

Meeting	Climate Change Policy and Scrutiny Committee
Date	16 December 2019
Present	Councillors Vassie (Chair), Baker (Vice-Chair), S Barnes, Fisher, Hook, D Myers, Wann, Smithson (Co-opted Non-Statutory Member) and Wilcox (Co-opted Non-Statutory Member)

Apologies

PART A - Matters Dealt with Under Delegated Powers

21. Declarations of Interest

At this point, Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, prejudicial interest or any disclosable pecuniary interests which they may have in respect of business on the agenda.

Councillor Vassie declared a personal interest in relation to item 4 of the agenda, as he had previously worked on several projects for the Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy.

Councillor Barnes declared a personal interest in relation to item 6 of the agenda, as he worked for an Offshore Renewable Energy company, Catapult.

22. Minutes

Members confirmed an alteration to the minutes in regards to item 19 of the minutes (Specialist Perspectives on Challenges and Opportunities of a Zero Carbon Fleet). The alteration was agreed in order to provide a further detailed account of the item in the absence of any written reports for the item at 12 November 2019 meeting.

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 12 November 2019 be approved and signed by the Chair as an accurate record. Subject to, the amendments to item 19 of the minutes.

Reason: To ensure a comprehensive record of the item be kept in the minutes as a substitute for not having written reports with the item.

23. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been six registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Petra Bistričić confirmed that Extinction Rebellion's road blocks would continue in the city every month to protest against air pollution in the city. They raised concerns that air pollution in the city was a major environmental and health issue that resulted in the death of York residents every year. They requested that the Council take the health risks seriously and that the city be made a car free zone. This request would extend to electric vehicles as they also create air pollution.

June Tranmer spoke as a member of One Planet York on its planning moving forward and the groups funding situation, with member funding not be sufficient for the group to carry out work. They highlighted that the group was still writing its mission statement and would like to provide mentoring to business' across the city, to assist these business to reduce their carbon foot print.

Debby Cobbett raised the Yorkshire and Humber Pensioners Convention Transport Manifesto and noted the importance of better bus services to people and the planet. They also noted that York's current bus services were not good enough for accessing the city centre. They asked the Committee to support the manifesto either as a Committee or as individual members. They raised the Council magazine not including anything on climate change and questioned if the council had done enough after declaring a climate emergency.

Kate Ravilious highlighted their background in climate science and their role as a science journalist. They noted that they were pleased that carbon budgeting was on the agenda but that the City of York Council had not done enough fast enough and were treating the Climate Emergency like it was business as usual. They requested the Committee recommend to the Executive to create a Specialist Climate Emergency team, to create a strategy on how to reach a net zero by 2030, and to pause all major projects until the strategy is in place.

David Emslie runs two business' at Clifton Moor, these business carry out work in lighting and water which can save money and reduce carbon

emissions. They noted that their projects aim to keep cost lower than the predicted savings and that projects on average recoup the cost of the project in 3 years. They an audit carried out for the York Eco Business Centre in May 2016 that highlighted a potential saving in both carbon emissions and up keep cost to upgrade light bulbs, that was not implemented. They asked that the Committee to support working with local organisations that can assist in reaching zero carbon by 2030.

Geoff Beacon raised concerns that the Local Plan was planning for people in the city to have large carbon foot prints. They highlighted a concern that a large amount of York residents were retired and moved from the south to buy several properties in the city, resulting in York importing a lot of high carbon foot prints, while driving those in the city with a low carbon foot print to live further out of the city. They noted that too few people knew about the Committee in the city and that more should be done to advertise it.

24. Refreshing York's Commitment to the Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy

Members considered the report regarding the prospect of refreshing York's commitment to Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy that had been adopted by a number of cities across Europe. It was noted that at the 29 August 2019 meeting of the Executive it was resolved that this Committee be asked 'to consider York refreshing its engagement with the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy.'

Ryan Green from the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) joined the Committee and confirmed that CDP had worked very closely with the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy. He noted that a key aspect of the commitment was to report on progress towards targets every two years and that this could be done for free through the CDP platform if the council wished to do so. He also confirmed that the current emission's reduction targets set in the commitment were the European Union's nationally defined contribution in the Paris Climate Change Agreement to Decarbonisation.

Members discussed the potential benefits of being able to share ideas and experience with other members of the Covenant who would hold shared objectives. It was also noted that membership of the European Union was not required to be a member of the Covenant and that members of the Covenant outside of the European Union, should still be able to access preferential loans from the European Investment Bank.

Members unanimously agreed to recommend to Full Council that they consider signing up to the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy.

Resolved: That Council sign up to the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy at the 19 December 2019 meeting.

Reason: To ensure that the Committee continued to support the Council's pledge to becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

25. Scoping Report on Corporate Review of Poverty in York

Members considered a request by the Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee (CSMC) to undertake a review into elements of poverty in the City which fall within the Climate Change Policy and Scrutiny Committee's remit, as part of a corporate review of poverty in York.

Members considered the parameters for the Committee's review into elements of poverty in the City which fall within the Climate Change Policy and Scrutiny Committee's remit as suggested in the report. Members agreed to expand the scope of its review beyond addressing fuel poverty by saving money on energy bills and pursuing sustainable affordable travel to improve accessibility to jobs and the city centre. Members raised the opportunity to also explore the health benefits of sustainable transport, as well as, potential economic benefits from the creation of green jobs and clean growth. Members also noted the often disproportionate effect of climate change on those from poorer economic backgrounds and considered issues such as flooding in the city, it was noted that the remit could also incorporate mitigating the effects of climate change on those in poverty.

Resolved:

- i. That a feasibility study be produced including a recommendation for the Committee's remit, taking into account the discussions held at the Committee, as part of a corporate review of poverty in York.

Reason: To agree a remit that would assist in providing a corporate, cross-party response to poverty in the city.

26. Carbon Budgeting

The Committee were joined by the Director of Economy and Place (CYC), as well as Jonathan Green (Stockholm Environment Institute), Ryan Green (CDP), and Sara Telahoun (Anthesis) for a round table discussion on the challenges and opportunities of Carbon Budgeting. Before Members discussed the item Sara Telahoun gave a presentation on local authorities and the climate emergency, the SCATTER tool, and Carbon Budgeting. After the presentation experts confirmed the importance of a team that worked on carbon budgeting and on providing oversight to all important council projects. Members were informed that the makeup of these teams varied at different authorities, but were recommended an example such as Bristol City Council's Energy Services Team.

Members discussed reaching zero carbon by 2030 and the importance of having a strategy on how to achieve this. It was noted that should the Council continue with a policy of business as usual, then it could have used its entire carbon budget between now and 2050 in 6 to 7 years. The importance of targeting areas with the biggest impact that can be achieved quickly was highlighted as a crucial element of any strategy, but that overall the strategy must look to do everything possible if it is to achieve the Council's goal of zero carbon by 2030. Areas identified to tackle carbon emissions included the cities current and future infrastructure, the cities energy supply, and the cities habitats and what land the Council had influence over.

The importance of public engagement was raised as being potentially crucial to the zero carbon by 2030 target for the city and it was noted that Members should play a key role in leading that consultation with residents. Members considered the role of a carbon Budget that could be both an asset in developing strategy, as well as, being a key tool in communicating with residents that strategy. Co-benefits were raised as a key part of messaging to get support for projects when trying to reduce carbon emissions.

Members also discussed at what level (such as individual authorities, regions, or national level) could the goal of reaching zero carbon be most effectively achieved. It was noted that this depended on the sector and that the council could look at both regionally, where devolution was noted as having been effective and locally, especially in relation to things that were directly in the Council's control. A potential lack of sufficient funding from central government was raised as a possible risk to initiatives seeking to make the city zero carbon by 2030. Therefore, Members highlighted the need to identify and then priorities areas that could be considered value for money. Exploring the economic opportunities of decarbonising the city's

economy was raised, Members highlighted examples of green projects having an economic benefit to a city.

The Committee unanimously agreed to make two recommendations to the Executive (see below under resolved).

Resolved:

- i. That the Executive be asked to appoint a Carbon Budgeting Specialist at a senior level, with a supporting team, to further develop a zero carbon strategy that will include a carbon budget.

Reason: To enable City of York Council to deliver on its pledge to create a zero carbon future for York.

- ii. That the Executive be asked to give careful thought to whether this Carbon Budgeting Specialist should sit outside the existing directorates.

Reason: In order to ensure that the proposed team can work freely in all areas of the City of York Council's operations.

27. Work Plan 2019/20

Members considered the committee's work plan for the remainder of the 2019/20 municipal year. It was agreed that the feasibility study as part of a corporate review of poverty in York would be added to the work plan for 14 January 2020. For the 4 February 2020 it was agreed that an update from One Planet York and Biodiversity (including tree planting) would be added to the work plan. For 10 March 2020 it was agreed that divestment from fossil fuels and a local energy strategy/clean growth investment would be added to the work plan.

Resolved:

- i. That the draft work plan was approved, as submitted, subject to the above clarification.

Reason: To ensure that the committee has a planned programme of work in place.

PART B - Matters referred to Council

24. Refreshing York's Commitment to the Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy

[See also under Part A]

Members considered the report regarding the prospect of refreshing York's commitment to Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy that had been adopted by a number of cities across Europe. It was noted that at the 29 August 2019 meeting of the Executive it was resolved that this Committee be asked 'to consider York refreshing its engagement with the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy.'

Ryan Green from the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) joined the Committee and confirmed that CDP had worked very closely with the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy. He noted that a key aspect of the commitment was to report on progress towards targets every two years and that this could be done for free through the CDP platform if the council wished to do so. He also confirmed that the current emission's reduction targets set in the commitment were the European Union's nationally defined contribution in the Paris Climate Change Agreement to Decarbonisation.

Members discussed the potential benefits of being able to share ideas and experience with other members of the Covenant who would hold shared objectives. It was also noted that membership of the European Union was not required to be a member of the Covenant and that members of the Covenant outside of the European Union, should still be able to access preferential loans from the European Investment Bank.

Members unanimously agreed to recommend to Full Council that they consider signing up to the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy.

Recommended: That Council sign up to the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy at the 19 December 2019 meeting.

Reason: To ensure that the Committee continued to support the Council's pledge to becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

Cllr C Vassie, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.35 pm and finished at 8.19 pm].