

# CLIMATE EMERGENCY ADVISORY COMMITTEE – CONSULTATIVE MEETING

WEDNESDAY, 16TH JUNE, 2021

**PRESENT:** Councillor N Walshaw in the Chair

Councillors B Anderson, N Buckley,  
P Carlill, M Dobson, R Finnigan, E Flint,  
A Forsaith, C Hart-Brooke, H Hayden,  
J Illingworth, M Robinson, M Shahzad,  
N Walshaw and P Wray

Before proceeding to the agenda, the Chair sought Members views in relation to recommencing physical meetings at the Civic Hall, or, continuing with remote consultative meetings moving forward. The Chair initially proposed that the next meeting scheduled for 28<sup>th</sup> July 2021 be held at the Civic Hall, with working group meetings continuing to be held remotely.

Members recognised the benefits of both physical and remote meetings, highlighting the need for full and proper discussions to take place face-to-face without technical distractions, but also the flexibility of remote meetings, which enable Members, officers, guest speakers, and members of the public to participate without the need for travel. Further to this, Members highlighted the Committee's role of leading by example in reducing the city's carbon footprint.

Reflecting on the views of Members and the advisory status of the Committee, the Chair confirmed that the Committee will continue to hold consultative remote meetings, and physical meetings will be arranged as and when formal decisions are required, to be reviewed in line with any changes to government legislation.

## **1 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Al Garthwaite and Paul Wadsworth. Councillor Matthew Robinson was in attendance as substitute.

## **2 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

## **3 Minutes - 10 March 2021**

**RECOMMENDED** – That the minutes of the meeting held 16<sup>th</sup> June 2021 be noted.

## **4 Open Forum**

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

Two videos were submitted on this occasion.

Our Future Leeds submitted a video, encouraging the development of a single cross-council Climate Emergency action plan, and emphasising the importance of the role of Scrutiny Boards in monitoring the progress of the city's action to reach net zero.

The East of Otley Action Group also submitted a video, outlining concerns in relation to a specific application for a new housing development on the outskirts of Otley, and the impact of such applications on the council's declaration of a Climate Emergency.

Members noted the Committee's role in supporting the development of a Climate Emergency action plan, which will be supported by the working groups and subsequently added to the Committee's forward plan for a formal discussion, whereas the scrutiny of an action plan falls within the remit of the Environment, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Board. In addition, whilst recognising the challenges associated with balancing local climate priorities with national planning legislation, some concerns were raised around the extent to which the climate emergency is prioritised across all council departments. The Chair highlighted the Local Plan Review, taking place through the lens of the climate emergency, as a significant step towards addressing barriers to sustainable practices within the planning system.

Both videos can be viewed [here](#).

## 5 Working Groups Update

The Chief Officer for Sustainable Energy and Air Quality, Polly Cook, provided an update to Members on the progress of the working groups to the Committee as follows:

- **Biodiversity and Food** – At the most recent meeting, the group received a presentation from Professor Caroline Orfila explaining the current food system and the percentage of calories required by the Leeds' population that is produced in Leeds, along with challenges faced in terms of variety of crops. The group will now focus on developing a Low Carbon Action Plan for food.
- **Planning, Buildings and Energy** – The group have recently met to discuss the PAS 2035 (the over-arching document in the retrofit standards framework), which is continuing to cause a number of challenges in terms of delivery within council schemes, and have developed a lobbying position with key asks for national government.

- **Transport** – The group has not met since the last Committee meeting, and proposals to restructure the working group were discussed later in the meeting.

## 6 Forward Plan 2021/22

The Chief Officer (Sustainable Energy and Air Quality) submitted a report that provided a proposal for the forward plan for future meetings of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee, and an opportunity to revisit the structure and work programmes of the working groups.

The Chief Officer (Sustainable Energy and Air Quality) introduced the report and set out the proposal to restructure the current transport working group to include behavioural change, incorporating ongoing work around communications and engagement for transport and climate emergency priorities more broadly. The Chief Officer also sought Members views on any amendments or additions to the proposed meeting scheduled appended to the report. It was also noted that the development of the Carbon Action Plan will be added to the forward plan to be considered alongside the COP26 Adaptation and Resilience Action Plan in September 2021.

Members thanked the Chief Officer for her contributions, and suggested several items of future work of the Committee, including:

- *Zero carbon strategy for wood.* In response to a request, Members were advised that the council's policies for the future use of wood, following significant tree planting schemes, will be added to the agenda of a future meeting of the Biodiversity and Food working group.
- *West Yorkshire Mayor.* Members suggested that the Committee consider inviting the new West Yorkshire Mayor to a future meeting, to discuss her priorities and how the Council can work in partnership to achieve net-zero across West Yorkshire.
- *Funding.* In reference to the funding item to be considered at the next meeting, Members requested that an update be provided in relation to the Climate Bonds Initiative, as well as funding plans of other organisations, such as the West Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce and the Institute of Directors, and other local authorities including Bristol City Council.
- *Relaxed mowing and verge cutting.* In reference to the item scheduled to consider the council's parks and countryside service, Members noted that more communication with parish and town councils is needed for relaxed mowing schedules, to ensure that the most convenient and safe locations are selected throughout the year.

**RECOMMENDED** – That the contents of the report and appendices, along with Members comments, be noted.

## 7 Update on citywide engagement with the Climate Emergency

The Chief Officer (Sustainable Energy and Air Quality) submitted a report that provided an update on work undertaken by the council and its partners to improve citywide engagement with issues relating to the Climate Emergency.

The following were in attendance:

- Chad Newton, Senior Communications and Marketing Officer, Sustainable Energy and Air Quality Team, Leeds City Council
- Kate Lock, Leeds Climate Commission
- Simon Moore, Leeds Climate Commission
- Jenni Brooks, Climate Action Leeds
- Adrian Capon, Connecting Leeds, Leeds City Council

The guest speakers in attendance delivered a PowerPoint presentation on the partnership approach to communications and engagement for climate priorities across the city. Highlights included:

- 'Leeds Climate' newsletter sends latest updates and opportunities to 5,500+ residents each month.
- Developing new campaigns and channels to reach new communities and individuals, including 'Hyperlocal' and peer-to-peer engagement, 'Leeds: City on a mission' a year-long programme with BBC Radio 5 Live.
- #LeedsActsTogether social media campaign launched by Leeds Climate Commission, to coincide with 5 Live's broadcasts, in response to the key recommendation of Leeds Climate Change Citizens' Jury for a city-wide communications drive.
- An update on 'Climate Action Leeds' the 5-year programme of climate emergency community action following a successful bid to National Lottery Climate Action Fund, including the four newly established in Seacroft, Garforth, Otley and Beeston.
- An introduction to the 'Walk it. Ride it.' campaign from Connecting Leeds, the start of a collective city-wide movement towards healthier, greener travel in Leeds that encourages people to consider walking, cycling and eventually all other green travel modes in the future.

**RECOMMENDED** – That the contents of the report, along with Members comments, be noted.