

CONSULTATIVE MEETING OF MEMBERS OF THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 17TH JANUARY, 2022

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,
N Walshaw and P Wray

1 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Notes of the Previous Meeting - 13 December 2021

RECOMMENDED – That the note of the consultative meeting held 13 December 2021 be noted.

4 Open Forum

Members of the public were invited to submit a question / statement in advance of the meeting.

One written submission was received and read out to the Committee from Boston Spa and Wetherby Community Green Group, as follows:

'Bearing in mind the level of construction that is being outlined across the region for the next few years and the level of progress that has been made in the improvements to sustainability in house building, why are building applications not being rejected if they are not towards the zero emissions end of the spectrum? And if these practices are not already being insisted upon, when do you believe that Leeds City Council will insist on these methods being compulsory?'

The Chair advised that a written response will be provided via email from the relevant council team.

5 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:

Biodiversity and Food – At the most recent meeting, Members received an update from the University of Leeds on their carbon decision-making tool for menu planning and discussed potential uses for the tool beyond school meals and opportunities for further research funding. Members also received a presentation from Meanwood Farm and Foodwise Leeds on community supported agriculture projects and ways in which the Council can support future projects, through land mapping and land allocation. The group also received an update on the Food Action Plan, initial engagement activity to help shape the new Food Strategy to be launched in Autumn 2022, and the initial microfeasability study undertaken to link greenhouses to the District Heating Network.

Behaviour Change and Transport – At the most recent meeting, the group discussed a Defra consultation in relation to proposals to restrict the sale and use of commonly littered single-use plastics. A collective formal response, on behalf of the working group, will be submitted.

Planning, Buildings and Energy – At the next meeting, the group will consider the draft Energy Strategy ahead of Executive Board in February 2022.

6 Future Fashion Factory Update

The Head of Economic Policy submitted a report which introduced the work of the Future Fashion Factory and how its programmes support the fashion and textile industry to help address the climate.

The following were in attendance:

- Fiona Bolam, Head of Economic Policy, Leeds City Council
- Gilda Smith-Leigh, Senior Economic Development Officer, Leeds City Council
- Professor Stephen Russell, Director of Future Fashion Factory
- Suzy Shepard, Co-Director of Future Fashion Factory
- Sue Rainton, Programme Manager, Future Fashion Factory

The Director of Future Fashion Factory delivered a PowerPoint presentation that provided an overview of the programme, based in Leeds. Members were advised that the Future Fashion Factory researches and develops advanced digital and textile technologies to transform the industry's agility in the luxury fashion design process, and ability to shift to circular economies. The presentation set out several ongoing projects and areas for future development.

Members discussed a number of matters, including:

- Members recognised the strong fast-fashion appetite in the UK compared to other countries, and the Council's role in engaging with communities to influence the move towards a more circular economy of reusing, recycling, and repairing, as well as encouraging purchase of a single higher quality item as opposed to several cheaper items.
- It was noted that large retailers in the UK often use unethical forms of low-skilled labour in developing countries, including child labour, to make items very cheap to purchase for the consumer. Members recognised that the process of introducing tougher international ethical trade standards, or a move towards more localised trade, must consider the economic impact on countries and potential to exacerbate poverty by removing jobs that families rely on.
- It was suggested that community hubs and other local support centres could be utilised to offer basic sewing and repairing workshops, along with communications, to encourage communities to keep and mend items.
- Members noted that the current LCC Waste Strategy does not include reference to fashion or textiles, and this should be considered as part of the strategy refresh, which is currently underway. The Chief Officer advised that she will continue to support and advise colleagues around sustainable measures, and specifically clothing and textiles, as part of the Waste Strategy refresh.

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

7 Future Talent Plan Update

The Head of Economic Policy submitted a report that introduced a presentation that provided an introduction to work undertaken by the council to refresh the city's Employment and Skills Plan.

The following were in attendance:

- Fiona Bolam, Head of Economic Policy
- Meenakshi Parmar, Economic Policy Officer

The Head of Economic Policy introduced the report, explaining the Council's aim is to deliver a city-wide plan, now called the Future Talent Plan, that will be owned and updated by stakeholders in the city, supporting people to develop and maintain the skills that make them and our businesses resilient in the face of change – to be considered by Executive Board in Spring 2022.

The Economic Policy Officer delivered a PowerPoint presentation which provided an overview of the recent review of the Talent and Skills Plan 2017, including the outcomes of stakeholder engagement activity to date to develop an understanding of skills in demand in Leeds, including 'green skills'. The overarching challenges for the future of work in Leeds were identified as the need for employers to be more adaptable and the need to transform education to support the move towards a green economy. Members were

advised that the demand for increase in demand for green skills and the need for targeted support for transitioning high carbon sectors will inform the Future Talent Plan.

Members discussed a number of matters, including:

- Members were supportive of the focus on green skills in the updated plan, but expressed concerns around the over-professionalisation of job specifications for green jobs in the labour market, which could exclude those most vulnerable of being left behind by transitions within high carbon sectors.
- It was emphasised that council and sector led apprenticeships should focus on entry-level and out of work, with an attractive career path, as opposed to upskilling existing employees.

RECOMMENDED – That the contents of the report, along with Member’s comments, be noted.

8 Any Other Business

It was highlighted that the meeting details on the democracy.leeds.gov webpage was difficult to find in the new consultative format, and that this may result in residents being unable to follow the meeting. The Chair asked the Governance Officer to resolve this issue.

A Member queried the date of the next finance working group and was advised that the details would be circulated to all members once a date had been finalised.

9 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Wednesday 9th March 2022 at 10am