

**CLIMATE EMERGENCY ADVISORY COMMITTEE – CONSULTATIVE
MEETING**

MONDAY, 1ST NOVEMBER, 2021

PRESENT: Councillor N Walshaw in the Chair

Councillors B Anderson, N Buckley,
P Carlill, M Dobson, E Flint, A Forsaith,
A Garthwaite, C Hart-Brooke, H Hayden,
J Illingworth, M Shahzad, P Wadsworth and
P Wray

24 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

25 Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interests.

26 Notes - 13th September 2021

Matters Arising

Item 21 - It was requested that the reference to the development of the communications plan be amended to reflect that work has been undertaken by the team/service as opposed to an individual councillor.

RECOMMENDED – That the note of the meeting held 13th September 2021 be noted.

27 Open Forum

Members of the public were invited to submit a video recording of their open forum submission in advance of the meeting.

One video was submitted on this occasion from Foodwise Leeds, advising Members of the organisation's application to the Sustainable Food Places 'Food for the Planet' campaign grant to pilot a Community Composting project, and seeking financial commitment from Leeds City Council to support their bid. Members agreed to consider the options, including potential funding opportunities through Community Committee wellbeing funds, in more detail at the next meeting of the Food and Biodiversity Working Group. The video can be viewed [here](#).

Pat Urry, a representative from Roundhay Environmental Action Project (REAP), attended the meeting and addressed the Committee. Members were

advised of concerns within the local community about the domestic changes required to reduce the carbon output in their homes, and whether the Council intend on developing detailed advice and guidance, including a list of suitable contractors in Leeds. The Executive Member for Infrastructure and Investment advised of ongoing work taking place with Leeds City College and local business partners to ensure that young people are taught the skills required for sustainable building and retrofit, including a Green Careers event with schools, to be considered in further detail later in the meeting (Note 29 refers).

A Committee Member raised an issue on behalf of a local resident in regard to the cutting back of trees by Network Rail. The Chair noted his shared frustrations on the matter, however highlighted that the local authority has no legislative powers to stop the actions of Network Rail.

28 Working Groups Update

The Chief Officer for Sustainable Energy and Air Quality, Polly Cook, provided an update to Members on the progress of the working groups to the Committee as follows:

- **Behaviour Change and Transport** – At the most recent meeting, Members discussed plans to increase bus patronage, with presentations from Professor Gillian Anable (University of Leeds) on the latest insights to barriers to increasing bus travel, Connecting Leeds on the latest zero-carbon ‘Park and Ride’ in Stourton, the West Yorkshire Combined Authority with an update on the core network, and the West Yorkshire Mayor’s plans for bus travel in the region going forward. At the next meeting, the group will focus on responding to aspects relating to electric vehicle charging points within the most recent consultation documents released by Government.
- **Biodiversity and Food** – At the most recent meeting, Members focused on actions from the last Committee meeting with Housing Leeds, who explained their general approach to managing land, woodland planting and biodiversity. Members highlighted examples of locations where the approach has not worked effectively, which the team have agreed to assess, and updates will be provided at a future meeting on alternative approaches taken to improve the process. Planning officers also presented their new leaflet to promote the benefits of front gardens and provided an opportunity for Members to comment on the campaign prior to launch. The group also discussed the use of harmful chemicals, which will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting, along with the Food Action Plan.
- **Planning, Buildings and Energy** – At the last meeting, Members were provided with an update on the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and some of the challenges experienced, along with a further discussion regarding the PAS 2035. At the next meeting, the group

will consider the cross-party response to the heat and energy aspects of the Government's consultation.

29 An update on work to raise awareness among young people of green careers in Leeds around COP26

The Chief Officer (Sustainable Energy and Air Quality) submitted a report that introduces a presentation at the meeting that provides an update on work undertaken by the Council and partners to raise awareness of, and inspire young people into, 'green collar' jobs in Leeds. Representatives from the council's Sustainable Energy and Air Quality service, Employment and Skills service, and Ahead Partnership will be in attendance.

The following were in attendance:

- Chad Newton, Senior Communications and Marketing Officer, Sustainable Energy and Air Quality Team, Leeds City Council
- Carly Boden, Employment and Skills Manager, Leeds City Council
- Georgina Johnson, Ahead Partnership

Representatives delivered a PowerPoint presentation, highlighting the following:

- A 'green collar' job is any role that contributes to the net-zero carbon ambition and will be mostly available in the private sector, predominantly within building and energy industries, but the transition requires significant support from the public sector and is a core feature of the Government's Net Zero Strategy.
- A number of green jobs have already been created in Leeds – through the Leeds PIPES District Heating Network and companies such as Cenergist.
- Young people's understanding and passion for climate issues provides an opportunity to engage with them at an early stage to raise awareness of green careers and ensure that schools, colleges and employers are equipped to support green career pathways – reflected in the collective calls to action within the Talent and Skills Plan in Leeds.
- An official COP26 Regional Roadshow event will be held 5th November 2021 for school pupils in Leeds at the low carbon construction firm CITU, focusing on bringing together pupils and local workers in jobs that contribute towards decarbonisation from a diverse range of sectors, as well as speeches from the West Yorkshire Green Jobs Taskforce, the council's Executive Member for Climate, and the Mayor of West Yorkshire.

Members discussed a number of matters, including:

- In reference to the issues raised during the open forum (Note 27 refers), Members highlighted that accessible training is crucial across trade sectors immediately, to ensure that consumer choice is available in relation to home retrofit. The Chair noted that changes to building practices will be encouraged by upcoming changes to lending from major banks to businesses and prospective homeowners, which will be limited depending on the sustainability of the product / dwelling.
- It was requested that links to the Government's recently published Heat and Building Strategy be circulated to Members following the meeting.

RECOMMENDED –

- a) That the contents of the report and presentation, along with Members comments, be noted.
- b) That the Government's Heat and Buildings Strategy (2021) be circulated to Members.

30 Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Update - Schools in Leeds

The Chief Officer (Sustainable Energy and Air Quality) submitted a report that introduces a presentation on the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) programme of works being delivered by the Sustainable Energy and Air Quality service.

Senior Project Officer, Joe Callin, delivered a PowerPoint presentation, detailing the process of decarbonising school sites as part of the PSDS programme in Leeds, including examples of completed projects, an explanation of funding allocation, some of the challenges experienced to date, differentials of costs between decarbonised and non-decarbonised sites, and the scale of future challenges.

Members discussed a number of matters, including:

- The Chair noted that the funding allocation of £1.4bn until 2025 for the PSDS programme announced by Government was disappointing, and that to achieve maximum impact and achieve 2030 net-zero ambitions, sustained funding of multiple billion pounds per year is required.
- The Executive Member for Infrastructure and Climate noted her thanks to the team for their continued efforts to deliver the programme.
- In reference to the recent announcement of rising energy prices, Members queried whether the costs detailed in the presentation are likely to vary and were advised that the constant fluctuation of energy

prices makes it difficult to update business cases to reflect the current picture.

- In response to a query, it was confirmed that excess electricity generated by solar panels outside of term time is used by 'Solar for Schools', the community interest company who own the solar panels, to fund the on-going maintenance of the panels, panel removals, cost of inverter replacement etc. and any excess income generated by over recovery of electricity versus SFS's costs are shared with the schools.
- Members queried the alternative sources for heating if the heat pumps malfunction or are unable to fully heat the school on a particularly cold day. It was explained that the schools have a hybrid heating system and that gas boilers are maintained as secondary heat source to support the heat pumps during peak demands. The boilers are also able to accommodate the full heat demand of the site in the event of a malfunction.

RECOMMENDED – That the contents of the report and presentation, along with Members comments, be noted.

31 Climate Education

The Chief Officer (Sustainable Energy and Air Quality) submitted a report that introduced an update on work undertaken by the Council and partners to support delivery of climate education to young people in Leeds.

The following were in attendance:

- Steve Ruse, Lead Sustainable Schools Consultant, Children and Families, Leeds City Council
- Chris Jackson, Leeds Development Education Centre (Leeds DEC)

The Lead Sustainable Schools Consultant introduced the report, providing an overview of work undertaken by the Council and partners to support climate education for children and young people in Leeds, following previous discussions at the Committee's meeting held 18th January 2021. Members were advised that the Climate Action Route Map (CARM) presented previously had been finalised and made available to schools. Members were shown Southroyd Primary School's webpage dedicated to their climate priorities and commitments, along with a copy of their action plan for the school year, which was developed using the CARM guidance.

Chris Jackson, Leeds DEC, advised Members that in recognition of the pressure on teachers to focus on delivering a national curriculum that does not yet feature climate issues as a key aspect, Leeds DEC have created a range of resources to support global education to be integrated within core

subjects. A demonstration of the Leeds DEC website and the resources available was presented on screen.

Members discussed a number of matters, including:

- Members commended the work of Southroyd Primary School and agreed to write to the school to thank them for their contribution to the city's 2030 net-zero ambitions.
- Members recognised that until climate education is recognised as a key subject to be taught in schools, teachers time and resources are restricted to meeting statutory responsibilities, particularly recognising the additional pressure of 'catch-up' learning required as a result of school closures during the pandemic. Members welcomed the approach and resources available through Leeds DEC.
- In reference to earlier discussions around green jobs, Members suggested that a local accreditation process be developed for schools and colleges who deliver key climate initiatives from the Council and partners and agreed to discuss further and consider options at a future Behaviour Change and Transport Working Group meeting.
- In recognition of the heightened feelings of stress and anxiety amongst young people in relation to climate change, Members noted the importance of climate education resources and plans incorporating time for children and young people to reflect on the emotional impact of topics raised and provide wellbeing support.

RECOMMENDED –

- a) That the contents of the report and presentation, along with Members comments, be noted.
- b) That a letter be sent to Southroyd Primary School by the Chair, on behalf of the Committee, commending their commitment to climate action.

32 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday 13th December 2021 at 10.30 a.m.