carbon. A member highlighted the role of procurement in supporting circular economy, reducing plastics, and encouraging sustainable supply chains. Clare reiterated that the remit of the Climate change strategy, PBC operational / Borough and CEWG TOR was centred on CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions, however a proactive carbon transition strategy could be pursued without losing sight of wider opportunities to support wider social and economic benefits for the Borough.

## **AGREED**

That the Working Group continue to receive updates on the progress of Clare's framework.

### **3. PRIORITY THEMES**

The Group worked through each strategic theme.

#### **Carbon Reduction & Energy**

It was explained that there would continue to be a focus on PBC building energy reduction, addressing high-use sites. Further retrofit options would be identified but would be reliant on funding. Pipeline projects should ideally be centred on return on investment approaches and operational resilience.

#### **Transport & Mobility**

Work was ongoing on EV strategy refinement. Members highlighted the importance of a modal shift toward rail, buses, and active travel. The Colne–Skipton Rail reinstatement was identified as critical for both carbon reduction and economic benefit.

#### **Waste & Circular Economy**

Glyphosate trials and alternatives were discussed at length. The Brighton & Hove model (street-by-street opt-out) could provide learning, though operationally complex. Members acknowledged a strong public reaction to both excessive weeds and herbicide use, requiring communication strategies. Phil Riley was requested to address the next meeting, once he has spoken to officers at Brighton & Hove.

#### **Nature, Biodiversity, BNG**

Reports on the Lancashire Nature Recovery Strategy were noted. A watching brief would be undertaken to see what levers LCC authorities may want to employ to deliver the objectives of the strategy.

#### **Climate Adaptation & Resilience**

Members raised issues of flooding, drainage, soil saturation, and farmer support following repeated extreme weather. It was noted that many local farmers struggle with digital access needed to apply for grants.

## **AGREED**

That the Working Group continues to receive updates on the progress of the Priority Themes.

### **4. SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT**

A wide-ranging discussion took place on the merits of developing a single overarching Sustainable Procurement Policy.

Key issues included:

- Incorporating environmental, carbon, and social-value criteria.
- Avoiding fragmentation of multiple micro-policies (peat, glyphosate, plastics).
- Learning from existing best-practice models.
- Creating space for small and medium sized enterprises to compete while improving supply-chain reporting.

## **AGREED**

That Clare explore the development of a consolidated policy and bring recommendations back to the Working Group.

## **5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The Working Group discussed the need for a structured engagement plan.

Pendle Council was preparing a borough-wide website redesign. This would present an opportunity for a fresh climate section, with short relatable videos, clear action guidance, youth-friendly content and links to local groups and support schemes. Members stressed the need to ensure that work would need to be future-proof, to allow content transition to a new unitary authority, and that policy and messaging would need to survive potential restructuring. Members proposed forming a directory/network of local climate and environmental groups. Success stories such as Colne Junior Council's can-collecting project should be amplified on social media.

## **AGREED**

That community engagement remains a standing agenda item and that officers explore options for a Pendle Climate Network with members encouraged to write in with details of local groups they are aware of.

## **6. FUNDING & OPPORTUNITIES**

Clare updated members on the Great British Energy Community funding call which was reported to be open for renewable and community energy schemes. It was said that there was ongoing Salix and Warm Homes Funding Scheme opportunities.

Discussions had taken place with United Utilities (UU), including potential funding for rainwater harvesting, water-efficiency audits for schools and Council buildings, depots, and possible small repairs such as leaking taps. Also, UU provides water saving support for residential properties. Members also discussed using Council reserves to issue low-interest loans to co-operatives as permitted under certain

models of local wealth-building and the importance of ensuring Pendle is “shovel-ready” for future funding calls/ opportunities.

## **AGREED**

That the update be noted.

## **7. CENTRAL GOVERNMENT – POLICY UPDATES / CONSULTATIONS & CORRESPONDENCE**

Members noted the unsatisfactory, glib responses received to letters about water runoff, artificial turf, and impermeable surfacing.

It was said that the scale of the National Planning Policy Framework consultations which saw 225 questions raised brought a uncertainty over whether the government was actively listening or how long it would be before the new NPPF would come into being.

Interest in Portsmouth Council ban on adverts for single-use plastics, and whether a similar approach could be considered locally was raised.

## **AGREED**

That the update be noted and investigations take place as to the practicality of the Portsmouth Council ban on adverts for single-use plastics.

## **8. OTHER GUEST SPEAKERS TO BE SCHEDULED**

The Group suggested inviting:

- Lancashire Peat Partnership
- LCC’s Active Travel Team
- Recycle IT
- LCC Street Trees Officer

## **9. ITEMS FOR NOTING**

Alkincoats Nature Reserve has been extended by nine acres (approved by Natural England).

Gib Hill Nature Reserve had works undertaken to improve access and support tractor operations for grass-cutting and wildflower encouragement.

The Reusable Nappy Campaign had no update and was awaiting collaboration.

## **10. DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS**

The Working Group noted the next meetings as follows:

- Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> June 2026 at 6.00 p.m.

- Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> July 2026 at 6.00 p.m.
- Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> September 2026 at 6.00 p.m.
- Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> November 2026 at 6.00 p.m.

Chair \_\_\_\_\_