CONSULTATIVE MEETING OF MEMBERS OF THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 19TH FEBRUARY, 2024

PRESENT: Councillor K Dye in the Chair

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

38 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Downes.

39 Declarations of Interest

Minute 42 Directors Update from the Director of Adults and Health – Councillor Foster wished it to be recorded that he undertook outreach work for a number of care providers.

40 Notes of the Previous Meeting

RECOMMENDED - To agree the meeting notes of the Consultative Meeting of Members of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee held 22nd January 2024.

41 Open Forum

There were no Open Form items for consideration, however work was ongoing to secure submissions for the March meeting.

42 Directors Update - Director of Adults and Health

The Director of Adults and Health, Caroline Baria, provided the Committee with a verbal update and presentation on the work of the five service areas covered by the Directorate.

Social Work and Social Care Services -

In-house services are reviewed and refurbished regularly, with buildings being fitted with energy efficient adaptions including air source heat pumps, solar photovoltaic panels to roofs and LED lighting.

The Community Equipment Service fleet includes Electric Vehicles (EVs) to deliver equipment to service users at home, and the service recycles equipment which is no longer needed to provide to new users.

The Telecare Service is now 100% digital and old telecare equipment is recycled for use in Care Homes.

The Directorate seeks to reduce travel by encouraging staff to undertake service user reviews/assessments by phone where it is appropriate to do so. Social Work teams are based in and serve geographical patches which has reduced the need to travel. The Service employs a rostering system to ensure routes are efficient and walking routes are built in so that staff can travel to an area and walk between scheduled visits.

The Directorate has reduced its footprint from 4 buildings to 2 and 13 operational teams are co-located with Leeds Community Heath.

Commissioning –
The Team is working with City Development to develop new provision for adults with complex needs, to be located in Leeds, so that service users and their carers/families remain in the city and have less far to travel.
Care providers are actively encouraged to be carbon neutral and the Directorate offers training/support on measures to achieve it.
Care provision contracts include a carbon neutral requirement. The Directorate seeks a small number of providers to fulfil the contracts to operate in a specific geographical area which enables care workers to walk between appointments.
The Home Plus team receive carbon literacy training and the Green Doctors are trained energy efficient experts within that Team.

Resources -
There was increased use of e-communications and the Finance team had ceased doing home visits as the default offer for financial assessments. The billing process includes collection of email addresses and direct debit payments were encouraged.
Staff primarily worked from home since the Coronavirus pandemic and were office based for team work/meetings – this had assisted the Directorate to reduce its office space requirements.
The workforce development team introduced on-line training during the pandemic and this approach had been retained.
Providers were encouraged to do local leaflet drops in the localities where they have vacancies as this helps to encourage a local workforce who can walk to work.

Service Transformation –
The team is working on the use of digital, AI and assistive technology to support the assessment and review processes and is developing on-line tools to enable service users to self-assess.

Health Partnerships –
The team supports the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Board and looks at how to work effectively across the Integrated Care Board, NHS and Third Sector partnership.
The Team facilitates a focus on climate change adaptations and actions and ensures zero carbon is at the forefront of partners' strategies and plans.
The use of hybrid meetings for partners/organisations reduces the costs and carbon footprint and also increases efficiencies.

Climate Adaptation –
The Directorate maintains a UK Health Security Agency Adverse Weather and Health Plan which ensures preparedness for incidents of extreme heat and cold for those in receipt of care services and living in Care Homes.
The available research and advice on climate emergency is reviewed and shared with partners and made available in one place for easy access.

The Business Continuity team work to ensure the in-house team is prepared and consider the impact of extreme weather on staff wellbeing, transport etc. The Commissioning Team also works with external providers to provide adaptation advice on their individual plans

Corporate Travel Plan
Social Work teams are based in geographical patches which reduces need for travel across the city. Staff are hybrid working with training on line, both of which bring carbon and financial benefits.
Financial assessments increasingly use digital/telephone assessments where appropriate, rather than home visits.
Staff car usage – car allowance claims have reduced by 23% since 2021/22
Public transport usage – bus use travel claims have increased by 51% since 2021/22

During discussions, the following matters were considered:
On-line self-referrals – The Committee received assurance that digital is only used when it is appropriate to do so. The family or carers are first consulted for their view on whether it is appropriate. "Talking Points" located at Hubs are also used and service users are offered the option of meeting there to discuss their needs.

Staff travel – A reduction of 23% since 2021/22 in car mileage claims and the increase in bus usage claims revealed a shift in staff travel modes. The Director undertook to report back on how the Directorate sought active travel, whether the reduction in car usage was related to the increased use of on-line assessments or greater use of bus/public transport and on the take up of the LCC lease scheme for the purchase of electric or hybrid vehicles by staff.
In relation to the grey fleet (Business or staff travel) further consideration would be given on how to provide departmental data to the Committee prior to a Director providing an Update report.

Heating in Care Homes – Work was being done to include Care Homes on the LCC Building Management System – staff in the Home will still be able to manage heating on site, but the BMS would be able to identify any issues such as using too much/too little energy. The installation of thermostatic radiator valves on corridor radiators could address energy use in those areas whilst still maintaining warmth in residents personal rooms and communal rooms.

Lower Carbon foods – The Directorate did pose questions to the Independent Sector providers on whether they serve low carbon impact meals, but it was acknowledged that provision will be low cost lead. The Director agreed to review the approach and also seek to identify any Homes with a best practice approach that could be learned from and shared.

Home visits and geographical working – The Committee received assurance that if a service user requested a home visit or face to face appointment, that would be accommodated.

It was reported that Carers Leeds had expressed a preference for on-line assessments.
In terms of recruitment and retention of staff, contracted providers had welcomed the geographical team work patches. Requiring staff to have a car reduces peoples ability to apply for vacancies, and the organisations had shown better retention of staff when they have smaller geographical areas to cover.

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

43 Working Groups Update

Biodiversity, Food and Waste on the 29th January 2024 – Councillor Anderson provided a brief overview of the discussions on the Leeds Food Strategy held at the meeting, which covered the three missions to improve health and wellbeing, eat well, all have access to affordable and nutritious food. With focus on the redistribution of food and reducing food waste, the WG considered the following actions:

- Community composting - work with FoodWise to signpost funding and the creation of an updated list of funding streams to support the initiative to share with CEAC and all 99 Members. Additionally, Members representing rural/semi-rural wards with agricultural operators were requested to consider whether they knew someone from their ward who could work with officers.
- Right to Grow - the work being done by Scrutiny at Hull City Council which the WG will review once complete.
- School composting - Members were requested to advise officers of any schools operating a school composting scheme.
- Mapping the city - to identify usable land to maximise the opportunity for residents to compost and grow their own.
- Community windfall - the WG considered whether windfall fruit can be gathered legally, as windfall could be some peoples first or only access to fruit. The WG noted that gathering windfall could potentially be an issue although the landowner would be unlikely to pursue the matter.
- Allotments and how to address the need - the WG considered that Members of the Development Plan Panel could seek to ensure that planning policy sets aside land for allotment use.

The Chair encouraged Members to provide feedback on any of the issues to officers and agreed that the outcome of the Hull Scrutiny of the Right to Grow motion would be considered at a future WG.

RECOMMENDED – To note the update and to note the dates of future WG meetings:
Finance and Economy Monday 11th March 2024 at 10.00 am
Planning and Buildings – Friday 15th March at 1.30 pm

44 Air Quality & Climate

The Committee received a report from the Chief Officer Climate, Energy and Green Spaces highlighting the ongoing monitored improvements in air quality

in Leeds and the key areas of work relevant to the alignment between decarbonisation and air pollution.

Andy Hickford, Senior Project Manager, Climate, Energy & Green Spaces team presented the report and highlighted the following:

- Leeds air quality is consistently improving and remains compliant with national air quality standards - historical analysis demonstrates the annual improvements in air quality and shows compliance on both NO2 and PM 2.5. targets.

- The 2023 Annual Status Report submitted to DEFRA provides the full detail of all data collection points in the city. In Leeds, monitoring is installed where there may be cause for concern and when low levels have been recorded for a period of time, the monitoring is removed and utilised elsewhere.

- Monthly monitoring in 2023 showed that NO2 levels remained below target last year, except at Bishopgate (the Dark Arches), which is not a residential area. Monitoring at Bishopgate paused whilst Connecting Leeds highways works were carried out, now that monitoring has resumed, the recorded levels are lower providing evidence of the benefits of the Connecting Leeds schemes. Connecting Leeds is important in terms of managing transport emissions as transport accounts for 30% of emissions. The Strategy has clear targets to increase bus use, encourage active travel choices and decrease the number of car journeys.

- There are links between air quality and the aim for net zero, but equally there are differences between 'greenhouse gasses' and air pollution and as such measures should be considered with both local air quality and global decarbonisation outcomes in mind:

- NO2 tends to be local pollutants – emissions are close to the source i.e. transport emissions are kerbside.
- PM2.5 tends to have a greater/wider source i.e. industry, however there has broadly been a reduction in PN2.5 since 1990.

- Domestic pollution – This is a new area of research but there is growing concern about domestic internal pollution. In homes there is exposure to dust, dust mites and bacteria etc but heating and cooking methods also bring exposure.

- Cooking - Some research on cooking methods has shown a stark difference between the impact of electric oven cooking and gas oven cooking - pollution doubles in homes using gas cooking. Careful consideration should be given to how this pollution is publicised.
- Heating – The cleanest forms of heating are electric heating, heat source pumps and gas fired boiler. Solid fuel heating is the worst polluter and poses the most risk to health, again the challenge is how to publicise this information. Additionally, although wood burning can be seen as sustainable as each tree felled for fuel can be replaced with

new planting, over the long term it is not sustainable as the significant number of trees needed cannot be replenished to meet demand.

- De-carbonisation and pollution links – The issues which cause the climate emergency may not be the same as those affecting health. Consideration should be given to both the links between air quality and decarbonisation and the works needed to address them to ensure the measures to address one issue do not have a negative consequence on another issue.

During discussions, the Committee considered the following issues:

NO2 measurements - Typically air pollution levels are higher in winter and lower in summer and are impacted by different seasonal factors including weather conditions or an increase in traffic. The data showing peaks recorded at Bishopgate and International Pool locations in March were influenced by high levels of Saharan dust. With regard to any risk of displacement of issues away from Bishopgate location, the Committee heard that any highways programme of works looks at air quality and displacement issues, fundamentally schemes are designed to manage congestion locally and meet the Connecting Leeds targets which include decarbonisation targets. Measures can be conditioned on developments/works to further mitigate issues such as the installation of EV charging. Data for 2023 will be included in the 2024 Annual Status Report, but once available could be shared with the Committee.

Cooking – It was noted that some community traditions prefer gas and burning flame cooking to electric ovens. The Committee supported a suggestion to further consider this and how to communicate the health benefits of electric ovens at a future WG.

Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) – This related to people who had a strong reaction to things found in the home such as solvents, particulates etc. It was suggested that MCS could fall within the remit of the Consumer Protection agency. As indoor pollution is a relatively new area of research, little was known about the role of a Local Authority in relation to MCS.

Wood burning – In response to comments that Councillors were increasingly dealing with neighbour complaints regarding wood burning it was reported that most of Leeds was within a Smoke Controlled Area designation with an approved list of materials for burning. Concerns over materials being burned could be reported to the Environmental Health Team - the first step in taking action will be education. It was noted that the “Clean Air Night” held in January had focussed on wood burning. Additionally, work would be done to ensure the reporting contact details are accessible.

Air Quality monitoring in outer wards – In response to a comment regarding the A65, it was reported that monitoring was undertaken between the Horsforth roundabout and Guiseley. The more monitoring data collected, the better, however the cost of traditional monitoring units was at least £10k.

Partnership working with the University is reviewing the accuracy of cheaper units and comparing the results with existing monitoring units – if these are favourable, the use of cheaper units could be extended.

RECOMMENDED –

a) To note the report outlining the ongoing work on improving air quality.
b) To note the reference to the Annual Status Report 2023 and the forthcoming update report to Executive Board in March 2024.

45 Update on the Local Authority Pollution Control permitting of industrial polluters

Paul Spandler, Environmental Health Manager, Communities, Housing and Environment provided the Committee with details of the local authority pollution control permitting regime and it's operation in Leeds. He highlighted that there is an acknowledgement that industrial sources contribute to the overall emissions of pollutants to air and these are subject to an environmental permitting regime which sets emission limits and other conditions to minimise pollution.

- The Environment Agency regulates larger sites, such as Peckfield within the Leeds boundary.

- The Local Authority, through the Environmental Health (EH) team, issues approximately 200 permits for other, including operators such as Allied Glass, brickworks and ferrous and non-ferrous foundries, as well as for any dust emitters such as crematoria and for petrol stations and dry cleaners. The cost of the permit depends on the complexity of the manufacturing process.

- Once a permit is issued, the team undertakes at least one visit per year depending on the type/size of operation and request monitoring data from the operator. If an operator does not comply with the terms of the permit, enforcement action can be taken, but liaison with an operator is the first step.

- The team also actively look for any process which may need a permit, for example a printworks may start fulfilling larger orders over a period of time which may require a permit for the resultant increased pollutants involved in the process.

- Over time there has been a move away from emission creating processes – between 2005 to 2021, greenhouse gas emissions from industrial sources in Leeds decreased 31%

During discussions with the Committee, the following matters were considered:

<u>The planning process</u> – The Committee heard that the EH team would be consulted as part of the planning process when relevant applications are

submitted, such as for new petrol stations, and would propose mitigation measures where appropriate.

Reporting – Members were encouraged to report sites of concern, but to also access the interactive map which showed all the active regulated process sites in Leeds City Council Prescribed Processes (arcgis.com)

Monitoring – The type of monitoring depends on the type of process. Using Allied Glass as an example, the operator is permitted to emit a certain amount of pollutants and monitoring equipment is located on a chimney stack. The operator can see when the permitted level has been exceeded and the manager has a duty to flag it to the EH team. The EH team can also request monitoring data periodically. Should there be a period of non-compliance, action would be taken. There may be a fault or system breakdown which the operator has a duty to report and could explain the data. If there was a furnace breakdown which could be rectified in a few days, then no action would be taken, however if it could not be rectified in a reasonable time then the EH team would seek to shut that furnace down.

Incentives – Energy costs for industry uses are high so operators seek to use less energy through investing in and employing modern alternatives which use less energy or create less pollution. Additionally, permitted levels of pollution are reviewed and have reduced over time which acts an impetus to reduce pollution.

RECOMMENDED – That the contacts of the report and discussions be noted.

46 Update on the EV Infrastructure Strategy

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Officer Climate, Energy and Green Spaces on the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (EVCI). The EVCI Strategy identified the key actions and the role of the Council in facilitating and supporting the development of infrastructure required to support the transition to zero-tailpipe emission vehicles.

Andy Hickford, Senior Project Manager, Climate, Energy & Green Spaces team presented the report and highlighted the following:

- The Strategy published in 2022 acknowledged the significant carbon emissions from transport and aimed to ensure that the infrastructure and facilities were in place to encourage people to change to EV travel. A shift to walking and cycling was also required to achieve zero carbon.

- Leeds has already seen a significant transition to electric vehicle usage which will improve air quality and bring carbon savings. It should be noted that EV are not 100% emission free as there will be particulate matter caused by brake and tyre wear. 2

- 500 public charging points have been installed and 50,000 EVs have been registered in Leeds. Charging points have been installed in diverse locations across the city and increasingly, charging points are commercially led. The number of private charging points is unknown,

but there are a number in schools who have successfully bid for funding to install them and some are installed as a condition on planning permissions.

- Leeds City Council's own vehicle fleet is significantly EV, one of the levers the local authority has to encourage others to use EV is to show their benefits. LCC has piloted and demonstrated the viability of EV vans to small and medium sized business to show how they work/capacity, and whilst the initial purchase of an EV may be more expensive than a petrol/diesel vehicle, over the length of ownership it will be cheaper.

- Implementing the Strategy includes working with the Government and operators to secure funding to support installation on LCC owned land, to support residential charging and working with LCC Highways and Transportation on designs to facilitate on-street charging. Installation should consider other transport modes, accessibility and existing walking and cycling infrastructure and be mindful of other works ongoing in Connecting Leeds Strategy so that installation works do not undermine other highways work being done.

- With funding secured, the next step is engagement to seek the views of Members, Directorates and businesses on plans to roll out additional charging points.

- One of the challenges to installation is the capacity and suitability of the National Grid which will inform where points can be installed and costs. Consideration of site requirements is key, to ensure installation does not conflict with other development and to ensure the longevity of the site - is the place in a useful location, is it well used and demand led by all groups in the city (taxi & private hire, trade)

The Committee also heard about common misconceptions associated with EVs:

Life cycle emissions and the carbon debt created during the production process for vehicles and batteries – this has been presented as significant, but as the scale of production increases and as manufacturers invest in renewable energy in manufacturing, the carbon debt has dropped and remains significantly lower than that of ICE vehicles once fuel production is factored in. There *is* a carbon debt associated with EV batteries, that isn't resent in combustion engine vehicles, but this is more than offset over the whole life of the vehicle with significant air quality benefits and carbon reduction in using EV's compared to internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles.

Range – Is a legitimate concern, but mid-range vehicles now provide 200+ miles on one charge with higher range vehicles achieving 300+ miles, so parity with ICE vehicles is being approached Additionally, there is misconception of how much mileage we actually drive – most domestic

vehicles drive less than 10,000 miles a year, which equates to one charge per week, so EVs are feasible for most drivers.

Price – No new vehicle is cheap, including EV's but the price disparity between EV and petrol vehicles is shrinking and second hand vehicles are now a similar price, with whole life cost of EV's less than that of ICE due to lower running costs

Fire Risk – Concerns had been raised in the media about EV combustion and this had been researched particularly during consideration of the location of EV charging sites. The risk of EV combustion is significantly less (5x) than that of a petrol vehicle.

Charging behaviours – a 2023 survey of EV users showed broadly that EV users had EV chargers at home and did use public charging points – supporting the plans to roll out domestic charging and public charging points. The type of public charging was reviewed, with EV charging Hubs increasingly seen as popular which further supports the aim to implement a charging hub.

During discussions the following matters were considered:

The nature of EV battery fires – the Committee noted a comment that although EV batteries may be less likely than petrol vehicle fires, EV fires burned harder, hotter, longer and were difficult to extinguish. With that in mind, a query was raised whether the city had sufficient infrastructure and measures in place to deal with an underground EV fire, as the city had a number of apartment blocks and offices with underground parking and whether there was a role for the relevant Scrutiny Board to review the city's preparedness for such an incident. In response the Committee heard this was a complex area, studies undertaken by the Australian Department of Defence found significantly less risk, but fire from an EV did have the potential to be greater. Notably, the Fire Service had also researched the risk and did include EVs in their fleet which showed confidence in their use. In terms of EV infrastructure, no underground charge points had been installed. It was suggested that fire at a charging point would indicate an issue with maintenance and upkeep – the possibility of fire will be reduced if the equipment is well maintained and provided/installed by a reputable supplier. The appropriateness of charging points had been considered by West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (WYFRS) along with whether they should be included on project Risk Registers, where it was determined that this was not required. It was felt that EV ownership by the WY Fire Service suggested WYFRS confidence in dealing with any EV fire. Noting the offer to provide further detail on this issue, the Committee agreed that the matter would be considered at a future WG meeting and a representative of WYFRS be invited to attend.

Residential Charging Points – The Committee noted comments that many Leeds streets are narrow and some residents had created makeshift charging points with cables leading from homes, across pavements to kerbside EVs. It was noted that Government guidance was due to be published, in residential

areas the challenge for Local Authorities was the risk to residents falling over cables, rather than the technicality of EV charging point installation. Therefore it was critical to identify suitable locations for charging points and hubs which are near to home, safe, secure and do not impact on the street walkway use. Members were encouraged to provide suggestions for potential charging point/hub sites within their wards to officers for consideration.

RECOMMENDED –

a) That the contents of the report be noted as an update on progress made since the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy was approved in 2022.
b) That the Committee re-enforce the need to support the transition of transport towards zero-emission as a key component of the councils Net Zero ambitions.

47 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RECOMMENDED - To note the date and time of the next meeting as Monday 18th March 2024 at 2.00 pm