

# CONSULTATIVE MEETING OF MEMBERS OF THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 21ST JULY, 2022

**PRESENT:** Councillor K Dye in the Chair

Councillors B Anderson, J Bowden,  
P Carlill, A Garthwaite, C Hart-Brooke,  
H Hayden, O Newton, M Shahzad,  
E Thomson, P Truswell, J Tudor and  
P Wadsworth

## 1 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Blackburn and Councillor Buckley.

## 2 **Declarations of Interest**

No formal late items of business were added to the agenda, however Committee Members had received supplementary documents in relation to agenda item 8 Carbon modelling for Waste Management and Kerbside Waste Compositional Analysis Briefing just prior to the meeting.

## 3 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RECOMMENDED** – That the minutes of the formal meeting held 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022 be noted for information.

## 4 **Open Forum**

Members of the public were invited to submit a question / statement in advance of the meeting.

Clarrie Ramsden – Seacroft Community Hub. The Committee was provided with an overview of the work undertaken by Seacroft Hub across the ward focusing on climate change and food poverty, including a forest garden, community allotment, community composting and seed libraries, noting a 5<sup>th</sup> seed library was due to open in the coming week. #GetGrowingSeacroft is on Facebook and twitter. The Hub is looking to utilise land on the derelict site of The Gate Public House, Seacroft for allotment and education space and to support proposed work as a social subscriber and sought Member support for this scheme.

Andy Goldring - Climate Action Leeds / City Hub Lead. The Committee was advised that although the City Hub had support from partners across the city, it had yet to identify a city centre location to bring all sectors together and create a template for the future city-wide approach. Negotiations to secure a space in a city centre shopping centre were ongoing and Member support for that would be welcomed, along with support to secure a long term location through conversations with LCC Asset Management over use of LCC sites and a discussion on whether the use of Community Infrastructure Levy monies would be permissible to support the Hub. Members noted the offer to

provide a detailed presentation on the work of the City Hub to a future CEAC meeting. Members also noted a suggestion that Thwaite Mills could be an ideal location for the City Hub and an offer from Councillor Garthwaite to raise this issue with appropriate officers. Members agreed that if Mr Goldring made his request in writing to the Chief Officer Sustainable Energy and Air Quality, the request, including the Committee's support, would be forwarded to the appropriate Service.

Brent Haigh – Hydrogen Energy - The Committee received a video submission on the topic of hydrogen and the development of hydrogen as an alternative energy source and opportunities to draw down funding for the region and increased employment. It was agreed that the Infrastructure, Planning and Buildings Working Group would consider the issues raised and actions currently being taken and give a formal response to the query "What is the Committees view" in due course.

## **5 Working Groups Update**

The Chairs of the Working Groups (WG) provided an update on the progress of the working groups since the last Committee meeting:

Community and Business Engagement – Councillor M Shahzad outlined how the WG had set three questions in order to consider how we will communicate with residents and enhance our engagement with the city.

- 1) How can we reach people where they are, rather than where we want them to be? The right message needs to get out to the right people at right place and time as sometimes the message is not clear, or not tailored to the characteristics of the community. Actions proposed included sending a quarterly email to collect information on planned local events so that the climate engagement team can attend the events and meet local people and have quality climate conversations. Additionally the engagement team could attend a future Youth Summit meeting. The WG also reviewed the availability of climate change information on the LCC website, and agreed that work would be undertaken to collate the information into a more streamlined offer which will be easier to share.
- 2) How to discuss key climate issues appropriately and make them relevant? It was considered that linking them to the cost of living crisis by showing the benefits that change can offer would resonate with residents, an example being to use trusted local business to provide key messages, such as the local plumber who invested in an electric van to save running costs.
- 3) How do we engage a new audience? The WG considered this can be achieved by securing partnerships with internal/external teams on co-issues highlighted by climate action, there was a proposal for the SEAQ team to visit the Community Committees and to take climate action discussions to community spaces and events unrelated to climate action events.

Infrastructure, Planning and Buildings – Councillor Dye reported on two presentations received by the WG –

- Update on the net zero housing plan. Discussions had focussed on key actions to follow up; including the establishment of a 'Better Homes Hub', retrofit work, how we view new build development and low carbon homes. Proposals to create a map of retrofit opportunities across the city, to develop an engagement plan, and to review how to develop the skills needed to achieve net zero were also highlighted.
- Feasibility study of using Solar energy. The presentation was provided by Arup.

Noting the detail of the presentations provided to the IPG WG it was agreed that the Chief Officer Sustainable Energy and Air Quality will review the presentations prior to them being shared with the Committee to ensure they contain no commercially sensitive information.

Discussions noted the following points:

The Big Bus Chat – Members and residents were invited to take part in the West Yorkshire Mayor led Big Bus Chat, on the themes of bus transport being safe and inclusive, better connected and de-carbonised, as part of the plan to improve the network.

Working Group (WG) updates – Although WG meetings are not formally minuted for inclusion in Committee agenda, it was noted that actions arising from the WGs are fed back to the Committee and the webcast of the Committee meetings can be shared widely with interested groups. It was agreed that invitations to attend WGs be re-sent to all Councillors to encourage wider attendance.

**RECOMMENDED** – To note the content of the updates provided.

## 6 Director Update

The Committee received a verbal report from Neil Evans, Director of Resources, as part of a programme of visits to the Committee from each of the Directorates.

The Director outlined examples of how working against climate change is being embedded into the different work activities of the Directorate. He explained how combatting climate change is not optional but is critical to Leeds City Council operations. Some of the activities include;

- The 30-strong Sustainable Energy and Air Quality (SEAQ) team is led by a Chief Officer, meaning their remit is represented at the highest level within the Directorate and is one of the biggest departments of its type in the country. The team has attracted £100million investment from the government over the past three years which has gone towards District Heating and decarbonising LCC buildings
- The Council continues to invest in climate action, at a time when budgeting issues are leading many other Councils to cut back on this area
- HR promote a bike to work scheme, salary sacrifice for Electric Vehicles, public transport discounts and carbon literacy training. One of

their big challenges for the future will be supporting staff to move away from petrol and diesel vehicles, without costing staff extra money

- Integrated Digital Services have been supporting the transition towards working from home, reducing printing and replacing energy heavy servers with cloud storage
- Resources also undertakes a considerable amount of public engagement around Leeds becoming carbon neutral by 2030
- Corporate Property Management are investing in Leeds City Council buildings, and will be moving into the SEAQ unit to ensure planned works have regard to climate action
- Fleet Management also work with the SEAQ, and their joint work has led Leeds City Council to be the largest user of Electric Vehicles.
- Where food is purchased by LCC, such as within schools, Resources has committed to reducing food miles by sourcing within the Yorkshire region.

Discussions focused on the following issues:

- Investment in the District Heating Scheme and the PIPES scheme
- Investment of HRA and Government Grants to decarbonise housing stock and upgrade old heating systems
- An approach to procurement which would seek to ensure that goods and services meet the climate action /zero carbon target for the city

**RECOMMENDED** - The Committee thanked Mr Evans for his presentation and noted the discussions.

## **7 Embodied Carbon**

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Officer Highways and Transportation which outlined the current practices undertaken within the department to address the climate emergency, specifically regarding embodied carbon.

Mr Paul Russell, Civil Engineering Manager, Highways and Transportation attended the meeting to present the report and began by highlighting the services' commitment to tackling the climate crisis. However as development and building innately creates carbon the Service had established a Climate Emergency Task Force to support its work looking at how carbon is generated, namely through use of;

- Asphalt
- Concrete
- Steel
- Other raw materials
- Materials sent to landfill
- Construction Vehicles

The report considered four main topics;

1. Carbon calculation tools; the carbon cost of maintaining roads also has to be incorporated into carbon calculations. Highways and Transportation (H&T) have been working on capital programmes such as East Leeds Orbital Route (ELOR), and the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme Phase 2 (LFAS2). Whilst in

development these schemes have created carbon emissions but in the long run they will prove to be carbon saving as they will reduce congestion and flood damage. H&T development frameworks included carbon calculation tools and carbon targets embedded within them. However part of the solution towards lower carbon emissions may be the need for less infrastructure to be delivered in the long term.

The Committee considered how city building carbon calculations could be captured and used to influence future planning conversations with Government, by collaborating with university partners within the city. Councillor Hayden suggested working with Leeds Climate Commission and Yorkshire & Humber Climate Commission to develop this idea.

2. Procurement; Highways and Transportation is developing a suite of three frameworks internally

- Minor Works Contractor Framework for contracts under £2 million
- Intermediate Works Contractor Framework for contracts between £2 million and £7 million
- Major Works Contractor Framework for contracts over £7 million

Each of these frameworks was developed within the Leeds Outcomes, Themes and Measurements (TOM's) in order to build social value into those procurement processes.

3. Low carbon materials; the pricing for these materials is still a lot higher than conventional materials, which is being exacerbated by the current issues of the rate of inflation and the ongoing situation in Ukraine. Trials of lower carbon materials are being conducted, such as on the A63 in Garforth.

4. Offsetting; measures include tree planting. ELOR alone included 3,000 trees and 30,000 whips being planted. There is a balance to be had between reducing road use, and reducing congestion, in order to prevent carbon emissions.

The Committee discussed ways in which the Council could work with various partners regarding the research of embodied carbon within the city, as well as some of the work already being done in the city by external organisations and businesses; particularly involving the universities and the Leeds Climate Commission and the Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission.

It was noted that this is a quickly developing area, and the Committee would welcome further reports from the Chief Officer Highways and Transportation in due course.

**RECOMMENDATION** - To note the contents of the report and the discussions at the meeting, along with the matters identified for future action detailed above.

## **8 Analysis of Waste Services in Leeds**

The Committee received a report of the Chief Officer, Environmental Services, which provided information on two pieces of work commissioned by the Council to assist the development of an updated Leeds Waste Strategy and associated Waste Management Plan.

The following were in attendance to provide a presentation:  
John Woolmer - Chief Officer, Environmental Services  
Philip Turpin - Senior Business Officer (Technical), Environmental Services.

In his introduction, Mr Woolmer emphasised the report and presentation contained initial, draft data that is still being verified and worked on and so should not be reported or used as confirmed data/information. However, it was still felt useful to provide an overview of the work being done to better understand the performance of Environmental Services in terms of its carbon footprint across all the services it provides and also in terms of household waste. These will both inform the developing Waste Strategy for Leeds and the accompanying Waste Management Plan, both of which will reference the National Resources and Waste Strategy and the anticipated legal requirements for kerbside food and glass collection by 2025, along with the implications of the new national Deposit Return Scheme (for plastics).

The Committee received two presentations from Mr Turpin:

**Leeds household kerbside waste compositional analysis:**

- The Council engaged Alfred H Knight consulting services to carry out a statistically representative compositional analysis of kerbside residual (black bin) and dry mixed recyclables (green bin).
- Waste collection across the city is predominantly undertaken on alternate weeks of wheel bin collections, the remainder of the city are mainly weekly black bin and four-weekly green bin collections.
- The analysis of waste from 250 properties was undertaken in February 2022 and waste was manually sorted into 13 categories with 40 sub categories, the initial outcomes were shared with Members, the highlights being (in terms of content measured by weight):
  - Residual waste (black bin) – putrescible (food etc) 36% food, paper/card 13%
  - Dry Mixed Recyclable (green bin) – paper/card 55%, plastic 15%
  - Waste per household per week in 2022 = residual 10kg; DMR 3kg compared with 2015 = residual 10.9kg, DMR 3.6kg
- Referencing NI 192, the National Standard for recyclates, the analysis showed that if all recyclates were recovered from the residual waste (black bin), this would only make a 9% points difference to the citywide Leeds recycling figure. It was also noted that some of those recyclates are not recoverable as they are contaminated. The initial analysis supported the following conclusions:
  - As the National Waste Strategy focusses on glass and food waste, analysis showed Glass in black bins = c.13,300 tonnes and in green bins = c.1,500 tonnes, therefore in theory there is a total of c.14,800 tonnes that could be recovered through kerbside glass

recycling, on top of a similar amount that is currently successfully and efficiently recovered through glass banks and HWRCs. This therefore provides the city with an opportunity to potentially double its glass recycling, however it was noted that it was unlikely that this full amount would be achieved through glass kerbside recycling as not all residents would want/use an extra bin and the black bin would still be an option some would use.

- Food waste in the residual collection = c.66,800 tonnes; however it was noted that it was unlikely that this full amount would be received in future food waste kerbside recycling for the same reasons as with glass;
- Alternate collection of recycling in green bins provides better recycling results, and results showed the amount of contaminants has decreased between 2015 to 2022
- Black bin analysis shows that the predominant missed recyclates are cardboard and recyclable plastic film. The proportion of garden waste in the residual collection has reduced, probably reflecting the success of the roll out and use of this service (brown bins) in Leeds, helped by it remaining a free service.

Discussions on factors which had driven waste reduction since 2015 noted the following information:

- The sub category of “carrier bags” mentioned in the presentation is all ‘recyclable plastic film’ (it is sometimes referred to as ‘carrier bags and refuse sacks’)
- The total waste arisings for the Leeds area had risen due to the increase in household growth, however the type of household growth presented a complicating factor to the data – flat/apartment development exceeded house building in 2021/22 and flat dwellers often display a different attitude to waste.

In acknowledgement of the draft status of the results of the analysis and the breadth of the topic, it was agreed that the next presentation would proceed with the Working Group to consider the issues in detail at a future meeting.

### **Carbon footprint/impact of LCC Environmental Services – baseline and future options:**

- The Council engaged Eunomia Research & Consulting Ltd to create a baseline carbon footprint for all the waste management functions across Environmental Services, to appraise options for reducing CO2 emissions related to the Council’s waste activities, and to create a carbon assessment model to allow for further appraisal of options and future annual performance monitoring. It was again noted that the data produced was still being checked and verified and was to be treated as draft.

- Analysis of the draft data showed where the greatest climate gains could be made across the service. The analysis also provided initial options to consider for the future development of the service and built a carbon assessment model that supports an annual review of the carbon footprint and an assessment of each of the development options.
- 2019/20 was chosen as the baseline year, thus avoiding the skewing impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on the Service, and included all waste management services (residual kerbside, flytipping, bulky collections, recycling, food waste pilot, household waste sites and bring sites, street cleansing and grounds cleansing).
- Collection results were inputted into the model which showed a baseline result that the Service has a net carbon impact of -33,323 tonnes (i.e. a net carbon benefit).
- The emissions the service makes mainly through operational functions are displaced by negative emissions /carbon savings elsewhere by how waste is processed/treated and re-used or recycled. The energy generation provided by the Recycling & Energy Recovery Facility (RERF), and the District Heating Scheme both bring a positive impact to the results. All services have a net carbon benefit, with the Household Waste and Recycling Centres contributing the most; however, although the analysis does include the impact of LCC and contractor vehicles accessing sites and transporting materials, it does not include the impact of residents driving to recycling sites. Where analysis is available on this, it shows that the carbon impact of residents driving to sites is relatively small and so whereas it would of course decrease the carbon benefit, it would not make a significant difference, which will reduce even more as vehicles move away from fossil based fuels.
- The analysis has supported consideration of different and new approaches to recycling, including kerbside glass recycling, weekly collections, combined waste alternate collections (ie glass, metal and plastic one week, paper/card the next), source segregated food recycling and mixing garden with food.
- Inputting the different approaches into the model showed the main carbon benefits would be gained from source segregation of food and glass waste. However, the assumptions made in the model when assessing the carbon benefits of collecting garden with food are based on a narrow range of examples, and ones not necessarily comparable to Leeds. Further work is to undertaken to better estimate what the food yield could be in Leeds (ie the percentage of food waste that would be presented by a household if they had the option to put it in their brown bin), and how that would affect the results of the model.

- Mr Woolmer explained that the intention is to develop the Leeds Waste Strategy and associated Waste Management Plan using the impact on carbon reduction as the key performance/outcome driver. This is a move away from measuring the success of greater “reduce-recycle-reuse” by simply presenting the percentage of material recycled according to weight. The need to also consider in the strategy/plan what is practical/deliverable within a diverse city such as Leeds and ultimately affordable was highlighted too.

In conclusion, the Committee noted;

- The way Leeds City Council currently collects and processes waste across the city results in a net carbon benefit of around -33,000t per annum to contribute towards the city’s zero carbon ambitions; but there is a potential to save up to an additional 3700t of carbon per annum;
- Household Waste and Recycling Centres make the greatest net contribution to carbon reduction in terms of waste management;
- There will be a legal requirement to offer kerbside food waste and glass collections from 2025 (subject to the result of consultation to be published by the Government, further delayed from “early 2022”) and this would mean changes to the way residents present waste in Leeds – various collection models are being assessed as part of the carbon analysis work to help inform what the preferred option(s) will be, which will also need to consider what is practical/deliverable and ultimately affordable (the Government has committed to funding all new “burdens”, and is expected to release details on how that will work together with the consultation update).
- The carbon modelling provides another tool to inform service options and collection regimes along with other key factors of finance, fleet and resources. The results of inputting data related to the use of electric fleet, the impact of food waste education campaigns or carbon capture technologies can be taken into account though the modelling.
- The proposed way forward in developing the Leeds Waste Strategy and Waste Management Plan is to move the focus of how we improve what we do/offer and measure success away from a weight based recycling percentage to the contribution it makes towards a zero carbon city.

The Ward Councillor for the Rothwell ward expressed support for the consideration of an option for food waste collection as Rothwell had been the ward for a previous pilot study. In response to a subsequent query about the specified destination (composting, bio-gas generation) and the environmental impact of food waste collection it was noted that current modelling assumes that source segregated collection destination= anaerobic digestion and mixed garden/food collection destination = In-Vessel Composting system. These assumptions will be revisited as more modern techniques come on-line.

In conclusion the Committee noted the significance of the work already undertaken and considered how to progress the work of this Committee, noting that a joint Inquiry by the Environment, Housing and Communities and the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Boards was planned for September.

Members received clarification on the purpose of the presentations to inform and seek the views of CEAC on the proposed direction of the developing waste strategy based on the carbon modelling, the rationale, and future presentations to judge the success/ detail of specific modelling and the benefit/ scale of impact that changing an approach might bring.

**RECOMMENDATION** - The Committee expressed support for the rationale outlined, in particular to move to measuring success/improvement through greater carbon reduction, and agreed that a future discussion on the detail of the final analysis be held at a Biodiversity, Food and Waste Working Group.

**9 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

**RECOMMENDED** – To note that the date of the next meeting will be 19<sup>th</sup> September 2022, at 1pm.