

Climate Emergency Advisory Committee

Thursday, 23rd June, 2022

PRESENT: Councillor K Dye in the Chair

Councillors B Anderson, D Blackburn,
J Bowden, N Buckley, P Carlill,
A Garthwaite, O Newton, M Shahzad,
E Thomson, P Truswell, J Tudor and
P Wadsworth

Councillor

1 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against the refusal of inspection of documents.

2 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

The agenda contained no exempt information.

3 Late Items

There were no late items of business.

4 Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were made.

5 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Hayden and Councillor Hart-Brooke.

6 Minutes of Previous Meetings

RESOLVED –

- a) That the minutes of the last formal meeting held 10th March 2021 be agreed as a correct record
- b) That the notes of the Consultative meeting of Members of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee held 9th March 2022 be noted.

7 Open Forum

Two matters were raised under the Open Forum:

Climate Action Leeds (CAL) - Mr T. Hermann made a short representation on the £2.5 million programme to reach a zero carbon and nature friendly city for Leeds by 2030. The organisation's work is based on the doughnut economics model.

Five organisations support the work as delivery partners: Voluntary Action Leeds, CAG consultants, Together4Peace and Leeds Tidal. CAL provides a two day a week support worker for local groups and will start new recruitment drive to secure additional resource. Several local community groups are part of the programme, including:

- Eco-friendly Garforth
- Our Future Beeston
- Otley 2030
- Climate Action Seacroft

The Chair thanked CAL for their submission and encouraged the local groups to attend future CEAC meetings and Mr Hermann confirmed this will be communicated to the groups.

Medact Leeds – The Group submitted a video outlining their campaign, ‘Health for a Green New Deal’ which can be viewed [here](#). Due to the World Health Organisation describing climate change as the biggest challenge facing human health, this is the group’s focus, along with loss of biodiversity. The Group is specifically focusing on the impact of air pollution and the effects on children, and the presentation acknowledged Ella Kissi-Debrah, the first person ruled to have pollution included in her death certificate. The Group is campaigning in Leeds for cheaper zero emissions, segregated bike lanes especially near schools and to improve air quality.

The Chair thanked the Group and confirmed the submission would be provided to relevant officers in City Development (Highways and Transportation) for consideration.

8 Forward Plan 2022/23

The Chief Officer (Sustainable Energy and Air Quality) submitted a report which set out the proposed meeting schedule for 2022/23 attached as Appendix 1 and suggested amendments to the Committee’s working groups for discussion.

The Committee considered the different approaches to growth, including doughnut economics. The Big Leeds Climate Conversation findings showed that more than three quarters of respondents believe that tackling climate change is either more (63.5%) or much more (14.7%) important than maintaining current levels of economic growth. There will be a workshop on doughnut economics for Members, possibly to take place through the working groups.

The Chief Officer clarified that any Councillor may apply to join the CEAC working groups, not just Members of the Committee.

The Chair confirmed that there will be an ongoing programme of visits to CEAC by the Director of each directorate during the municipal year.

RESOLVED: The committee confirmed the work programme, including committee dates.

9 Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan

The Chief Officer (Sustainable Energy and Air Quality) submitted a report providing a summary on the range of activity which had taken place since the last meeting of the Committee to progress plans to build the city’s resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Members noted the intention for a climate audit to be undertaken with LCC services to identify how service provision and service users may be impacted by the effects of climate change.

Members noted the many areas of the city susceptible to flooding and highlighted the need for the Plan to consider smaller incidents on tributaries to the Aire, Wharfe and Calder which impacted on local residents and the local economy.

Members also considered the concept of corporate responsibility amongst partners noting a comment regarding sale of woodland for residential development.

Officers agreed to feedback the above comments to the relevant partners.

Members noted a request for the Plan to separate and identify those risks and smaller actions which will have an immediate positive short term impact from the long term aims of the Plan. The Committee noted work being undertaken with partners to translate aspects of the Plan into scenarios to present to Service areas which will inform discussions on their own policies to support change.

RESOLVED –

- a) That the update provided on activity taking place across the Council to address the current, future and expected impacts of climate change be noted.
- b) That the leading role the Council is playing in the work on resilience and adaptation across the region in conjunction with the Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission be noted.
- c) That the Committee support the approach to undertake a service-led climate risk assessment, including the delivery of a series of workshops, which will inform council-wide reviews of business continuity plans and the corporate risk register.
- d) That the Committee support enhanced city-wide engagement with every community in Leeds over the next 12 months to raise awareness of, and receive feedback on, the Council's activity to support climate mitigation and adaptation.
- e) To support the proposal for the involvement of the Committee's working groups in this work moving forward.

10 Leeds Local Plan Update

The Director of City Development submitted a report in support of a presentation given to the Committee providing an update on the development of the Leeds Local Plan.

Martin Elliot, Head of Strategic Planning, delivered the presentation highlighting how the Leeds Local Plan 1 (LPU1) will be a statutory plan which, once adopted, developers will be required to have regard to, as such it will provide developers with a steer on the type of development the city wishes to see.

The presentation focussed on the five key themes intended to support the city to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change and ensure the delivery of sustainable development:

Carbon reduction – Existing policies will be revised to introduce the concept of a “whole life cycle” assessment of a development, from the building materials proposed, re-use of materials, sustainable construction methods, demolition or new build to the final use of the development to help consider carbon usage. The focus on zero carbon developments will seek to go further than existing policy by setting

out a focus on the fabric of buildings to withstand other energy technology that can be included within the development. Policies will also be prepared which identify broad locations for development of wind turbines and solar farms.

Place making – LPU1 has regard to the need to improve housing quality, and through stronger emphasis on design, housing density and links to the Connecting Leeds Strategy, it seeks to identify what quality developments in Leeds will look like and the concept of a “20-minute neighbourhood”.

Flood Risk – LPU1 will update Leeds’ assessment of flood susceptibility based on the latest evidence such as climate change allowances/ temperature change. Developments will be required to take the policy into account, the aim being to avoid development in high risk flood areas especially functional flood plains. Previously, the Local Authority operated an ‘exceptions test’ which balanced development with sustainability but the revised policy will start a conversation on whether that is the balance to strike for the future and whether flood plain development should be further restricted.

Green Infrastructure – LPU1 aims to present a better understanding of green infrastructure, particularly the movement of plants and animals and active travel considerations for people. The update to green space policies will ensure quality green spaces, which are functional and support Leeds health and wellbeing agenda.

Sustainable infrastructure – LPU1 will review digital connectivity for modern society, set out strategic support for mass transit schemes and policies on Leeds station update, HS2 and consider the airport policy.

Members were advised of the timetable for implementation, with a further report proposed to the October CEAC meeting as part of the formal consultation the Plan proposed for October to November 2022. Additionally the Committee noted the intention for work on a further Local Plan Update 2 to follow later in 2022, to potentially include issues such as housing, employment and town and local centres.

In discussions, the following comments were made:

Protection of garden areas as a city-wide strategy (for biodiversity, absorption of carbon by trees and hedges and for localised flood alleviation). Members noted that paving over garden space is allowed under “permitted development”, the LPA can influence the type of paving/hard surface (permeable) and the amount of area to be lost. An Article 4 direction can be used to remove permitted development rights but this is not intended for city-wide use, however the LPA could remove permitted development rights on new build permissions in order to preserve good green and blue infrastructure.

The promotion of blue infrastructure for active travel and movement of goods. Members heard that an existing policy protects wharfs and barges were being used to transport sand and gravel. LPU1 would seek to improve the quality of green infrastructure and link it with blue infrastructure where appropriate to improve amenity and alternative habitats.

Plans Panel considerations – National Guidance on emerging policies and plans provides that once a Plan is out for consultation, then the Local Planning Authority (LPA) can start to give weight to the policies within it during consideration of planning applications. If a proposed policy has not attracted objections, further weight can be given, but their consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) must also be considered – where an LPA proposes measures beyond any set out in the NPPF then the proposed policies are likely only to be considered once the full Plan has been formally adopted.

Microgeneration proposals – Members noted a comment seeking further consideration of microgeneration in the Plan, and it being implemented at the build stage with consideration to roof profiles and south facing roofs, rather than retro fitting to older properties which may not support new technologies. It was reported discussions had been held with developers, the outcome being that the Plan was not overly prescriptive, but would provide flexibility for developers to meet the targets – the policy will consider site layout, seek south facing developments, seek consideration of the energy hierarchy to be implemented and then how a development will be heated and powered. The National Grid which is proposed to be de-carbon already, but additional microgeneration in Leeds will further support the zero carbon target. Consideration was also being given to whether a mechanism for contributions can be established where developments with unaccounted-for carbon can generate funds to be used to undertake retro fitting elsewhere in the city.

Promoting the re-use of grey water – A comment promoting the inclusion of the use of grey/roof water in residential developments as is the case in industry and hotels was noted and it was agreed that this would be reviewed in the Plan.

20 Minute Neighbourhoods – Discussion noted that new developments in outer areas could more easily deliver 20 minute neighbourhoods and there was some concern over how the city centre would adapt to this and how the LPA could encourage developers to develop new centres and amenities for existing communities. Additionally, consideration of pedestrian routes into the city was needed as there were several residential areas on the outskirts of the city centre where residents could walk into the city but were prevented by barriers. A further consideration was highlighted relating to provision of schools within the 20 minute neighbourhood concept in order to dissuade parents and older students driving to school. Members noted that the Local Plan Update 2 proposed for later in 2022 would consider housing, transport and how the LPA will respond to the strategic carbon policies and how they apply to housing distribution.

Transport – Consideration of transport infrastructure in the medium term was key, as implementation of the mass transit solution was proposed for 2040. The LPU is intended to sit alongside the Transport Strategy and Transport Supplementary Planning Document, the Plans Panels will ensure a development layout is accessible and aim for development close to transport interchanges so the aim is to set a policy that can deliver mass transport aligned with neighbourhood policy.

Acknowledging risk to the aims of the LPU – The Committee acknowledged that changes to Central Government policy and Guidance could present a constraint on the ability of the LPA to set local policy to achieve zero carbon if the LPA did not

have the power to mandate or condition measures. Additionally the impact of development Viability Assessments in the consideration of planning applications was noted. The NPPF stipulates that in order for a Plan to succeed at Examination, the Plan should be sound - a test of soundness is deliverability. Members heard that a workshop had been held with developers on the proposals within the draft LPU and it was felt that developers locally were more aware of sustainable development funding, the realisation that their customers sought efficiency especially for energy use and were open to the proposals in the LPU. The inclusion of examples of community led housing and microgeneration in the LPU would provide positive encouragement to developers on what could be achieved.

The Committee also revisited the issue of car engine idling outside schools at school drop-off/pick-up times and noted that the banners previously supported by the Committee had been delivered to over 20 schools who wished to participate in the communications scheme. Members would receive further details directly in due course.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report and presentation and the comments made during discussions on the Leeds Local Plan be noted.

11 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RESOLVED – To note the date and time of the next meeting as Thursday 21st July 2022 at 2.00 pm