

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CLIMATE EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP
HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT OFFICE TEAMS
ON 17TH AUGUST 2026**

*PRESENT –
Councillor Yvonne Tennant (Chair)*

Councillors

*Chris Church
Sarah Cockburn-Price
David Cockburn-Price*

Co-optees

*Claire Brightley
Sylvia Godfrey
Angela Moran
David Penney
Stephen Sykes
Jane Wood*

Officers in attendance:

<i>Karen Spencer</i>	<i>Director of Resources, Pendle Borough Council (PBC)</i>
<i>John Halton</i>	<i>Principal Development Plans & Policy Officer, PBC</i>
<i>Rebecca Ferguson</i>	<i>Committee Administrator, PBC</i>

Also in attendance:

Vicky McAdam Snuggle Blanks owner

(Apologies for absence were received from Michael Powell.)



1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15th June 2026 were submitted for approval.

AGREED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 15th June 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2. GUEST PRESENTATION

Vicky McAdam, owner of Snuggle Blanks, gave a presentation on her reusable nappy and continence product business and the environmental benefits of reusable products.

Ms McAdam explained that she had developed reusable products for both children and adults with continence needs, with the business having grown from a need for larger reusable nappies. She outlined the potential environmental and financial benefits of reusable products,

particularly through reducing the quantity of disposable products sent to landfill and through products being washable and reusable many times.

The Working Group discussed the barriers to wider adoption, including public perceptions of reusable nappies, the initial cost to users and the difficulty faced by a small business in increasing manufacturing capacity while maintaining product quality. Members considered possible ways in which the business could be supported, including marketing, access to funding, links with colleges and educational establishments, and connections with community and other organisations.

Members also discussed the possibility of establishing links with organisations which could assist with business development, marketing and funding, and the potential for a small working group or network to explore these opportunities. Ms McAdam indicated that she was interested in revisiting opportunities to expand the business and welcomed further contact.

AGREED

That the presentation be noted and that opportunities to support and promote reusable continence products through appropriate community, educational and business networks be explored.

The Chair, on behalf of the Working Group thanked Ms McAdam for her informative presentation.

3. PROGRESS AGAINST THE CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

The Director of Resources reported that recruitment to the vacant Climate Emergency Officer post had been unsuccessful. Two candidates had been interviewed but neither had met the requirements of the role and no appointment had therefore been made.

It was reported that the Council would review the requirements and remit of the post following the appointment once the new Head of Property and Engineering Services commenced work in September. Members discussed the difficulty of recruiting to a specialist post with a wide remit, particularly in the context of local government reorganisation and the uncertainty surrounding future staffing arrangements.

Members stressed that the ability to identify, secure and manage external grant funding should be a key requirement of the post. The Director of Resources confirmed that the Council had been seeking a candidate with demonstrable experience of obtaining and delivering externally funded schemes.

Members also discussed whether the role could be structured differently to make it more attractive and whether greater coordination with other Council services could reduce the breadth of responsibility placed upon one officer.

In the absence of a Climate Emergency Officer, Members asked whether officers from services such as fleet, planning, housing and facilities could provide updates on climate-

related activity within their areas. It was noted that this would help the Working Group understand progress and communicate positive work being undertaken by the Council.

The Director of Resources reported that work was continuing on Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund projects at two leisure centres, including solar panels and air source heat pumps. It was noted that, although other climate-related work was being undertaken across the Council, resources remained limited.

AGREED

- (1) That the position regarding recruitment to the Climate Emergency Officer post be noted.
- (2) That the requirements and remit of the post be reviewed following the appointment of the new Head of Property and Engineering Services.
- (3) That relevant Council services be asked to provide information on climate-related work being undertaken in their areas, including any available information on the resulting carbon impacts, to assist the Working Group in monitoring and promoting progress.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Members considered ways of improving community engagement on climate issues during the period in which the Climate Emergency Officer post remained vacant.

The importance of widening engagement beyond those already involved in climate-related activities was emphasised. Members discussed strengthening links with schools and colleges, community and voluntary organisations, faith groups, sports clubs and other local networks.

Members considered the use of social media and short-form video content to reach younger and wider audiences. It was suggested that positive, accessible and engaging material should be promoted through the Council's established communications channels, including platforms such as Instagram and TikTok. Members recognised that communications should be coordinated through the Council's appropriate communications and marketing arrangements.

The successful use of Climate Fresk in schools was noted, although Members considered that substantially wider engagement was required to reach a greater proportion of the community. Members also discussed sharing examples of successful local projects through Working Group minutes, newsletters and existing climate networks.

The National Climate Emergency Briefing film was discussed as a useful way of opening up climate-related discussion to the public. Members noted that local screenings were already taking place and considered that further screenings across Pendle could help increase engagement.

AGREED

- (1) That opportunities to increase community engagement through schools, colleges, community organisations, faith groups, sports clubs and voluntary networks be explored.
- (2) That positive examples of local environmental and climate action be promoted through appropriate Council and community communication channels.
- (3) That further opportunities to host local screenings of the National Climate Emergency Briefing film be explored.

5. FUNDING & OPPORTUNITIES

Members discussed available funding opportunities, particularly those aimed at farmers and landowners for biodiversity enhancement, habitat restoration and climate adaptation projects.

It was noted that while grant funding was available through a number of schemes, application processes could often be complex. Members highlighted the support available from organisations such as the Ribble Rivers Trust in assisting applicants. Examples of local rewilding and nature recovery schemes were discussed together with opportunities to share good practice across the borough.

6. EMAIL COMMUNICATION

Members discussed the use of email communications and agreed that where possible links to relevant information and resources should be circulated rather than lengthy documents.

It was noted that the existing distribution list continued to be used for agendas, minutes and relevant information.

7. POTENTIAL FUTURE GUEST SPEAKERS TO BE SCHEDULED

In addition to the previously identified speakers, Members suggested inviting:

- Climate officers from neighbouring local authorities.
- Representatives involved in home energy efficiency and retrofit programmes.
- Officers involved in Lancashire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- Representatives from local biodiversity and rewilding projects.

The existing list of potential speakers remained:

- Lancashire Peat Partnership
- Lancashire County Council Active Travel Team

- Recycle IT
- Lancashire County Council Officer responsible for Street Trees

8. OUTSTANDING ITEMS

Plant Based Treaty

The Working Group noted that it was still awaiting a decision from the Executive regarding the recommendation that the Council sign the Plant Based Treaty.

National Emergency Briefing

The Working Group noted that it was still awaiting a decision from the Executive regarding the recommendation that the Council support the National Emergency Briefing campaign.

Members discussed opportunities to host local screenings of the briefing film and use it as a tool to engage residents and community groups.

AGREED

- (1) That the Chair pursue the outstanding recommendations relating to the Plant Based Treaty and the National Climate Emergency Briefing with the Executive.
- (2) That opportunities to promote and host local screenings of the National Climate Emergency Briefing film continue to be explored.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Members discussed the implications of local government reorganisation and the importance of maintaining momentum on climate action during the transition period.

Reference was made to biodiversity net gain requirements, local planning policy, housing targets and opportunities to strengthen environmental outcomes through the planning process.

Members also highlighted the importance of sharing examples of successful local projects and agreed to continue identifying and promoting good practice across Pendle.

The Working Group received an update from John Halton on planning matters, including the implications of changes to national planning policy, housing targets and the Council's ability to secure strong environmental outcomes through local planning policy. Members expressed concern about the environmental implications of meeting housing targets and the potential pressure for development on greenfield land.

It was advised that the Council's adopted planning policies relating to net zero carbon and climate change resilience remained important and that Members could provide comments on where they considered that stronger requirements could reasonably be justified. He also explained that the Council was reviewing its planning policies against the latest national planning policy changes.

Members discussed biodiversity net gain and were advised that the Council's adopted policy continued to require the hierarchy to be followed, with on-site delivery preferred where possible. The relationship between biodiversity net gain, the Lancashire Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the use of developer contributions was also discussed.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Climate Emergency Working Group would be held on **Monday, 19th October 2026 at 6.00 p.m.**

Chair _____