

CONSULTATIVE MEETING OF MEMBERS OF THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Monday, 18th March, 2024

PRESENT: Councillor K Dye in the Chair

Councillors B Anderson, J Bowden,
P Carlill, E Carlisle, R Downes, M Foster,
A Hannan, N Harrington, A McCluskey,
M Rafique, M Shahzad, E Thomson and
J Tudor

48 STATUS OF THE MEETING

With the agreement of the Chair, the meeting took place as hybrid consultative meeting rather than a formal, solely physical meeting. As such, it was noted that the consultative nature of the meeting did not allow for formal decisions to be made but did allow for the committee to make recommendations on the agenda items contained within the published agenda pack.

49 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against the inspection of documents.

50 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

The agenda contained no exempt information.

51 Late Items

No late items of business were added to the agenda.

52 Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were made.

53 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor O Newton.

54 Minutes of the Previous Meetings

RECOMMENDED - That the minutes of the meeting held on the 15th of December 2023, be approved as a true and correct record.

RECOMMENDED – To note the meeting notes of the Consultative Meeting of Members of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee meeting held on 19th February 2024.

55 Matter Arising

The following matters arising were raised:

To include Councillor J Bowden within the attendance list for the Consultative Meeting of Members of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee meeting held on 19th February 2024.

56 Open Forum

At the discretion of the Chair, a period of up to 15 minutes may be allocated at each ordinary meeting for members of the public to make representations or to ask questions on matters within the terms of reference of the Committee. No member of the public shall speak for more than five minutes in the Open Forum, except by permission of the Chair.

The following submissions were made as part of the Open Forum:

Bumblebee Conservation Trust

A video was played for Members that had been submitted by the Bumblebee Conservation Trust, a charity dedicated to reverse the decline of bee populations, which outlined their manifesto and pledge to Government and Local Authorities to protect pollinators as pollination was crucial for a third of food production, including fruits and vegetables which contribute to healthy lifestyles. Insect pollination was also vital for 90% of plants in the UK and the natural world would be unrecognisable without them. There were over 270 species of wild bees of which, 24 were bumblebees, the honeybee was native the UK but was no longer wild as they are contained for food and honey production and didn't contribute to wild pollination. Over the past 100 years there was widespread decline in bee numbers, with 2 species extinct since 1940, with the increase in farming, use of pesticides and loss of habitat contributing to the decline. The Bumblebee Manifesto proposed 5 core recommendations to improve the situation which focused on 3 areas which Local Authorities can impact; prioritising pollinators over pesticides, improving flower rich habitats and to go further and faster to tackle climate change. Communities should be empowered to go pesticide free and focus on bio-diversity net gain, with green spaces prioritised. Recommendations were outlined as creating pollinator habitats, phasing out pesticides and embedding pollinator action in climate and nature policies. Contact details for engaging with the charity were provided as darryl.cox@bumblebeeconservation.org with further information available online via www.bumblebeeconservation.org

The presentation slides were to be shared with Members for their information and it was proposed that protection of pollinators was to be considered as a future working group item. The Green Spaces department had employed a new Technical Officer whose work on bio-diversity was relevant to this topic. An initiative was being run at Roundhay park to introduce areas of wildflowers, with this model gaining traction and expected to be implemented at other locations.

Yorkshire Sustainability Festival

The founder of Yorkshire Sustainability Week, which was now rebranded as Yorkshire Sustainability Festival, provided an overview of the progress of the event for summer 2024, noting last year's had been the largest business sustainability event in the North of England, attracting 1,200 people to attend 20 events in 15 locations. The festival events were scheduled over a two-week period, covering the whole Yorkshire region and comprised of a 2 day conference in Leeds at Cloth Hall Court and engagement events from the 10th to the 21st of June 2024. A series of round table discussions were to take place as well as talks from keynote speakers with topics to be covered outlined as, construction, energy, transport, skills, citizens

and engagement. The conference was to take place on the 18th and 19th of June, with a marquee, food vans and a brand activation zone open to the public outside the venue on Quebec Street, beyond the marquee, the event was to be ticketed. The topics for the conference were circular economy, manufacturing, skills, technology, food and waste, future cities, transport, water, people, places and housing. Members were requested to assist in identifying speakers for panel discussions. A secret business lunch was to take place on the 20th of June. It was expected that 2000 people were to attend 50 events and the ambition of the festival organisers was to create a regional Conference of Parties and was partnered with the Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission.

57 Working Groups Update

An update on the recent Economy and Finance Working Group was provided, which had focused on an overview of the progress of improvements to the procurement process by addressing where value for money or social value was best applied. The Council spent approximately £1.3 billion a year on procurement and existing Government guidance noted 10% minimum weight for improvements to social outcomes; the Council guidelines were focused on the 'Three E's', employment and skills, environment and education. Opportunities for future procurement were discussed and methods to reduce waste, improve energy efficiency, increase green skills and tackling emissions, including scope 3 emissions for businesses that were engaged with. The Council could go further on procuring local businesses but also local products to reduce the overall carbon footprint and also the Committee agreed to ask all directors to report on procurement at future CEAC meetings.

RECOMMENDED – To note the updates provided.

58 Director's Update - Director of Children and Families

The Chief Officer for Service Transform & Partnership (Children's and Families) provided the Committee with a verbal update on the work of the multitude of the services covered by the directorate.

Phil Evans, The Chief Officer for Service Transform & Partnership, presented the following information to Members:

- The Children's Mayor's manifesto had primarily focused on climate change and was a positive indication for young people and their approach to making the world a better place.
- The service was listening to children voices and had developed 12 wishes of Child Friendly Leeds. Wishes 5, *everyone takes more action to protect the environment from climate change*, and 6, *children and young people can travel around the city safely and easily* were most relevant to the Committee.
- To achieve wish 5, long term and short term goals had been set in order to create an action plan, promote initiatives and establish targets and best practice, supporting provision within schools.
- An Eco-Committee Conference, chaired by the Committee Chair, was scheduled for Monday the 25th of March from 10am to 2pm, which engaged with secondary schools to set priorities and provide resources. The Youth Summit on Climate 2020 had been attended by 100 school students and had help develop a tool kit for climate action for young people.

- Vital Energi, a large Council contractor, had engaged with Strawberry Fields and Ireland Wood primary schools to deliver climate education workshops and was expected to engage with further schools in Leeds. The 'get creative for climate' project had been launched to all Leeds primary schools and projects were to be submitted by the 12th of July 2024 and were planned to be showcased to Members.
- The Assets and Access team were working with the Department for Education to improve building sustainability and energy efficiency, assisted schools and relevant estates to create premises development and facilities management plans.
- The climate impact of commuting to and from schools was considered and independent travel training was ongoing to provide diverse travel options to decrease carbon and transport needs, including plans for investing in specialist inclusive learning centres. It was noted there were limited options within social care.
- The further work identified by the service was to decrease grey fleet mileage as it was the highest out of all Council departments, link up with corporate travel plans, review travel arrangements for looked after children, provide travel training and provide ultra low emission vehicles; however, resource constraints and duty of care implications were noted.

The Committee's discussions included the following matters:

- With the vast distance travelled by the services vehicles, the methods for reducing the need to travel, through rotas and advanced planning, were queried. In response it was outlined that work on this was in liaison with Asset Management to ensure that sites were in the best locations and also providing a larger scope of options where people can access services, as well as home provision options and electric vehicles for social workers.
- With reports of poor bus provision in West Yorkshire, the impact this had on younger people and their opportunities and attitudes was queried. It was noted that the evidence showed a wide scope of opinion, mostly anecdotal, and the main concerns were regarding safety and environmental issues, however, there was clear frustration with transport provision for outer areas.
- Changes to improve transport sustainability were broadly supported and since wish 6 had been written a wider perspective had developed for travel options to cause less of a carbon output rather than solely safety and reliability.
- It was agreed that information regarding social worker electric vehicle trials was to be provided back to Members. It was noted that responses had been broadly positive, but more work was required to capture data, however, financial and infrastructure challenges may limit provision.
- Details regarding schools and other relevant sites adaptability to changes in climate, particularly heatwaves, was to be raised with the Assets and Access Team and provided back to Members. The approach was covered by the Department of Education and resource challenges were noted.
- Teacher workshops and best practise discussions were ongoing and further information was to be provided back to the Committee. Members noted there was lots of positive work stemming from schools which could be shared with others and climate action groups maps could be extended across schools to network ideas.

- Members were a good bridge to provide communication regarding the 'get creative for the climate' project to schools and encourage engagement.
- It was noted that the Children's Mayor was to attend a future Committee meeting.

RECOMMENDED – That the update, along with Members comments, be noted.

59 Update on the development of the WY Mass Transit Network

The report of the of the Interim Head of Place and Consents - Mass Transit, provided an update on the West Yorkshire Mass Transit Programme.

Stacey White, the Interim Head of Place and Consents - Mass Transit, West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) presented the report and highlighted the following information:

- Although it was noted that West Yorkshire was a great place to live and work, the poor connectivity between areas limits opportunities and applied to both urban and rural settings. Mass transit was to integrate travel and improve the system.
- The purposeful aim of the development of the network was to provide affordable and efficient transport, allow behavioural changes by improving walking and cycling infrastructure, clearer travel information, a single ticket across different public transport methods and an environment first approach, aiming for carbon neutrality by 2038, alongside WYCA's declaration.
- The approach was to be phased, with Leeds and Bradford city centres as dedicated hubs, considered to be the heart of the system, with concentrated business, commercial and leisure options. Phase one was to develop a Leeds line and a Bradford line.
- The Leeds line was proposed between St. James's Hospital and the White Rose Shopping Centre, with other important locations considered. The line was part of a wider regeneration plan, linking the regional centre with key housing growth and regeneration areas to the south. Work will then be conducted in consultation with Kirklees Council to create a future case to connect towards Dewsbury.
- The Bradford line was to connect Leeds Station to Bradford centre stations, with the location for a new Bradford train station to be confirmed. The line was to complement the electrified rail system between the cities and was to create a more efficient inner city link.
- A strategic outline case was to be submitted to the Department for Transport, with a public consultation agreed over summer 2024. Commencement for construction of phase one was estimated as 2028.
- The sustainability strategy was to be all encompassing for planning, design, construction and operation, outcomes were established to track targets which guide design and decision making, international accreditation, such as PAS 2080:2023, was sought and four main pillars were proposed, transport, environmental, social and economic.
- Details for the transport pillar were outlined as providing a modern transport system for the region, increased capacity, reliable service, weather adaptability, increased uptake and improved travel information.

- The environment pillar focused on increased air quality, reduced waste, reduced energy output, increased bio-diversity, flood resilience, use of renewable energy with progress to be monitored.
- The social pillar sought to provide health and wellbeing benefits through provision of green spaces, employment opportunities, supporting the regional economy, high construction standards, and strategizing design to provide accessibility for all people, reducing barriers to travel access and improving integration between historically less served areas.
- The economic pillar was for education access, housing, productivity leading to economic recovery and growth, finding digital solutions with outcomes as supporting regeneration with mass transit as a catalyst for regeneration.
- Ticketing was to be good value for money and provide a fair, equitable fare across different travel options.
- The progress of sustainability was noted at this stage, as incorporated into the design principle and a key focus for the public consultation. Targets and indicators were being set, outlining strategic priorities, developing monitoring framework with the ability to use existing data to inform and shape a good system.
- Further information on the scheme was available at [Mass Transit West Yorkshire - West Yorkshire Combined Authority \(westyorks-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk) interested parties were able to sign up for updates via [Your Voice \(westyorks-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk) and email inquiries could be sent to masstransit@westyorks-ca.gov.uk

During discussions the Committee discussed the following:

- The renewable energy regeneration approach was supported by Members and requested to be updated on this part of the scheme as it developed.
- In order to link into employment and skills and green infrastructure jobs, it was noted that there was interest in creating links with education institutions across the region and influence over curriculums was important to train and retain staff.
- As tram and trolley bus proposals had previously been discussed in Leeds, it was noted that mass transit differed as it was focused on the West Yorkshire region and integrated many forms of transport. Trams may be a part of the scheme, with a local transport plan (LTP4) report considered by WYCA.
- As the delivery of mass transit was many years away, the impact of the re-franchising of the buses across the region was queried. In response it was noted that it was considered positive to deliver integration with buses as a feeder service to transport hubs. Potential delays to delivery were requirements for funding as planning, testing, construction and operation plans were required.
- Phase one was aimed to be operational around 2030 and the Government had largely supported the plans, including the Leeds Vision recognising the importance of integrated transport. The consenting process required a sound business case, in line with the transport and works act, was to be submitted to unlock land and planning rights through the Secretary of State.
- The re-franchising of buses was outlined to have limited impact on the resourcing of the mass transit team and a separate directorate was in development to cover this, with the ability to recruit. The mass transit team

was to be upscaled to 48 posts with around 12 currently employed and had legal and consultant support both internal and external to WYCA.

- As construction was scheduled to commence in 2028, there was to be an interim period where poorly serviced areas were unlikely to see any improvements, particularly in outer areas.
- In order for accessibility to be well considered, consultation and understanding the experience of people who live with disabilities was required to ensure provision of all necessary facilities.
- The approach for ticketing cross border into other districts covered by other local authorities was to be queried and understood against the transport policy plan; further information was agreed to be provided back to Members.
- The mass transit vision was to serve across West Yorkshire. Phase one Leeds line was not proposed to cover East Leeds, further than St. James's Hospital, however, strategic cases were to be developed to identify corridors to best connect places.
- Phase one was not solely to better connect Leeds and Bradford but was in order to create a central piece of infrastructure that was to be built up and connected to, eventually, all of West Yorkshire. The lines freed capacity, alleviating connection, and allowed for better connections to be developed in between.
- WYCA worked in partnership with the five local authorities which it covered to identify the key transport hub locations and create a connectivity infrastructure plan. The roles of different places needed to be understood for the scheme to connect them accordingly, as part of the mass transit vision.
- Land purchases were a long way from being secured with funding streams not yet certain in advance of submitting the strategic outline plan. Several route options were due for public consultation which will inform land purchase.
- Design feasibility for the proposed route connecting Leeds to Bradford was identified through nodes, where connections could be developed using disused railways or pathways, and also via creating new roads or travel infrastructure alongside existing routes.
- Different vehicle types and technology were proposed for the scheme, with a preference for developing a tram network for phase one.
- It was clarified that 40% of carbon emissions in Leeds stemmed from transport and given that a significant part of the mass transit infrastructure was not going to be constructed until after 2030, and also the earliest date for the bus re-franchising was in 2027, whether there was need to review the carbon neutrality by 2030 declaration was queried. In response it was noted that time can't be afforded to delaying response to climate change and the ambition fed into a vast amount of Council decisions.
- To allow deliverability of carbon neutrality against target dates it may need a rephrasing of policy, given that many barriers to achieving it were outside of the Council's influence, however, the 2030 date had been set against a context of feeling that national policy had not gone far enough. Existing transport strategy outlined feasibility issues and there was disparity between WYCA's and other authority's targets. Mass transit had identified key places to connect and actively addresses reducing emissions.
- The number of people's journeys and where the origin and destination had been used as an evidence base on providing clean travel options. A better

understanding of travel corridors was integral to providing the best travel method between locations and the bus re-franchising was not replacing mass transit, they were to work in unison.

- Connectivity to the White Rose Centre was queried as bus and train services were proposed to create a hub, however, no additional parking was proposed. It was noted that it was yet to be determined whether mass transit was to connect to train or rail at this location and park and ride schemes were under consideration.
- Significant improvements to rail and bus services were suggested as a potentially better solution to address travel issues in Leeds.
- In summary, it was outlined Members were to be provided back with information of ticketing proposals, travel corridor identification and an update on the consultation once completed.

RECOMMENDED – That the report, along with Members comments, be noted.

60 Climate Emergency Advisory Committee 2024/25 Forward Plan

The report of the Chief Officer, Climate, Energy and Green Spaces proposed a meeting schedule for the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee for the 2024/25 municipal year and that each meeting will progress one (or more) of the key climate change mitigation and adaptation themes.

Rachel Wainwright, Policy Officer (Climate, Energy and Green Spaces) outlined the following information to Members:

- The report included proposed topics of discussion for the next municipal year. Dates and timeframes were to be determined.
- There was to be 3 slots available as part of the Open Forum at each Committee meeting, matching previous arrangements. Changes to the Working Groups model were proposed to have a more neutral approach instead of workshops covering separate topics, to create a more streamlined process and reduce repeated work. These would be referred to as 'workshops'
- The director updates were again scheduled for consideration across 6 meetings and were to have a greater focus on procurement and adaptation.
- The plan had been developed in line with the years discussions and key topics identified by the Committee and was open to change and development subject to further suggestions from Members.

During the discussions the following matters were considered:

- Tracked updates for nature and tree planting initiatives was proposed, including maintenance processes and best practice for encouraging biodiversity, wildflower growth and limiting pesticide use, for future consideration.
- Indoor air quality, procurement best practice and how to positively influence services were to be considered at workshops.
- The less restrictive approach of the workshops was supported as it was considered robust, variable, an effective use of time and open to all Members.
- The WYCA green energy hub project was suggested to be covered as an item by the Committee in order to maximise the benefits of operation.

- The carbon footprint attached to access of NHS services was queried as a topic, given people often have to travel by car or appointments were provided at non local buildings. NHS partners and anchor groups were to be contacted to seek relevant data and policies on this topic.
- Members were thanked for their contributions to the Committee over 2023/24.

RECOMMENDED – That the report, along with Members comments and the meeting schedule for the municipal year in Appendix 1 and provide feedback, be noted.

61 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RECOMMENDED – The date of the next meeting had not been determined at the time of the meeting.