

**Climate Emergency Advisory Committee**

**16<sup>th</sup> of December 2024**

**Supplementary Information**

**Reports for:**

**Item 9 - Update on the Work of the Leeds,  
Yorkshire & Humber Climate Commissions**

**Item 10 - An Overview of the Current and  
Future Risks of Overheating in Leeds'  
Buildings and Public Spaces**

**Item 11 - Climate Emergency Advisory  
Committee Annual Reports**

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## Update on the work of the Leeds, Yorkshire & Humber Climate Commissions

Date: 16 December 2024

Report of: Chief Officer, Climate, Energy & Green Spaces

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

### Brief summary

This report is presented as an introduction to the update of the Director, Yorkshire & Humber Climate Commission and Research Fellow, Leeds Climate Commission which provides and update on the work of the Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission and Leeds Climate Commission. The Committee will also receive a presentation.

### Recommendations

- a) To note the contents of the Briefing Report and invite Members to comment and share views.

## **What is this report about?**

1. The Committee is requested to consider the attached Briefing Report on the work of the Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission and Leeds Climate Commission.
2. Rosa Foster, Director, Yorkshire & Humber Climate Commission and Amelia Duncan, Leeds Climate Commission Research Fellow, have been invited to attend the meeting to present on the Commissions' to Members. This paper provides context for that update and subsequent discussion.
3. We welcome the opportunity to explore with the CEAC what they see as their biggest priorities for integrated climate action across the city, and how the Commissions can work effectively with them.

## **Appendices**

- None

## **Background papers**

- [Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission - Climate Action Plan](#)

## An overview of the current and future risks of overheating in Leeds' buildings and public spaces

Date: 16 December 2024

Report of: Chief Officer, Climate, Energy & Green Spaces

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

### Brief summary

This report is presented as an introduction to the update of Prof. Jim Parker, Leeds Beckett University on the current and future risks of overheating in Leeds' buildings and public spaces, and what work can be done to mitigate and adapt.

### Recommendations

- a) To note the contents of the Briefing Report and invite Members to comment and share views.

### **What is this report about?**

1. The Committee is requested to consider information that will be presented during the meeting.
2. Prof. Jim Parker, Leeds Beckett University will present on this item, using a presentation to share current workings and future opportunities with the development of this work.
3. Opportunity to discuss the presented item will be welcomed, to develop this item and utilise resources accordingly.

### **Appendices**

- None

### **Background papers**

- None

## Climate Emergency Advisory Committee Annual Reports

Date: 16 December 2024

Report of: Chief Officer, Climate, Energy & Green Spaces

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

### Brief summary

This report is presented as an introduction to both the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee annual report and the Climate Emergency Annual report (presented to Executive Board in October 2024).

The reports provide an update on both the work being done through the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee and separately the work being done throughout the city to achieve our net-zero ambition.

### Recommendations

- a) To note the contents of reports and invite Members to comment and share views.

### What is this report about?

1. The Committee is requested to consider the reports associated with this item and the appendix.
2. Opportunity will be provided to members to feedback and comment on both reports.

### Appendices

- Appendix 1 – CEAC Main Committee - Open Forum submissions

### Background papers

- None

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# Climate Emergency Annual Report

Date: 16<sup>th</sup> October 2024

Report of: Director of Communities, Housing and Environment

Report to: Executive Board

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

## Brief summary

- In 2019 the council declared a climate emergency and this report provides the annual update against this target at both a council and city level. It also updates and reflects on wider changes relevant to the city's decarbonisation that have happened both regionally and nationally.
- Zero carbon is one of the three pillars of our Best City Ambition as we aim to become the first net zero city in the UK, rapidly reducing carbon emissions and reversing the decline in biodiversity, while supporting people to make more sustainable choices which can improve their standard of living. Our zero carbon work is also grounded in our Team Leeds approach with a range of partners involved, including all council directorates, a number of organisations from the Leeds Inclusive Anchors Network, the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, government departments, the LGA as well as specialist advisors. Overall, the council and partners have delivered climate action related schemes worth more than half a billion pounds in recent years, helping to create and support many hundreds of local jobs.
- In November 2023 Leeds City Council was recognised as one of 119 city authorities across the world leading the way on climate action as part of a list published by renowned international authority, the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP). It joined the likes of New York, Paris, Melbourne, Tokyo, Rio de Janeiro, and Cape Town on the organisation's annual 'A List' for the second consecutive year. Of more than 900 global cities that received a rating in 2023, only 13% received an 'A' grade. Leeds was among those cities being celebrated for showing that urgent and impactful climate action—from ambitious emissions reduction targets to building resilience against climate change—is achievable at a global level. However, this action will need to go further and faster in future years for Leeds to retain this 'A' grade.
- Leeds' contribution to climate change (the district's annual greenhouse gas emissions) have decreased by 38% since 2005, from 6.3 to 3.9 million tonnes of carbon. The council's own carbon footprint has shrunk by nearly two-thirds (63%) over a similar period.

- The council set out plans to invest £100 million improving the energy efficiency of its homes in 2021. The programme is beyond its halfway milestone and more than £60 million of projects have now completed, benefiting thousands of residents with healthier, more comfortable homes that are cheaper to keep warm.
- In the wider built environment, many other public sector partners have connected to our £62 million low carbon district heating network, which continues to expand rapidly. Similar to the council, other large organisational emitters in the city are also taking significant actions to reduce their own impact on the environment—supporting the city’s journey to become the UK’s first net zero city.

## Recommendations

The Executive Board is requested to approve the following recommendations:

- a) acknowledge the progress being made in our ambition to be the first net-zero city in the UK.

### What is this report about?

- 1 Our climate has changed already and the impacts of this are already being felt locally, nationally and globally. The climate will continue to change until global net zero is reached—meaning that the greenhouse gas emissions of every territory are either reduced or removed from the atmosphere by natural or human-made means. The planet is already 1.2 degrees Celsius warmer on average than in pre-industrial times as a result of human-caused climate change, according to the EU’s Copernicus Climate Change Service.
- 2 2023 was the second warmest year on record for the UK, according to Met Office figures with the top ten warmest years on record having each occurred since 2003. Eight of the twelve months of the year were warmer than average for the UK, with the hottest June on record and the joint hottest September. Globally, 2023 was the warmest on record, with carbon dioxide concentrations at their highest in the atmosphere for two million years. Close to 50% of days were more than 1.5c warmer than the 1850 – 1900 level, and two days in November were, for the first time, more than 2c warmer.
- 3 The UK also experienced 11% more rain than average falling, with England experiencing its sixth wettest on record (based upon records from 1836) with approximately 20% more rainfall than average.
- 4 The impact of these climate changes is noticeably showing in Leeds. From June 2023 to June 2024, the west and northwest of Leeds has been considerably wetter than the remainder of the city. Overall, for Leeds, eleven of these months during this period exceeded the average rainfall for the month.
- 5 6<sup>th</sup> May 2024 saw a series of flash flooding throughout areas of Leeds, particularly in the northwest areas, including Horsforth and Cookridge, due to the sudden onset of heavy precipitation and thunderstorms in the isolated area. During this storm, the expected rainfall for the entirety of May fell in a single hour.

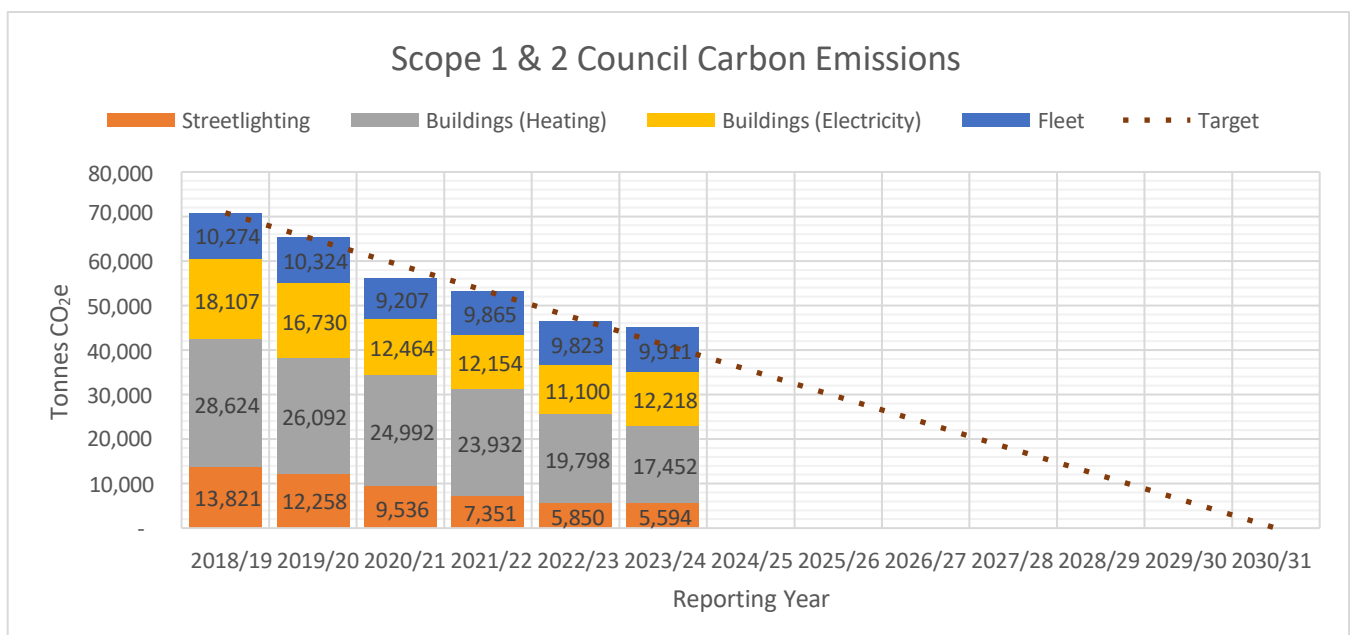
## 6 National and Regional Context

- 7 The council can take a wide range of actions to achieve net zero operations as an organisation and as a local authority can contribute significantly to the city’s progress towards its net zero target. Nevertheless, neither the council nor the city exists independently of national policy. The transition from natural gas, the shift to a net zero electricity grid, and the removal of fossil fuels from transport are three profound changes to which the council can contribute but where the principal levers lay at a national level.
- 8 With regards to scope 3 emissions, pertaining to those associated with consumption of goods and services, again the council can make some inroads but issues which determine the degree to which the citizens of Leeds are dependent on imported goods produced and transported with carbon are bound up with national industrial strategy and trade policy. New policies, such as the extended producer responsibility that is due to be introduced next year, will help to reduce scope 3 emissions by making producers responsible for what happens to their end products and drive systematic change.
- 9 The council can play two roles with regard to impacting on the national agenda. First, the council can and has been acting as a pathfinder for low carbon and zero carbon development. A constructive engagement with government is helping to develop district heating as a viable alternative and pioneering retrofit in multi storey buildings, as two examples. This engagement will help the city achieve reductions in carbon faster but also help prove the case for its implementation at a national level. Secondly, the council can engage national policymakers, communicate the local challenges and opportunities of net zero, and work with them—and with other partners including the LGA, UK100, Core Cities, and other authorities—to address barriers and ultimately improve national policy.

## Council Emissions - Overview

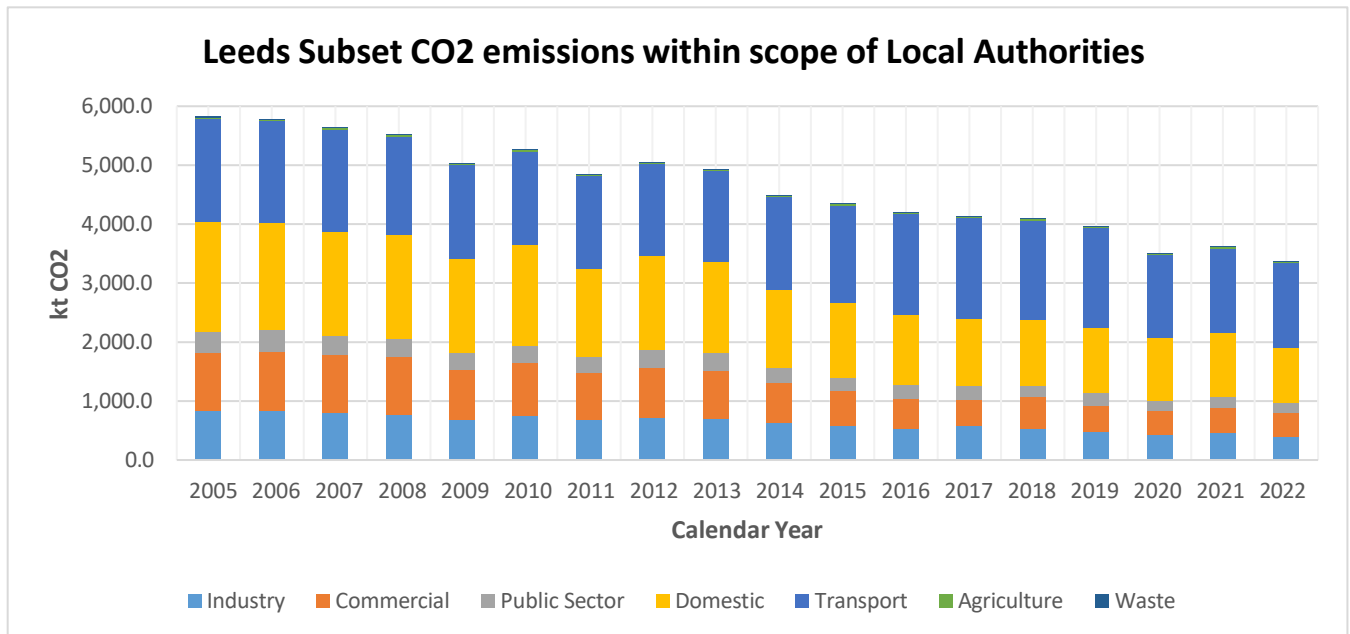
- 10 The chart below illustrates how our actions to date correspond to the trajectory required to achieve our net zero ambition. Although there has been a slight increase in emissions over the last year, relating to both Buildings (Electricity) and Fleet, the council is still on track, noting that the range of measures being implemented by the council as summarised in the sections below will need to be supported by major national policy, infrastructure and funding measures if this rate of progress is to be maintained.

11



## City Emissions - Overview

12 The chart below documents the overview of the city emissions across five categories; industry, commercial, public sector, domestic, agriculture and waste



13 As well as looking at scope 1 and 2 emissions, the council is committed to looking at how it can reduce its scope 3 emissions<sup>1</sup>. With an annual external spend of almost one billion pounds, there is significant potential to use our buying power to reduce wider emissions associated with council services. Measuring scope 3 emissions accurately is very challenging and labour intensive. However, we have started to capture more accurate data for some of our spend categories as shown in the table below and this will enable us to monitor specific areas and develop action plans to reduce scope 3 emissions.

14 The latest Scope 3 data can be seen below.

	Tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e 2019/20		Tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e 2020/21		Tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e 2021/22	Tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e 2022/23	Tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e 2023/24
Grey Fleet (car mileage claims)	1,246		587		858	970	953
Business Travel (other)	199		24		56	102	103
Water	229		158		156	245	203
	Tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e 2019/20 <sup>5</sup>	Food weight (Tonnes)	Tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e 2020/21 <sup>5</sup>	Food weight (Tonnes)	Not calculated		
Food total	7,535	2,494	4,990	2,138			

<sup>1</sup> Scope 1 emissions are direct emissions from sources owned or controlled by Leeds City Council and Scope 2 emissions are indirect emissions from purchased electricity, steam, heat, and cooling. Scope 3 emissions are those emissions that the organisation is indirectly responsible for from buying products or services from its supplier or mileage completed by employees in their own vehicles.

## Secure, cost effective, clean energy for all

15 The table below illustrates the progressive year-on-year reductions in gas and electricity consumption since the declaration of the Climate Emergency in March 2019 and the associated carbon emission reductions.

LCC billed energy consumption				
	Gas (kWh)	Elec (kWh)	Total kg CO2e	% CO2e reduction (compared to 18/19)
2018/19	155,185,026	123,951,177	62,626,120	0%
2019/20	150,975,376	128,138,426	59,688,728	5%
2020/21	147,653,416	106,961,797	51,431,690	18%
2021/22	140,519,929	104,264,513	47,309,569	24%
2022/23	116,845,656	95,243,427	40,128,294	36%
2023/24	103,503,408	94,341,543	38,467,682	39%

16 Action and progress since the last annual update can be summarised under the following key areas:

17 **Reducing energy consumption** – the council has continued its work to ‘right size’ the corporate estate in response to new ways of working and changes to models of service delivery, as well as ongoing work to raise awareness amongst building managers, staff and service users of the impacts of energy usage, and the improved use of data to understand where further energy savings can be achieved through better energy management.

18 **Improving energy efficiency** – the programme of work to secure grant funding and deliver energy efficiency, low carbon heating and renewables generation measures across the corporate estate and schools has continued. Schemes include the installation of heat pumps, building energy management systems, insulation, LED lighting, solar PV and a range of other energy efficiency measures. Work has also been undertaken to review how the crematoria can be made more energy efficient and reduce gas use by adopting common operational practise used by other local authorities whilst ensuring that the Council continues to respect the guidelines set out by the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management. In addition to this, the wholesale conversion of the city’s street lighting to LED has progressed rapidly, providing substantial reductions in electricity consumption.

19 One of the council’s main users of energy is streetlighting, accounting for around 30% of electricity consumption. As noted above, a four-year programme to transfer the city’s streetlighting to run on LEDs by October 2023 has now completed. In 2018/19 our carbon level was 14,857 tonnes, this has reduced by 2022/23 to 5,854 tonnes.

20 The current Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) Phase 3b programme has delivered carbon reduction measures at eight schools and four corporate sites with a further school and four corporate sites to be delivered in the next six months. Once complete the scheme will have decarbonised the heating supplies of 17 corporate and school buildings through the installation air source heat pumps, upgraded building management systems and

solar PV. Key projects have included Pudsey Leisure Centre and Morley Town Hall as well as Armley Mills and Temple Newsam House and Courtyard.

- 21 Work is already underway at sites for PSDS3c with a further six sites to be delivered in 2024/5, and two in 2025/6. A key project being the full decarbonisation of Torre Road Depot one of the city's largest carbon producing buildings. The use of buildings will change over time as service requirements develop and evolve. This may present opportunities for buildings to be used for different purposes which may necessitate more comprehensive refurbishment schemes being brought forward to remodel the building and address backlog maintenance requirements. In these situations, the council will take the opportunity to explore the potential to further improve the energy efficiency and performance of the building through implementation of a range of retrofit measures.
- 22 The council's fleet of electric vehicles is currently 380, believed to be the largest zero emission fleet of any local authority in the country. There are currently 121 depot charging points and 117 charge points at employee homes and work has been completed to future proof both the new Waste and Seacroft Ring Road depots to enable additional charge points to be installed when required, including provision of high-speed charging to support electrification of refuse collection vehicles. As part of a wider, broad ranging fleet review there remains ambitions to continue the transition of vehicles to alternative fuel to support Net Zero goals. The key barriers to delivery of this change remain the lack of availability of suitable zero emission vehicles, as well as the cost of the vehicles when they are available with the additional need to develop the required fuelling infrastructure to support them. This is a particular challenge for vehicles in specialist and heavier categories. The government, whilst planning to end the sale of conventional engine cars and vans in 2030, has now set a later date of 2035 and 2040 for HGV's (depending on size) which means that the market in heavier vehicles is some way behind and the horizon for price parity will also be later for HGVs than for cars and vans.
- 23 The council has ordered two electric refuse collection vehicles, with these in production and being prepared for delivery. These will replace outgoing diesel vehicles in the refuse fleet. The council continues to develop a fleet replacement strategy that best aligns decarbonisation and air quality priorities with service need as well as considering budget pressures. The long-term aim is to identify dates for when vehicles will be available in alternative fuel models but also when there will be better price parity (considering the potential revenue savings associated with alternative fuel vehicles). However, in the short term the focus of the cross-council vehicle review is to right size the fleet, ensuring that utilisation of vehicles is optimised, helping to potentially reduce our scope 3 emissions related to fleet purchase or hire.

### **Warm, affordable, low carbon homes**

- 24 The council has made good progress improving home energy efficiency, and it is optimistic following the new government's latest announcement that this will be accelerated further in the coming months.
- 25 Home Upgrade Grant 2 has proved to be an incredibly challenging scheme to deliver not just for Leeds, but for all authorities. Our original target was to improve the energy efficiency of 750 homes through installation of both insulation and low carbon heating, however we have reduced the target to 287 homes.
- 26 There are multiple reasons for this including:

- Low uptake by potential eligible applicants who, living in off-gas homes, are pepper-potted around the city, which makes it challenging to meet the grant criteria

- Delays in the provision of requisite off-gas data, which has only been received by the council in July, coming very late in the programme
- Low numbers of completed properties due to the complexity of installation of multiple measures in homes.
- The complex process of pipelining properties that require individual sign off by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) for each case

The council hopes to achieve the reduced target of 287 homes across the city with an approximate grant of £6.08m and is working hard towards delivering these homes. New properties can only be processed to the end of December 2024, which means there is limited time in which to use the off-gas data we now hold in order to drive sufficient take up. The final three months of the scheme will be to complete the agreed installations, with the scheme ending on the 31st March 2025.

- 27 Private Sector Housing, Housing Leeds and Leeds City Council's Climate, Energy and Green Spaces Team are working to bring energy efficiency improvements to a hundred back to back homes in the Cedars area of Armley.
- 28 The works, costing £4.4 million will be funded by West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Housing Leeds and central government grant funding, and will include the installation of external wall and attic room insulation in a mixture of council and private sector homes, alongside repairs and improvements to the local environment. A feasibility study is also being undertaken to assess the practicality of installing low carbon heating in the homes as part of a potential future phase of the scheme.

## **Decarbonised organisations, good green jobs and a skilled workforce**

- 29 2023 was another successful year of growth for the Leeds PIPES District Heating Network (DHN), with works ongoing across the city to connect new customers and extend the main spine network.
- 30 Almost 2,000 residential properties, including the Leonardo and Thoresby development, have now been connected, along with Leeds Civic Hall, Leeds Town Hall, Leeds Museum and Leeds Art Gallery and Central Library along with St George House. Key public sector stakeholders are also connected to the network including Leeds Beckett University, St James' Hospital, Quarry House and the Leeds Combined Court Centre.
- 31 Leeds Conservatoire (formerly Leeds College of Music) has become the fifteenth customer to have signed a contract to connect, with a total of 53 buildings now taking heat and/or hot water from the network, including 25 multi-storey flats and 28 across public and private sector buildings.
- 32 In the financial year 2023/24 the network of insulated underground pipes supplied 29,000 megawatt-hours of heating and helped reduce the city's carbon footprint by 5,945 tonnes of carbon.
- 33 Delivered in partnership with Vital Energi, it has also helped employ more than 430 people in the local low carbon economy including 36 apprentices.
- 34 The majority of connections to the network so far have been public sector customers, but we anticipate that the next phase will primarily connect commercial non-domestic customers. This

will raise the profile of the network and prove the viability and benefits of DHN connections for commercial customers.

- 35 On Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> September, Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission (YHCC) published their updated Climate Plan, following their original plan in 2021. The update is the result of three years of work, plus knowledge and feedback from commission members, events and workshops. The updated plan consisting of seven objectives, which provide the challenges and opportunities to ensure that the entire region is on the right path of climate action. Both the YHCC and the Leeds Climate Commission enable great cross sector collaboration focused on rapid emissions reduction, adaptation and improving nature.
- 36 Community Climate Grants is a programme funded by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA), directing £2 million to third sector community projects that cut carbon and reduce deprivation and inequality. £596,000 was allocated to 23 projects across the city. All projects are scheduled for completion by December 2024. Projects funded through the scheme had to focus on at least one of four priority areas: renewable energy, decarbonising buildings, enhancing nature, or promoting sustainable travel, while also addressing deprivation or inequality.
- 37 Some project examples are flagged below:
- 38 Friends of Gledhow Valley Woods
- a) Activities - Creation of a wetland area in Gledhow Valley Woods, removal of invasive species and learning and engagement activities with schools in adjacent areas.
- 39 Mafwa Theatre
- a) Activities - Deliver 30 gardening sessions with asylum seekers and longer-term residents in Lincoln Green. Create raised beds and vegetable starter beds for residents to establish micro plots. Deliver public events in the space to engage with wider community.
- 40 LS14 Trust
- a) Activities - Renovation of Killingbeck Community Orchard and under-used community allotments, delivery of fortnightly energy efficient cooking classes. Behaviour change work with local families to reduce home energy and travel emissions and cut household bills
- 41 Otley 2030
- a) Activities - Installation of solar panels and creation of a community garden on Weston Lane Football and Social Clubs. Community engagement and workshops on climate change, social justice and nature recovery
- 42 St Gemma's Hospice
- a) Activities - Installation of zonal valves to control heating in the hospice and lower temperatures in areas patients aren't being treated
- 43 Canopy
- a) Activities - Deep retrofit to four Victorian properties focusing on insulation and building fabric, using sustainable materials like wood-fibre and hemp-based insulation
- 44 Adapting and mitigating climate change also brings with it the opportunity to create new, green jobs, as well as developing existing roles to ensure people have the relevant skills needed to complete their job in the future. Examples of this include gas engineers moving from the installation of gas networks to ground source heat pumps.



45 Facilitate easy access to green skills, job information/opportunities, career pathways and to enable young people and adults to make informed choices. Develop targeted green skills, employability and innovation initiatives to support those furthest from the labour market, the economically inactive and those in low-paid or insecure work to develop skills required to access further learning and employment within low carbon growth sectors. There is also help to support the delivery of transition for those currently in jobs at high risk of not upskilling.

### **Reliable, affordable, integrated and zero emission transport**

46 The Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy has decarbonisation as one of its central pillars, in line with the council's own priorities. The strategy states: "Our vision for Leeds is to be a city where you don't need a car. Where everyone has an affordable and accessible zero carbon choice in how they travel. We want to Connect Leeds, Connect Communities, and Connect Businesses together in the most sustainable ways".

47 The electric charge infrastructure in the city has continue to grow in line with the increased prevalence of plug-in vehicles in the city. From 129 public charge points in the city in October 2021, there are now 548 public chargers, of which 114 are rapid or faster, as of October 2023 (according to Commons Library data), with the number continuing to increase.

48 A regional strategy to deliver infrastructure is being developed between WYCA and the five local authorities. As well as exploring bus franchising, mass transit is at the heart of the plans with an initial two lines under consideration with phase one planned to begin construction in 2028 and begin operation by the early 2030s.

### **Climate resilient and nature rich region**

49 Climate adaptation is broadly defined as referring to any activity that minimises the impact of current, expected, and potential climate change and its effects. Climate change poses a threat to lives, livelihoods and the local environment. Climate related risks will continue to increase, even if the global commitments of the Paris Agreement succeed in limiting warming to well below 2°C, until global net zero carbon emissions are achieved. The UK is already experiencing changes to its weather with a climate already 1.1°C warmer than pre-industrial levels.

50 Climate-related hazards that Leeds is increasingly likely to experience can be grouped into four themes: extreme and prolonged **heat, flooding, drought, and cascading impacts** resulting from climate impacts elsewhere. In 2022, Leeds experienced the effects of several of these hazards first-hand. In July, heatwaves through the UK saw Leeds' highest recorded temperature. This was a weather event which directly impacted the way many council services had to operate.

51 Since the council wide workshop in 2022, officers within Climate, Energy and Green Spaces continue to support and encourage services in the council to develop their own service-led action plans to take long-term actions that mitigate the risks from climate change. Services will be encouraged to consider three different types of adaptation actions (the "three P's" framework):

- Actions that **prevent** some hazards from occurring
- Actions that **protect** the city from harm and damage, by reducing exposure to a hazard
- Actions that **prepare** for an effective response to mitigate the harm and damage caused by a hazard by reducing the vulnerability of the people and places exposed.

52 The council is clear that this work is complementary of, not instead of, the council's commitment to working towards becoming a net zero carbon city as quickly as possible. Becoming a net zero city (climate change mitigation) and preparing for the predicted impacts of climate change (climate

change adaptation) are considered equally important strategic goals of the council's climate action work.

- 53 The council's Woodland Creation Scheme is continuing to expand the city's canopy cover every year. The planting objective is to capture and store carbon to contribute to the net zero ambitions. As well as planting, the Woodland Creation Scheme continues to include a successful tree seed collection campaign run in schools and other council facilities and an educational pack for schools.
- 54 In collaboration with Butterfly Conservation Society, Leeds City Council have established two large wildflower areas in Roundhay Park using seed sourced through Natural England in order to provide areas of managed habitat for native butterflies and other invertebrates which links to the conservation work undertaken at Tropical World.
- 55 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) refers to a relatively new planning regulation (it became mandatory in February 2024) that means all developments must leave biodiversity better off than before the development took place by creating or improving natural habitats and maintaining them for 30 years. If developers are unable to deliver BNG on the development site, they will have to deliver it 'off-site' and this provides an opportunity for Leeds City Council to implement externally-funded improvements to public green spaces across the city.
- 56 The Leeds City Council Planning team are encouraging developers to deliver off-site BNG locally, and the Climate, Energy and Green Spaces service are working to facilitate that on the land the council manages. Other services, including Flood Risk Management, are also looking into the potential of BNG to improve habitats they are responsible for (such as water courses). This year, following consultation with ward members and local residents, the first BNG schemes funded by developers will be implemented on our green spaces focusing on grassland and woodland improvements at sites in Armley, Gipton and Harehills, Roundhay and Killingbeck and Seacroft wards. These schemes, which are being undertaken on sites we are currently unable to maintain as efficiently as we would like due to reduced resources, will make the habitats better for local wildlife. Information signs will be installed to explain the reasons for the work to the public.

### **What impact will this proposal have?**

- 57 This plan covers a wide range of both policy and projects, all of which are designed to reduce the carbon emissions of the city and work towards our ambition to be the first net-zero city in the UK. Ward members are routinely consulted on projects and initiatives taking place in their ward area.

### **How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?**

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 58 In summary, responding to climate change is central to the overall vision for the future of Leeds as set out in the Best City Ambition.
- 59 The council intends to achieve net zero and adapt to climate change in a fair way that improves standards of living in all the city's communities and is supportive of our economy. Reducing poverty and improving the health and wellbeing of residents is also key to reducing vulnerability of climate-related hazards.

- 60 Although this report primarily focuses on the council's approach to the climate emergency, much of the work undertaken provides multiple co-benefits. The council and partners have delivered climate action related schemes worth more than half a billion pounds in recent years, helping to create and support many hundreds of local jobs.
- 61 This work also supports the city's health and wellbeing priority. We will reduce fuel poverty and cold-related illness by making our buildings more energy efficient; enable physical activity and public safety by improving our transport infrastructure; promote healthier and lower carbon diets; increase life expectancy by transitioning to cleaner energy, heating and transport; and improve access to green spaces which are proven to have clear benefits to both mental and physical wellbeing.
- 62 Further detail about the specific impacts on health and wellbeing and inclusive growth of our climate action are highlighted in previous reports focused on particular policies or programmes

### What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:		
Have ward members been consulted?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

- 63 This plan covers a wide range of both policy and projects, all of which are designed to reduce the carbon emissions of the city and work towards our ambition to be the first net-zero city in the UK. Ward members are routinely consulted on projects and initiatives taking place in their ward area.
- 64 The council recognises that changes required to transition the city towards a net zero economy will not be possible without widespread public support and behaviour changes from residents and organisations alike. The council's public communications and engagement has three fundamental roles: enabling the successful delivery of projects, explaining climate policy, and engaging the public on the changes that they can take, whether individual or organisational, to help accelerate climate action.
- 65 The council has used a number of 'owned' channels to provide updates and engage residents, including both general channels with a broad audience and climate-specific channels.
- 66 The Climate Emergency Advisory Committee (CEAC) is a cross party advisory committee authorised to consider and make recommendations regarding climate change, progression towards net-zero and sustainability. The main committee has continued to host open forum, allowing members of the public to present on issues that they wish the committee to consider via video link, via pre-recorded video, or submitted text. This is considered an important aspect as it provides an opportunity for public engagement. The CEAC Working Groups allow elected members to explore issues in more depth, often hearing from external speakers as well as officers from across the council. These are beneficial in providing a forum to scrutinise the progress against a number of key themes and supporting the development of policy and allows opportunity to input collectively into local and national consultation responses.

### What are the resource implications?

- 67 In terms of energy strategy, particularly in light of current energy prices and the expected increasing costs of fossil-fuel based energy generation, the proposed measures to reduce energy consumption, improve energy efficiency and increase the level of energy consumed from renewables or low-carbon sources will all serve to minimise the cost impacts to the council and the housing schemes will support the council's fuel poverty work.
- 68 Grant funding will continue to be sought from government in support of the ongoing expansion of decarbonisation measures across the council's buildings, the city's housing stock and transport infrastructure.

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

- 69 The council must be clear in communicating with the public what the climate risks are to the city and how they are addressing these. In doing so, this ensures that the Council's reputational risk remains intact, and the public does not lose trust and confidence in the work the council is doing. This report indicates the progress we are making towards our climate ambition and is transparent with the challenges that are faced throughout varying projects.
- 70 Climate Change is listed on Leeds City Council's [Corporate Risk Register](#), with multiple controls in place to manage this risk, and actions in place to manage the risk.
- 71 As many of the barriers to change sit outside of the direct control of the council, it is key that managing these risks involves working closely with national government and to highlight the challenges that will prevent the city reaching net zero. The council will continue to highlight the key barriers to progress, working with partners such as LGA, UK100, core cities as well as with local authorities at a regional level.

### **What are the legal implications?**

- 72 No specific legal implications.

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

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

- 73 As this report provides a general update on progress this section is not relevant.

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

- 74 Success will be measured by the reduction in carbon emissions at both a council level but also at a city level.

## **What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?**

75 This report provides an update on general progress rather than details on specific actions.

### **Appendices**

76 This report provides an update on general progress rather than details on specific actions.

### **Background papers**

77 None

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# Climate Emergency Advisory Committee Annual Report

Date: 16 December 2024

Report of: Chief Officer Climate, Energy and Green Spaces

Report to: Full Council

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

## Summary:

- The Climate Emergency Advisory Committee (CEAC) was introduced following the declaration of the Climate Emergency in March 2019. It is a cross party advisory Committee authorised to consider and make recommendations regarding climate change and sustainability.
- This report provides an annual update on the work of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee and its working groups/workshops. The last report was published in January 2024. This report does **not** provide an update on all climate work undertaken by the council – this was covered in the annual report taken to Executive Board in October 2024 and can be located here
- The main Committee has continued to host open forum, allowing members of the public to present on issues that they wish the Committee to consider either in person, via video link, via pre-recorded video, or submitted text. This is considered an important aspect as it provides an opportunity for public engagement.
- Climate Adaptation is integrated throughout the work of CEAC, with speakers at each main Committee meeting providing information as to how it is featuring amongst their work.
- The development of a forward plan at the start of each municipal cycle allows opportunity to curate the agendas to ensure all areas of climate related work are covered and those with the expertise on subjects can be invited at the earliest opportunity.
- Climate Emergency Advisory Committee working groups allow elected members to explore issues in more depth, often hearing from external speakers as well as officers from across the council. The working groups provide a number of key benefits:

- Supporting members to be well briefed on climate related areas, improving climate understanding and enabling them to engage in climate-related discussions in a more meaningful way with stakeholders including residents;
  - Providing a forum for 'check and challenge' of progress against a number of key themes as well as supporting the development of policy;
  - Developing cross-party national asks on key climate related issues;
  - Input collectively into local and national consultation responses
- The four Committee working groups continued until the end of the 2023/24 municipal year remaining as:
  - Food, Biodiversity and Waste working group
  - Infrastructure, Energy and Buildings working group
  - Community and Business Engagement working group
  - Economy and Finance working group
- While the CEAC Main Committee is designed to receive and comment on updates on work that has taken place in addressing climate change, the working groups are designed for constructive feedback on developing policies and plans still under development.

For the 2024/25 municipal year it was decided to change the 'working groups' to 'workshops', leaving these broad and not under the previous four headings. This decision was taken to allow topics to be discussed in a timely manner, which was important for any subject that is time sensitive. The previous format meant it could be between six and eight weeks for a particular working group to meet, delaying any discussion about a specific topic. These workshops, similar to the working groups, are open for all councillors to attend, not just those who are part of the CEAC main committee membership.

## **1. CEAC Main Committee**

- 1.1.1 Now in its sixth year of operation, although the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee has maintained a hybrid structure, with meetings taking place both virtually and in person, main committee meetings where possible are held in person. The meeting continues to be broadcast via YouTube, allowing opportunity for the community to access the meeting, both live and to the recording at a later date.
- 1.1.2 As mentioned earlier in the report, members of the public continue to be invited to speak at open forum. Those who have spoken in this municipal year are listed within Appendix 1, alongside the responses they have received.
- 1.1.3 Over the course of 2024, the main Committee has met a total of eight times.
- 1.1.4 Each of the council's directors received an invitation to attend a main committee meeting on a rolling basis to provide an overview of how their directorate is supporting the city's response to the climate emergency. This ensures that the committee has insight into a wide spectrum of work and will help identify areas to explore in more depth as part of next year's work programme. This provides opportunity for the Committee to feedback into key strategies and workstreams that departments are undertaking and challenge officers in the work that they are



delivering. Each director is asked to include a focus on specific areas including procurement and adaptation.

- 1.1.5 In November 2023, Leeds City Council was awarded an 'A' grade for a consecutive year and recognised as one of 119 city authorities across the world leading the way on climate action in a new list published by renowned international authority, the Carbon Disclosure Project.
- 1.1.6 The 2024 submission to CDP has been made, however officers will not receive results until early 2025, due to a change in submission deadlines. This will be reported back to CEAC once received.
- 1.1.7 Throughout the year the Committee has used the feedback from the 2023 CDP result to shape the agendas throughout 2024, ensuring that where required, higher levels of focus were on areas to improve, ahead of the 2024 submission
- 1.1.8 A summary of the key themes that were discussed at the main Committee this year is included below.

## 1.2 The development of policy related to the city's climate emergency response

- 1.2.1 One of the first topics of the year was an update on **Mass Transit** provided by West Yorkshire Combined Authority, in response to the latest information regarding the Mass Transit Programme and its next stages
- 1.2.2 Following on from a previous update, detailed information was shared on the intended changes to the transport network and what this would mean for Leeds, its stakeholders and residents.
- 1.2.3 It was noted that West Yorkshire, although a great place to live and work, the poor connectivity between areas limits opportunities and applied to both urban and rural settings.
- 1.2.4 The aim of the development of the network was to provide affordable and efficient transport, allow behavioural changes by improving walking and cycling infrastructure.
- 1.2.5 Key areas of discussion focused on the importance of the balance between prioritising areas with low car ownership and areas with high car ownership as well as being inclusive to the entire city, particularly conscious of those in outer city locations.
- 1.2.6 Members asked WYCA to return to a future committee meeting to provide further updates.
- 1.2.7 Similar to this, an update was brought to the committee on the **Connecting Leeds Strategy**, providing an update following the latest Executive Board report in late 2023.
- 1.2.8 Members welcomed the data for active travel and public transport use that stated during peak commuter hours was overall positive with a long term trend for uptake in sustainable travel options and a 10.9% reduction in car use over 2022 to 2023. This

had a particular ask in previous years, what data was available to monitor progression.

- 1.2.9 The update was seen as positive and provided plenty of opportunity to provide feedback from members who felt the more transparent these updates were including data would be helpful in understanding what challenges are still present.
- 1.2.10 Supporting the net zero ambition is the work being done through ***Nature and Tree-planting initiatives through Leeds*** which has presented, similar to other areas, celebrations and challenges while understanding the needs of the community.
- 1.2.11 In addition to tree-planting initiatives, an update was provided on biodiversity net gain as well as on practical initiatives such as the establishment of wildflower areas in collaboration with Butterfly Conservation in Roundhay Park, which is providing managed habitats for native butterflies and other invertebrates which links to the conservation work undertaken at Tropical World.
- 1.2.12 An update was brought to the main Committee on the development of the ***Leeds Food Strategy*** ahead of its next report to Executive Board.
- 1.2.13 The committee were updated on the key areas of progress and challenges that and received an overview of the three missions;
  - Health and Wellbeing
  - Food Security and Economy
  - Sustainability and Resilience, which linked to the Council's three pillars.
- 1.2.14 Senior Officers attended to update on the ***Leeds Household Waste and Recycling Collection Strategy Update*** following the introduction of glass collection within green bins as of 1st August 2024. 7000 tonnes of glass had been collected in August, with 80% suitable for remelting, this was above the current national target of 72%.
- 1.2.15 A wider update was provided on government policy surrounding food waste collections, and the proposed changes to the method of recycling. Officers confirmed that Leeds were in a good position currently and prepared for any changes that may come from national policy.
- 1.2.16 Members welcomed an update on the future work of the strategy, to include exploring options for food waste processes, with agreement from the Executive Board. Members were also keen to add the committee's support for the food waste proposals.
- 1.3 The implementation and delivery of projects or initiatives related to the city's climate emergency response
  - 1.3.1 Colleagues from Climate, Energy and Green Spaces attended meetings throughout the year to update the Committee on the substantial work being done to decarbonise infrastructure throughout the city and to explain the support being delivered to

residents to make their home more efficient; helping the net zero ambition for the city and their own wellbeing.

- 1.3.2 An update was provided by senior officers on **Heat Network Zoning** and the implications for the city. It was confirmed this was a national policy with implementation due in 2025 following consultation.
- 1.3.3 The policy mandated that larger buildings and new developments were connected to district heating, with Local Authorities becoming Zoning Coordinators. Members and officers raised concerns and discussed the challenges the local authority may face with this additional responsibility.
- 1.3.4 Updates were also received for ongoing work to address air quality throughout the city and the current position on Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure throughout the city. It was noted that a switch to identifying indoor air pollution was more of a focus moving ahead with this work.
- 1.3.5 The limited time frame in which to obtain and then use grant funding was used as an example as this is an additional strain to stretched resource capacity. Another example, not exclusive to just this area of work, was how external impacts, such as utility company capacity, can also delay projects.
- 1.3.6 The Committee welcomed an update on **Flood Risk Management** in July. Senior officers provided an update on the implementation of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, particularly the latest updates in relation to the Flood Alleviation Scheme Phase 2
- 1.3.7 Members noted particular interest in the Aire Resilience Company being the focus of a future workshop discussion.
- 1.4 Engaging residents and stakeholders to shape and accelerate the city's climate emergency response
  - 1.4.1 Throughout the course of the year communications and engagement has been a prominent feature of the main committee and the working groups/workshops, and its importance is key in addressing the net-zero ambition of the city
  - 1.4.2 With the limited resource available within the Climate, Energy and Green Spaces team, the work to achieve the Council's net zero ambition has to continue to be a collaborative effort throughout the departments within the Council and as a wider city.
  - 1.4.3 Key examples of excellent decarbonisation work were brought to the committee in November, throughout the Leeds Anchors Network – with representation from Leeds Teaching Hospitals and University of Leeds to present the work they are undertaking to address the net-zero ambition.
  - 1.4.4 Climate Action Leeds (CAL) provided an update on how they were working for a zero carbon, nature friendly, socially- just Leeds, through different workstreams and collaborations. The committee endorsed the work the different climate action groups

are doing citywide and agreed to explore the Leeds doughnut economics and climate education in future workshops.

- 1.4.5 The Committee noted that a lot of good work is being done to support climate adaptation and feedback from the Committee was that the public's awareness of this work could be improved – if they were, this could open more opportunities for engagement.
- 1.4.6 Providing cross-cutting messaging that allowed communities to understand the benefits undergoing improvements to their property remains a key factor when delivering projects and programmes of work. This ensures that people understand the reason behind the work they are having completed and the positives that will come as a result.
- 1.4.7 It was welcomed that methods of communications and engagement include virtual and in-person consultations, as the mutual agreement by the Committee as not everybody has the same level of accessibility to resources.

## **2. CEAC Working Groups (known as CEAC Workshops from May 2024)**

- 2.1.1 Climate Emergency Advisory Committee working groups provide an additional opportunity for elected members to explore issues in more depth, often hearing from external speakers as well as officers from across the council.
- 2.1.2 While the CEAC Main Committee is designed to receive and comment on updates on work that has taken place in addressing climate change, the working groups and workshops are designed for constructive feedback on developing policies and plans still under development.
- 2.1.3 The working groups also allow opportunity for discussions and input on regional and national consultations.

2.1.4 Each working group/workshop over the last 12 month are summarised below:

### **2.2 Food, Biodiversity and Waste working group**

- 2.2.1 The Food, Biodiversity and Waste working group focused on the Leeds Food Strategy, with a particular focus on the redistribution of food and reducing food waste.
- 2.2.2 An in-depth discussion was held to identify the potential opportunities available throughout the city and what members could assist with. Examples included; community composting schemes, school composting sites, community windfall, and the Right To Grow motion. Allotment availability and mapping the city assets to identify available land were additional suggestions, which would require resource and capacity.
- 2.2.3 Members agreed to explore opportunities in their wards to establish opportunities to reduce waste and encourage community growing. It was agreed that the outcome of

the Right to Grow motion in Hull would be taken into consideration at a future working group

### 2.3 Economy and Finance working group

2.3.1 The Economy and Finance working group received a detailed update from colleagues on Procurement, following a previous update in February 2023.

2.3.2 A discussion was held on opportunities for future procurement and methods to reduce waste, improving energy efficiency, increasing green skills and tackling emissions. This included scope 3 emissions for businesses that the council are engaged with and share the same procurement values.

2.3.3 Following this working group, it was agreed that future Director Updates were to include an update on procurement within their directorate

2.3.4 Due to staff capacity, and topics not suitable for the working groups in question, both the Community and Business Engagement, and the Planning, Buildings and Energy working groups did not have any meetings in 2024.

### 2.3.5 Workshops

2.3.6 From May 2024, the working groups had been changed to workshops, in order to better reflect the logistics of the meetings, as explained earlier in the report.

2.3.7 Due to resource availability, the first of these meetings took place in November 2024. For this workshop, discussions were on the use of glyphosate within our estate with members and officers using nationwide case studies to aide the discussion.

2.3.8 Additional discussions were brought to the workshop by officers to explore the risk of climate impact on estate buildings and the heightened risk this could bring e.g increasing air pollution within historic buildings following extreme heat.

2.3.9 A discussion was then held to establish workstreams and topics members wanted to explore in future workshops. Topics identified included communication and engagement, air quality, energy and the Aire Resilience Company.

## 3. Conclusion

3.1.1 This year's Climate Emergency Advisory Committee has considered a wide range of issues at the main Committee meetings, referring many issues to its working groups for further examination.

3.1.2 The change from working groups to workshops better reflect the key topics that the Committee wanted to explore, in a timely manner.

3.1.3 CEAC will continue to play a key role in ensuring that the net zero ambition is embedded across the council, engaging with external partners to ensure makes recommendations for effective action, not only in the council but the wider city.

- 3.1.4 The Committee has seen that the Council is making significant progress, with the powers and resources available to it, to reduce the city's impact on the environment through its policies and delivery programmes.
- 3.1.5 The Committee recognises that much of the Council's work in this area is objectively ambitious and considered best practice among the local government sector. It notes the 'A Grade' recognition by the CDP that the council has been awarded.
- 3.1.6 The Committee will continue to play an important role to check, challenge, and support the relevant work of different council departments as appropriate to help ensure that the council is leading by example and making progress as fast as practical, with reasonable community and stakeholder engagement and support.
- 3.1.7 The Committee notes that the capacity and capability of the local authority and wider city to deliver faster progress in reducing carbon emissions and adapting to climate change is currently constrained by factors beyond the local authority's control, as well as its own financial challenge
- 3.1.8 The Committee has, and will continue to, engage with national policymakers and others to advocate for the changes that would enable Leeds council, communities, and businesses to accelerate action on climate change.

#### **4. Recommendations**

- 4.1 To note the contents of the report and the work of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee throughout the 2023/24 and 2024/25 (to date) municipal year

## Appendix 1 – CEAC Main Committee - Open Forum submissions

Open Forum Submission Date	Submission Received From	Key Issues Raised	Council Response
27 <sup>th</sup> November 2023	No Open Forum submissions were received	N/A	N/A
15 <sup>th</sup> December 2023	No Open Forum submissions were received	N/A	N/A
22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2024	No Open Forum submissions were received	N/A	N/A
19 <sup>th</sup> February 2024	No Open Forum submissions were received	N/A	N/A
18 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	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	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/workshop item.
	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 requesting wildflower seeds.	Members were requested to assist in identifying speakers for panel discussions
17 <sup>th</sup> June 2024	Leeds Children's Mayor	A presentation was provided by the Leeds Children's Mayor, from Ireland Wood Primary School, which detailed his work on addressing the climate emergency. He had been involved in various initiatives at 27 events, projects and talks since his election which helped raise awareness to climate change	Members thanked the Leeds Children's Mayor for his presentation and all his support and success with the work that aligned to the Committee.

**Appendix 1 – CEAC Main Committee - Open Forum submissions**

22 <sup>nd</sup> July 2024	No Open Forum submissions were received	N/A	N/A
23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2024	Boston Spa Energy Efficiency Trial (BEET)	Having visited Open Forum previously, an update including a video was provided on BEET, produced by Northern Powergrid to show the work that has been under way.	The Chair gave her thanks for the fascinating work and would be in contact to assist with further questions and promotion of the programme, alongside other Committee Members.
	Royal Horticultural Society (RHS)	As part of the National Education Nature Park programme, the Senior Programme Officer for Yorkshire and the Humber RHS, and local contact for the institution, provided details for upcoming events and ways to promote and engage with the events. The broad goals for the programme were to increase biodiversity within the sites of educational institutions, facilitating climate based learning and outdoor education for children of all school ages.	The Chair outlined she had scheduled to meet with the Senior Programme Officer and Climate Ambassadors and Members outlined they would contact local schools and provide further details accordingly
4 <sup>th</sup> November 2024	Pudsey Community Project (PCP)	The Director for PCP outlined the purpose of the organisation which is charity based and part of the Leeds Community Anchor Network, operating out of West Leeds. It provides a range of services, including, a food bank, youth, employment and bereavement support, a repair café and reduce, reuse kid's clothes.	The Chair thanked Director for PCP and outlined that the Committee was supportive and were to promote the services offered by the organisation
	Horsforth Climate Action	A Hub Worker from Horsforth Climate Action outlined the multiple projects and work that they under take throughout the community, to raise awareness and address the climate emergency.	The Chair thanked Horsforth Climate Action for their wealth of work to address climate change and support a range of services and work across Leeds.