

Climate Emergency Advisory Committee

Thursday, 22nd October, 2020

PRESENT: Councillor N Walshaw in the Chair

Councillors B Anderson, J Bentley,
N Buckley, P Carlill, A Forsaith,
A Garthwaite, J Illingworth, M Midgley,
L Mulherin, M Shahzad, P Wadsworth and
P Wray

24 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals.

25 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no exempt items.

26 Late Items

There were no late items.

27 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

28 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillor D Blackburn, and Councillor A Forsaith was in attendance as substitute.

29 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 September 2020 be approved as an accurate record.

30 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, the working group continued to focus on the Sustainable Food Systems item considered at the Committee meeting on 22 September 2020. It has been requested that further

reports and presentations be delivered to future meetings of the working group with specific focus on vertical farming, carbon storage within soil, linking with partners, and engaging the public with local food production. In addition, Cat Scott, an environmental scientist from the University of Leeds, attended the meeting and presented research findings on a recent study of carbon capture. Moving forward, the group intend to focus on the use of tree protection orders and consultation on the White Rose Forest Strategy.

- **Transport** – at the most recent meeting, the working group held in-depth discussions around the progress of the school streets programme and the active travel neighbourhoods that are proposed in the city. At the next meeting, members asked to explore in more detail specific geographical areas for future schemes.
- **Planning, Buildings and Energy** – at the next meeting, the working group are to consider domestic energy, following circulation of the planning white paper to members for comment.

31 Voltage Optimisation

The Head of Democratic Services submitted a report that introduced a presentation delivered by Mr Keith Jackson on his recent submission to OFGEM regarding voltage optimisation.

Mr Jackson delivered a presentation to Members that detailed the process and evidence for introducing Quality of Supply regulation within energy supply, following a trial in Boston Spa, to contribute to the net zero ambition across the city and provide a more affordable and reliable energy system for domestic customers.

Members discussed a number of matters, including:

- Members noted the success of the trial in Boston Spa, however sought clarity as to whether the model would be successful in areas that are not ‘break points’. Mr Jackson confirmed that the model has potential to
- In response to a query, Mr Jackson noted that there would be an initial cost of approximately £1m to install new software, which is currently being designed by the Northern Powergrid and will then be available to other energy providers at no cost, however this will generate savings for 4m Northern Powergrid customers initially, and subsequently 25m customers nationwide if rolled-out.

RESOLVED –

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted;
- b) That further discussions be scheduled for a future meeting of the Committee to determine lobbying action.

32 Improving Air Quality in the City

The Head of Democratic Services submitted a report that introduced an update from the Chief Officer (Sustainable Energy and Air Quality) on the implementation of the Clean Air Charging Zone (CAZ).

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor James Lewis, Executive Member for Resources
- Polly Cook, Chief Officer for Sustainable Energy and Air Quality

The Chief Officer delivered a PowerPoint presentation, highlighting that following a joint review with Government, the Council and the Government had jointly agreed that Leeds had achieved compliance with the Government's EU compliance (PCM) model and would remain compliant in the future, and consequently, the CAZ was no longer required. In addition, Members were advised that the Council will keep up to £5.57m of unspent funding to continue offering grants to help businesses switch to cleaner vehicles and to temporarily offer free licensing to taxi and private hire vehicles to incentivise their use in Leeds.

Members discussed a number of matters, including:

- In response to a query, Members were advised that the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy sets out that due to the current financial challenges, Council resources would no longer be used to replace external funding, and therefore, when the remaining £5.57m funding is used, the grant system will close. However, existing infrastructure will continue to be used where possible and in line with the Council's air quality obligation.
- Members recognised the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Taxi and Private Hire economy, and were supportive of the offer of temporary free licensing of vehicles as well as grants for new vehicles, and asked that the Council encourage other bordering West Yorkshire authorities to consider introducing similar incentives.
- In response to a query, Members were advised that the Council continue to work with Highways England in terms of monitoring roads and identifying non-compliance and agreed to look in further detail at specific cases outside of the meeting.
- Members queried whether renewable sources would be used to generate power for electric vehicle charging points across the city, and it was confirmed that all charging points use 100% green electricity.

Although not a disclosable pecuniary interest for the purposes of this Committee, which is not a decision making body, Councillor M Shahzad wished for it to be noted at this stage that he is a Taxi Licence Holder in Leeds.

RESOLVED –

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That an update from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority be scheduled for the next meeting to provide Members with detail of air quality measures taken across the region.

33 Open Forum

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

A video was submitted by Simon Campbell-Skelling regarding the West Yorkshire Pension Fund's investment in fossil fuels, which can be viewed [here](#).

The Chair noted that in addition to the video submission, a request for this matter to be considered in greater detail had been submitted from a Councillor. Therefore, the Chair proposed that an item be added to the agenda of the next meeting, to consider the West Yorkshire Pension Fund investment in carbon assets.

RESOLVED – That an item be scheduled for the January 2021 meeting to discuss the West Yorkshire Pension Fund investment in carbon assets in greater detail.

34 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Monday 18th January 2021 at 10 a.m.

The Chair also requested that an additional special meeting be arranged for December 2020 to consider the Committee's annual report to full Council in January 2021.