

Climate Emergency Advisory Committee

Monday, 16th December, 2024

PRESENT: Councillor K Dye in the Chair

Councillors B Anderson, E Bromley,
P Carlill, A Rae, M Rafique, A Rontree,
S Seary, M Shahzad, P Stables and
J Tudor

36 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against the inspection of documents.

37 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

The agenda contained no exempt information.

38 Late Items

No late items of business were added to the agenda, however, supplementary information was circulated to Members prior to the start of the meeting. This related to the reports for items 9, 10 & 11.

39 Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were made.

40 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R Downes, Councillor O Newton and Councillor N Harrington, with Councillor S Seary substituting for Councillor N Harrington.

41 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on the 4th of November 2024, be approved as a true and correct record.

42 Open Forum

At the discretion of the Chair, a period of up to 15 minutes may be allocated at each ordinary meeting for members of the public to make representations or to ask questions on matters within the terms of reference of the Committee. No member of the public shall speak for more than five minutes in the Open Forum, except by permission of the Chair.

The following submission was made as part of the Open Forum:

Circular Fashion

The fashion and clothing industry contributed to a largely hidden carbon crisis, with 92 million tonnes of textile materials wasted globally per annum, which was forecast to rise to 130 million tonnes by 2030 unless the issue was addressed. Unwanted or unsold clothing was often burnt or sent to landfill, and better practises were sought to reduce the negative carbon impact that the textile industry had, through circular fashion initiatives. The Circular Fashion Incubator CIC had been set up as a platform

for sustainable fashion shows, with an ambition being to open a hub within Leeds to host workshops and teach upcycling and repair work and also provide solutions to address fast fashion carbon impacts through designer support projects, such as providing studio spaces and a clothing exchange programme, to allow clothing to be more sustainable and to make clothes items last longer. It was noted that slow fashion designers struggled to find spaces to work and also sell products. The Little Circular Fashion Design Academy was a programme engaging with children to raise awareness, increasing eco-consciousness for the next generation, and provide life skills, such as how to sew and repair clothes. The Circular Fashion Incubator CIC team was comprised of 5 staff members who worked across a number of key focus areas, including eco-art, education, emotional support, financial advice, leadership skills and slow fashion design to influence positive change. The organisation was partnered with the Circular Fashion Week Conference and Competition, with an event scheduled from the 28th – 29th of May 2025 at Nexus, Leeds University. Teaching sustainable practises was a tool to transform the fashion industry and Members support was encouraged, including assistance seeking grants, sponsorships and identifying suitable venues for discussions, events and studios.

The Chair thanked the speaker for their submission, highlighting this key issue and addressing it through appropriate means. Support was offered to the organisation and Members were encouraged to attend relevant events.

43 Director's update - Strategy & Resources

A verbal update/presentation from the Strategy & Resources Directorate, was provided to update Members on recent work of the department.

Andrew Dodman, Chief Officer, Human Resources/Interim Assistance Chief Executive, and Andrew Byrom, Deputy Chief Digital & Information Officer, provided Members with the following information:

- The Directorate was the largest within the Council and was split into professional support functions such as finance, human resources, marketing and IT and then front line delivery covering catering, cleaning and facilities management. There were six dedicated teams within the directorate.
- Legal, Democratic Services and Information Governance supported the climate emergency agenda by providing legal advice for a variety of meetings and strategic plans, such as Net Zero, supported hybrid meetings and had reduced levels of printed paper packs.
- The Finance team held a similar position, supporting a range of advice and management processes for capital, revenue and finance, including for energy efficient projects and links to the Best City Ambition. Sustainable methods for procurement were outlined as contracts over £5million required a carbon reduction plan and delivery of additional social value beyond the core contract requirements was sought. Joining up a single approach with other Leeds Anchor organisations was sought to add to social value ambitions.
- The Integrated Digital Services team were working to reduce the number of applications used across the Council and to move away from physical data storage to the cloud model in order to reduce hardware requirements. The team also supported hybrid working and were working to reduce printing requirement, including installing more efficient printers.

- Human Relations and Business Support developed active travel schemes and corporate travel plans to reduce grey fleet car use and overall millage. Carbon literacy training was offered to increase overall expertise and climate consciousness.
- Strategy and Performance covered climate resilience and serve weather planning, including creating regional and national links to join up work and share best practise.
- Civic Enterprise covered facilities management, cleaning and travel and considered sustainable planning for efficient vehicle use, telematics and the electric vehicle fleet. In order to increase the efficiency of buildings LEDs lights were installed, hybrid working, the Big Switch Off and increased recycling of waste was also supported.
- Leeds Building Services focused on increasing sustainability considerations for procurement decision making and scheme design for elective vehicle charging and sustainable power generation, such as air source heat pumps. 43 of the Craft Operatives had completed training for maintaining renewable schemes.
- One quarter of the Council's vehicle fleet were now electric vehicles and trials for electric refuse vehicles had commenced. Telematics to improve routing efficiency was also implemented.
- Catering Leeds were mindful of their impact on the Net Zero ambition, with a need to reduce food waste and also use digital solutions to reduce reliance on paper.
- The next steps were to consider the Directorates position within wider Council strategies, including a strong emphasis on climate consciousness, continuing and strengthening partnership working to streamline national and regional approaches and identify further sensible funding opportunities. These steps considered digital and physical infrastructure, workforce and training, service delivery to support Net Zero, as well as continuing to review and reflect on previous activity.

Members discussed the following points:

- It was confirmed that the Council were not purchasing energy from a green energy provider due to cost and effectiveness, but further solar options were being explored.
- There was solar power used at New Market House to charge the building, but it was not yet used to power the electric refuse vehicles, however, more efficient methods were to be explored.
- The focus had been on the overall electricity consumption of the Council and options to expand solar power for charging electric vehicles, both internally and for park and ride schemes, had not been planned for at this stage.
- There was an intention to collect food waste at schools through the revised refuse collection methods, and further details on the contents of the plans were agreed to be provided back to Members.
- IT equipment was recycled through a contract with an external organisation, with laptops being data wiped resold or stripped, which was cost neutral to the Council. Printing toner cartridges were returned for reuse to the supplier.

- There were mixed views received from staff in regard to using their own equipment, as part of the Core Business Transformation Programme, and more work was required before its roll out in April 2025.
- There was not a specific metric for determining required desk space provision due to different service's needs, but estates and capacity were reviewed, and adaptations were made accordingly.
- There had been some issues with the recent changes to printing policy which had impacted on the ability to work remotely, with further concerns raised with the close down of the Christmas period. In response it was noted that the ambition was to reduce printing need and increase digital use which would save money and paper.
- Members suggested electronic annotation methods would be required if paper copies of documents were to be replaced with digital and there were also implications on exempt information which was sent to Members via restricted paper copies only. Officers offered to meet with Members to discuss issues and resolutions.
- Information regarding the effectiveness of refuse vehicles going out on multiple collections a day was agreed to be referred to the Chief Officer for Environmental Services and provided back. A route management review was also ongoing.
- Future plans to expand and embed carbon literacy training were explained as to extend the offer further than current management training requirements and a generic programme was in development with further information agreed to be provided to Members when available. Members noted this training was essential to encourage behaviour changes, as had been seen in partner organisations, which could be furthered by shared learning.
- The impact that proposals to pay back staff for grey fleet mileage when moving to personal ownership electric vehicles, particularly for lower earning staff were queried. In response the Executive Board decision of 2019 was planned to be implemented by the end of 2025, but work requirement analysis was ongoing, and a purchasing and leasing scheme was to be made available, as well as making further affordability considerations.

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

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

The report of the Chief Officer, Climate, Energy & Green Spaces, introduced the update of the Director, Yorkshire & Humber Climate Commission and Research Fellow, Leeds Climate Commission which provided an update on the work of the Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission and Leeds Climate Commission. The Committee also received a presentation.

Amelia Duncan, Research Fellow for the University of Leeds, provided Members with the following information:

- A Climate Commission was a model inspired by the UK's Committee on Climate Change and had originally been experimental partnerships between the third sector, public sector and relevant organisations.
- Leeds Climate Commission (Leeds CC) was the first to be established in 2017 which was followed by a significant research grant to apply this model to other

locations, with over 20 established since, as well as a national network of Commissions.

- The Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission (YHCC) had been established in 2021, with good governance and working partnerships developed across the region.
- Work was conducted to influence climate action, develop and share best practises, facilitate research and attract investment, alongside regular service reviews.
- The University of Leeds acted as a secretariate for the Leeds CC, as an entity to convene in order to discuss and promote climate initiatives. Leeds had over 20 Climate Commissioners and YHCC had over 40.
- Areas of focus were, keeping on track through regular evaluation, partnership working and acting as a catalyst for climate action, including managing new partnerships.
- Evaluation was done through robust evidence gathering, and covered risk and resilience, biodiversity and nature, fairness and climate justice. A climate action dashboard had been developed to explore different profiles of carbon output across individuals, businesses and public institutions. Logistics and engagement were managed through performance indicators.
- Partnership working was scaled up where appropriate, as well as encouraging ownership of projects. A Climate Awareness Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) was to be made publicly available, and a spiral model education programme had been developed to engage with students consistently through their education and to support carbon literacy.
- A solar and fuel poverty map had been produced to empower residents and encourage fairness and informed delivery partners. Leeds sustainable supply chain pilot involved anchor institutions to create circular supply chains.
- Leeds CC and YHCC shared ideas and best practise, with a regional focus to scale up action and inform regional and national policy.
- YHCC was comprised of four groups, the Regional Picture and Evidence Group, Regional and National Policy Collaboration, Public Affairs Steering Group and Communities and Engagement.
- Flagship projects from YHCC worked to develop pledges, strategic framework, adaptation plans and mobilise and encourage funding.
- Public engagement included promoting climate talking points, our carbon story, transport and the climate action pledge.
- The climate action pledge sought for the region to be climate change ready, to reduce emissions and support biodiversity. It promoted leadership and fairness and engaged with employers, stakeholder and workers.
- Future opportunities were to make the climate action dashboard widely available and to create further links across the region, including future dialogue with the Committee.

During the discussions the following matters were considered:

- The Climate Awareness MOOC had been developed through the University of Leeds business school and contained information relating to carbon reduction, climate adaptation, social justice and carbon literacy. It was currently offered to business students and was being integrated into staff training, with a hope to feed the training into all courses offered by the university.

- The Climate Awareness MOOC was outlined as a useful tool for Parish and Town Council's to promote climate awareness, carbon literacy and accredit Elected Members. This was agreed to be followed up after the meeting.
- Combining solar availability and fuel poverty was outlined to be valuable work and the fuel poverty map could inform retrofitting work and allow a benefit of return to lower income private properties through resource allocation and retrofitting. Further data was agreed to be shared with relevant partners and housing providers, in order to translate the map into reality, inform social housing models and integrate the model into the wider housing industry.
- The fuel poverty map could be provided to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to assist with the one stop shop home energy initiative, which allowed people to access grant funding to sustainably improve their homes efficiency.
- Community energy initiatives were considered by YHCC through Community Energy England, looking at local energy plans. Climate Action Leeds were also working on this through identifying potential sites for retrofitting and supporting partnership delivery, however, this was still in its initial stages.
- Further dialogue and collaboration were important in order for the overall approach to be linked and knowledge to be shared, working towards a common goal.
- To continue momentum on this agenda, considerations for the circular economy, increased public engagement, including at schools, carbon literacy training and developing delivery plans for retrofitting and sustainable energy generation needed to continue to be enhanced.
- A timeline for nature framework for Leeds, which was work that had been established in partnership by the University of Leeds, the Council and Climate Action Leeds, was agreed to be provided back to Members.

RESOLVED – That the presentation, along with Members comments, be noted.

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

The report of the Chief Officer, Climate, Energy & Green Spaces, presented 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 could be done to mitigate and adapt.

Jim Parker, Senior Research Fellow, Leeds Beckett University, provided Members with the following information:

- Leeds Sustainability Institute, as part of Leeds Beckett University, conducted applied research in three key areas, sustainable building, urban environments and behaviour changes.
- The update focused on retrofit work related to the findings of the Urban Heat Island (UHI) and associated intensity and overheating data and predictions. The UHI effect was the retention of heat from the sun in dense urban areas, which was a global issue and lead to the retention of heat at night time which impacted upon peoples sleep and could exacerbate health issues.

- There were building regulations in place for London and Manchester to consider the effects of UHIs and allow consideration of and to condition for ways to reduce the effect.
- Leeds city centre was outlined to be dense but dissipated and with the climate getting warmer, the city centre experienced higher temperatures when compared to outer areas. Foliage retained heat and released it at a slower rate.
- Modelling and prediction of variables were understood through dynamic simulation, where an average temperature was determined and informed what would need to be accounted for in terms of heat dissipation methods. 3D models were also used to predict weather effects.
- Part O had just been included as a new building regulation for new dwellings, but dynamic simulation was not mandated within Leeds yet.
- Simulation weather files were currently taken from data sets at Leeds Bradford Airport, Leeds East Airport RAF Base, University of Leeds, Leeds Beckett University and Leeds City Council. Using weather files from airports was not ideal to compare with city centre locations.
- Historically, dwellings were naturally ventilated, other non-domestic buildings, often used air conditioning to reduce temperatures, which required energy. TM59 assessments provided guidance on mechanically ventilated properties to ensure that the ventilation system was appropriately sized to prevent overheating.
- Design summer year files, based on previous data, was noted to often be out of date and morphing it to predict future temperatures was often not accurate. UK Climate Impact Projections provided different scenarios, considering the level of wind and rain.
- A network of sensors were in place across the city to provide more granular data to help understand the difference in heat retention between grey spaces and green spaces. Five new weather stations had also been constructed, collecting more accurate, detailed data, informing a bespoke, nuanced approach for the city centre and outer areas.
- Recommendations and future work were to increase the sophistication of data analysis, develop more accurate data gathering methods, raise awareness of UHI, capture micro-climate data through the new weather station locations and partnership working.

During discussions the Committee discussed the following:

- How these models, findings and heat projections could inform planning decisions was queried, including its inclusion into planning policy, with consideration of the two new local policy suites currently being developed for Leeds. Current data was somewhat of out date and there was not much in place in legislative terms yet.
- It was often difficult to evaluate planning proposals with limited design details but following the implementation of policy for London and Manchester and as more nuanced data became available, the approach would be better informed.
- How green space alleviated overheating was queried, in response it was well established that green space mitigated heat, dependent on foliage type and

complexity and often needed to be expansive to have real effects; land allocation and demand tight within the city centre.

- It was suggested that the data would be helpful if shared with Public Health with the referenced cardiovascular impact of overheating. It was noted that initial meetings had been held with Public Health, with more work to be continued, such as mapping data.
- The overheating study and associated data would be a useful consideration for the next City Development Director's update to the Committee, particularly considering using up to date research when developing local planning policy. It was outlined that data needed to be confirmed as wholly accurate before informing the planning process, but connections were beginning to be made.
- Members noted their ambition to be proactive for developments to be climate adapted and given the concerns of locking in poor performance with less reliable data, a long term plan for accurate weather files was sought.
- The weather files, published by the Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE), were mainly used to meet regulation compliance and there was push back by the development industry to go further on overheating conditions and considerations; comparing this data with more complex data would inform a more accurate approach. Learning how to respond to future risks was an essential piece of climate adaptation.
- Data specific to Leeds could be used to pose questions to developers and inform environmental buffers, green space provision or contributions to reduce overheating impacts. There were some difficulties quantifying all weather prediction considerations such as wind direction, but all cooling methods were sensible to support.
- Next steps to promote this agenda were to feed into Public Health and the planning process once data became more detailed, as well as liaison with the Anchor institutes to discuss best practises.

RESOLVED – That the presentation, along with Members comments, be noted.

46 Climate Emergency Advisory Committee Annual Reports

The report of the Chief Officer, Climate, Energy & Green Spaces, presented 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 provided 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.

Polly Cook, Chief Officer for CEGS, provided Members with the following information:

- In introducing the Climate Emergency Annual report which had been presented to Executive Board and Scrutiny Boards, the key headline figures were, since 2005, the Council had reduced its carbon output by 63%, the city as a whole had reduced by 38% and also highlighted retrofit, electric vehicle, community projects and fleet mileage workstreams.
- The Climate Emergency Advisory Committee annual report was to be submitted to Full Council, subject to additional comments by Members, and its contents reflected on the work conducted and the progress made through the Committee.

During discussions the Committee discussed the following:

- Given that the data on the Council's scope 1 and 2 emissions outlined there was still a lot of work to be done to reach carbon neutrality targets, further information regarding the plans which were in place to meet targets were sought. In response, it was noted that over previous year, carbon emissions had stabilised and kilowatt per hour data showed a decline, however, nationally, carbon output from the grid had increased.
- The focus currently, for the Council to make progress, was to reduce kilowatt per hour energy consumption as national plans changed to the grids carbon reliance, alongside a mix of sustainable power sources beginning to come to fruition. There were also corporate initiatives in place to seek funds for public sector decarbonisation.
- The variety of Council owned buildings posed challenges, with retrofitting some heritage buildings taking detailed consideration, with significant costs to connect air source heat pumps. City centre buildings had been connected to district heating and options to improve all building efficiency were continued to be explored.
- Decarbonising the Council vehicle fleet was challenging as the required technology for some vehicle types was not yet ready or was high cost. The trial for electric refuse vehicles was positive, however, was still in its initial stages and a wider review was to continue.
- Work to improve insulation efficiency for Council buildings was explained to be considered by the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and focused primarily on draught proofing windows and doors and was often dependent on a buildings age.
- An evaluation of leisure centre efficiency was ongoing, the corporate estate was moving away from gas heating and improvements to the housing stock were considered.
- Members were satisfied with the contents of the CEAC report to be submitted for consideration at Full Council and thanked CEGS Officers for their continued work.

RESOLVED – That the presentation, along with Members comments, be noted.

47 Working Group Update

The Chair updated Members, noting a Working Group had been held, considering glyphosate usage, climate risk to the Council estate and had identified future topics. A visit to Lotherton Hall was planned for the new year, which was to link to a previously identified topic for consideration of communication and engagement.

The next Working Group meeting had been scheduled for the 27th of January 2025; however, it was noted this potentially clashed with a Community Committee review working group and an alternative date may to be sought, in consultation with Members. It was suggested that Doodle polls could be used as a digital method to consult on dates with Members for future Working Group dates.

48 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RESOLVED – To note the date and time of the next meeting as Monday the 20th of January at 10:00am.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Monday, 24th March, 2025