

## Subject: Update on citywide engagement with the climate emergency

Date: 16 June 2021

Report of: the Chief Officer (Sustainable Energy and Air Quality)

Report to: Climate Emergency Advisory Committee

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

### What is this report about?

#### Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions

- The purpose of this report is to provide an update on work undertaken by the council and its partners to improve citywide engagement with issues relating to the climate emergency.
- The council currently engages tens of thousands of residents every month on climate related issues via a monthly newsletter and regular social media updates. Additionally, media regularly report on climate-related stories linked to the council's work—around 200 such stories have been published across various publications since the start of the new year.
- However, achieving the most ambitious decarbonisation will require widespread support of Leeds residents, businesses and governments at every level. Therefore, it is important that the council and partners continue working to promote actions that support the city's net-zero ambition and reach those not yet engaged. There are several key initiatives taking place to support this, outlined below.
- Leeds City Council is a supporting partner of Climate Action Leeds (CAL), a collaboration of local third sector groups working to mobilise communities, campaign groups and sector groups to plan and act together at both a community and citywide scale. Representatives from CAL will be in attendance to present an update.
- Following a year of discussions with the council, BBC Radio 5 Live launched its year-long 'City on a Mission' series on 25 May. The radio project will focus on Leeds' efforts to decarbonise. It will inform, entertain, and involve the station's 5.4 million weekly listeners in conversations around what moving to net zero could mean for their homes, work, travel, diet and leisure.
- Leeds Climate Commission has launched a new #LeedsActsTogether campaign that brings together stakeholders from across the city to encourage more organisations to share their climate commitments and inspire further action. Representatives from Leeds Climate Commission will be in attendance to present an update.
- Connecting Leeds has recently launched a new 'Walk it Ride it' campaign to encourage people to consider walking, cycling and eventually other green modes of travel for short attainable journeys. A council officer leading this work will be in attendance to present an update.

### Recommendations

- a) The Climate Emergency Advisory Committee is asked to note the contents of the report and presentation.

## Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 Achieving the most ambitious decarbonisation will require widespread support of Leeds residents, businesses and governments at every level. Therefore, it is important that the council and partners continue working to promote actions that support the city's net-zero ambition with those not yet regularly engaged.
- 2 The purpose of the report and presentation is to update members of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee on work being taken across the city to do this.

## What impact will this proposal have?

### Wards Affected:

Have ward members been consulted?       Yes       No

- 3 Communications and engagement will help inspire and involve more residents and organisations to take action to support the city's ambition to become a carbon neutral city.

## What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- 4 The Big Leeds Climate Conversation held in 2019 found widespread support for actions to tackle climate change, however when it came to individual action to reduce impact on the environment almost half of respondents indicated that they would like to do more but don't know where to start.
- 5 Additionally, "a large-scale communication drive through every possible means...with clear, positive and practical messages" was also a key recommendation requested by the Leeds Citizens' Jury.
- 6 Regular engagement with residents and other organisations already takes place. The council engages tens of thousands of residents every month on climate related issues via a monthly newsletter and regular social media updates. Additionally, media regularly report on climate-related stories linked to the council's work—around 200 such stories have been published across various publications since the start of the new year.
- 7 Members of the Sustainable Energy and Air Quality team will be presenting an update on the council's work to each community committee in the next cycle.

## What are the resource implications?

- 8 None. Work outlined in this report will be owned and managed by existing communications officers and/or externally funded partners.

## What are the legal implications?

- 9 None.

## What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 10 Failure to secure the support of the city could severely limit action necessary to achieve the council's ambitious net-zero target. This will be mitigated by continuously seeking to engage new audiences with the co-benefits of climate action and by leading by example.

- 11 The impact of communications/engagement work can be limited by the wider fiscal, regulatory and legislative context. This will be mitigated through work to influence policy internally and by engaging with national policy makers on the council's 'national asks'.

### **Does this proposal support the council's 3 Key Pillars?**

Inclusive Growth

Health and Wellbeing

Climate Emergency

- 12 Achieving the most ambitious citywide decarbonisation will require widespread support of Leeds residents, businesses and governments at every level. The work outlined in this report and presentation will promote actions that support the city's climate emergency ambition.
- 13 Many of these projects will also complement the 'inclusive growth' and 'health and wellbeing' strategic priorities, for example work to promote sustainable travel and green skills.

### **Options, timescales and measuring success**

#### **a) What other options were considered?**

14 Section not applicable.

#### **b) How will success be measured?**

15 Section not applicable.

#### **c) What is the timetable for implementation?**

16 Section not applicable.

### **Appendices**

17 None.

### **Background papers**

18 None.