

Climate Emergency Scrutiny Committee

Report of the Head of Carbon Reduction

Portfolio of the Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change

Business Support

Summary

1. Processes associated with the commercial and industrial sector contribute almost 6% of emissions in York. However, the business carbon footprint is much larger than this through the contribution of energy usage from commercial buildings and from fleet and freight.
2. Achieving York's climate change ambition of becoming a net zero carbon city by 2030 will require all businesses in York to make changes in how they operate. There are number of existing and planned services available to businesses to support them in this transition.

Recommendations

3. Scrutiny Committee is asked to:
 - i. Consider the contents of this report on Business Support

Reason

The impact of the commercial and industrial sector contributes to our city-wide emissions. Decarbonisation of business is essential in meeting our climate change ambition.

Background

4. Processes associated with the commercial and industrial sector contribute 6% of the total carbon emissions in York. However, the overall contribution from businesses is much larger through energy usage associated with commercial buildings, fleet operation, freight, material consumption, waste and business supply chains.

5. Addressing emissions associated with business cuts across several of the themes and objectives within the Draft York Climate Change Strategy.
6. There a number of local, regional and national support services available to businesses to support their transition to net zero.

Local Support Services

7. The Economic Growth team staff work to encourage new businesses into the City and also support businesses on a one to one basis by:
 - providing advice and guidance on a wide variety of economic topics
 - looking to create employment opportunities
 - attracting and supporting businesses
 - helping to shape the workforce of the future
8. The Carbon Reduction Team are working with the Economic Growth Team to create a comprehensive checklist for business sustainability. The checklist will be used to advise businesses on what areas they need to look at when considering sustainability as well as provide signposting to other useful services and links on where to get more information and funding.
9. The newly launched York Sustainability Clinic is an initiative which is part of the Environmental Sustainability Academy at York (ESAY). The clinic offers students at University of York practical experience related to environmental sustainability. A recent pilot saw undergraduates supporting local businesses to develop sustainability action plans and solve real world environmental issues. The clinic is planning to be introduced as part of the main university programme in September 2023.
10. First York recently launched the York Go-Greener Fund with £20,000 allocated to help small businesses in retail, leisure and hospitality encourage eco-friendly high street spending and boost customer-led sustainable growth. The fund is supported by the FSB (Federation of Small Businesses) in North Yorkshire and the York & North Yorkshire Growth Hub.

Regional Support Services

11. Run by Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership in partnership with York & North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (Y&NY LEP) the Resource Efficient Business (REBiz) programme provides advice and

financial support for small or medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to become more resource efficient (energy, water, waste) as well as develop circular economy business models and practices. This programme is available to businesses across West and North Yorkshire. Support includes:

- Free resource efficiency audits worth to £1,200
- 40% funding towards capital investment projects to a maximum £40,000 grant
- Free circular economy consultancy of up to 30 days intensive support

12. The Y&NY LEP has recently launched their Free Net-Zero Business Toolkit, this includes:

- 6 'Benefits to Business guides' and checklists around the circular economy to:
 - a. Learn about the circular economy, and how it benefits businesses
 - b. See real-life case studies to show the ideas in action
 - c. Use an action-focused checklist, to help take the knowledge from the guides into business action
- Carbon and Circular Economy Toolkit, comprising of:
 - a. Carbon questionnaire – asks questions about different areas of business operations that create carbon emissions
 - b. Carbon Footprint analysis – identifies how much and where carbon is produced, as well as giving a circularity level. This tool offers checklists and frameworks to help to improve hotspot areas
 - c. Circular Economy Toolkit – provides an introduction to the circular economy and assists with baselining, exploration, prioritisation and planning for the circular economy

National Support Services

13. The SME Climate Hub is a global initiative that asks businesses to pledge a commitment to cutting carbon emissions in half by 2030 and to reach 'net zero' by 2050 or sooner. They have developed free, practical resources specifically tailored to support SMEs on their net zero journey

through strategic emission reductions and opportunities for climate leadership.

14. Business in the Community (BITC) work and campaign to continually grow businesses responsible practices, uniting efforts for greater social and environmental impact in communities. They focus on:
 - developing a skilled and inclusive workforce
 - ensuring work is good for everyone
 - innovating to sustain and regenerate the planet
 - building thriving communities
15. Ashden's mission is to accelerate transformative climate solutions and build a more just world. Their awards, events, networks and analysis support climate innovation in the UK and developing countries.
16. Energy Saving Trust is an independent organisation working to address the climate emergency. A respected and trusted voice on energy efficiency and clean energy solutions, they:
 - work towards a smart, decarbonised, decentralised energy system.
 - empower millions of householders every year to make better energy choices.
 - deliver transformative energy programmes working with governments.
 - support businesses with energy efficiency strategies, research, assurance and communications, enabling them to play their part in building a sustainable future.
17. WRAP is a climate action NGO working around the globe to tackle the causes of the climate crisis and give the planet a sustainable future, working specifically to change the way things are produced, consumed, and disposed of, to reduce waste. They will work collaboratively on a Voluntary Business Agreement to enable action across the entire supply chain
18. Carbon Trust supports organisations globally to accelerate towards Net Zero. Seeking smarter ways to work, from target setting, Net Zero pathways, assurance and footprinting, to policy advice, strategy setting and programme delivery.

Implications

- **Financial** – There are no financial implication associated with the report.

- **Human Resources (HR)** – There are no HR implications associated with the report.
- **Equalities** – There are no Equalities implications associated with the report.
- **Legal** – There are no legal implications associated with the report.
- **Crime and Disorder** – There are no crime implications associated with this report
- **Information Technology** – There are no IT implications associated with this report
- **Property** – There are no property implications associated with this report

Contact Details

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Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background papers

First Bus Go-greener Fund Winners

<https://www.ynygrowthhub.com/blog/news/york-go-greener-fund-winners/>