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Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Environment and Climate Emergency
Date	21 November 2023
Present	Councillor Ravilious (Executive Member)
Apologies	Councillor Kent
Officers in Attendance	Claire Foale, Assistant Director of Policy and Strategy Paul McCabe, Strategic Manager (Strategy and Policy) Shaun Gibbons, Head of Carbon Reduction

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### **13. Declarations of Interest (10:01 am)**

The Executive Member was asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests she might have in respect of the business on the agenda. None were declared.

### **14. Minutes (10:01 am)**

Resolved: That the minutes of the Decision Session held on 17 October 2023 be approved and signed by the Executive Member as a correct record.

### **15. Public Participation (10:02 am)**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the session under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

### **16. A Climate Ready York (10:02 am)**

The Executive Member considered a report that recognised the increasing threat facing the city, and region, by climate change. The report outlined progress towards strengthening York's resilience to climate change and set out key climate risks, as identified through a climate risk and vulnerability assessment.

The Assistant Director of Policy and Strategy emphasised that the report sought to ensure the city was ready for increased

threats faced by extreme weather events and potential water insecurity, as well as flooding, for which the city was already well prepared, and included recommendations for strengthening the city's approach to climate adaptation.

The Strategic Manager provided an overview, noting that:

- Met Office data suggested that heavy rain leading to flooding, extreme heat and extended dry periods were all likely to increase in prevalence and impact.
- following Council's steer, and building on the 2019 Climate Emergency Declaration, an initial assessment in 2022 identified 46 risks to the city from climate change, as detailed in Annex A of the report.
- consultations with national, regional, local and city partners had been drawn on to produce a revised York Climate Change Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (CCRVA), as set out in Annex D of the report.
- paragraph 49 of the report set out recommendations for the Executive Member to consider, including strengthening the Climate Change Strategy ambition to be net zero by 2030, by adding that by 2030 York would have set the conditions to be Climate Ready.
- a task and finish group would be established to ensure all new and emerging strategies clearly referenced climate adaptation.

The Executive Member thanked officers for the work on this issue and she recognised the need to further explore the cost of delaying action, and to consider the impact the wider UK risk would have on York.

Resolved:

- i) That the assessment of identified climate risks, as set out in Annex D of the report, be approved.
- ii) That the recommended next steps, as set out in Paragraph 49 of the report, be approved.

Reasons:

- i) To provide a basis for ongoing climate action.
- ii) To strengthen the approach towards a Climate Ready York.

## 17. Annual Carbon Emissions Report 2022/23 (10:10 am)

The Executive Member considered a report on York's carbon emissions from corporate activity in 2022/23, which monitored progress towards the city's 2030 net zero goal and identified areas of improvements.

The Head of Carbon Reduction provided an overview noting that:

- this year's reporting incorporated emissions associated with energy used in maintained schools, as well as indirect emissions from building maintenance materials, staff commuting, and homeworking. This improved the accuracy of reporting, although it made like-for-like comparisons with previous years more challenging.
- corporate emissions for the financial year 2022/23 had been calculated as 5490tCO<sub>2</sub>e; with the additional data sources removed, this represented a 10% reduction from 2021/22. The majority of corporate emissions came from two sources: gas used for heating and hot water in council buildings, and fuel used by the council fleet.
- heat decarbonisation plans had been completed for 33 of the council's highest energy consuming sites, and funding was being sought through the Decarbonisation Scheme and the York and North Yorkshire Net Zero Fund to undertake capital works to deliver improvements.
- the Solar for Schools programme had continued to expand with two maintained schools receiving free solar panels and two more were due to complete this year.
- further light-emitting diode (LED) streetlighting work was scheduled with support from the Net Zero Fund.
- the fleet electrification programme had reduced emissions from council vehicles and once completed was expected to save a total of 800tCO<sub>2</sub>e.
- the inclusion of staff commuting and homeworking had shown areas where improvements could be made, and the Council Travel Plan was being updated with suggestions for reducing these emissions.

The Executive Member thanked the officer for the work on this issue, and in answer to her questions regarding the scope for further reductions, staff travel, and homeworking the Head of Carbon Reduction confirmed that:

- the majority of the emissions reductions was associated with the fleet electrification programme, which covered all

council vehicles under 3.5 tons, and decarbonising council heavy goods vehicles could lead to significant improvements in emissions.

- the heat decarbonisation plans for the 33 sites identified would deliver a 65% reduction in emissions across those sites, but capital funding was needed to support this initiative.
- there was scope within the staff travel plan to provide advice to staff on reducing energy consumption when commuting and working from home.

Resolved: That the Corporate Emissions Report be approved for publication.

Reason: To monitor progress against the ambition for the council to be net zero by 2030.

## **18. York Emissions Inventory Report 2023 (10:17 am)**

The Executive Member considered a report that presented the Emissions Inventory for the city of York, which would be used to monitor the progress towards the city's 2030 net zero goal.

The Head of Carbon Reduction provided an overview noting that:

- there was a 12% reduction in city-wide emissions from 2019 to 2020, due in part to restrictions on travel and services during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- the report was based on UK Greenhouse Gas Inventory (GHGI) data, as the SCATTER tool had been temporarily discontinued. This did not significantly alter the outcome of the report, as GHGI was also used as the source data for SCATTER.
- since the production of the report, the council had been notified that York had retained its A-List status as a climate-leading city with the international climate organisation CDP (formerly Carbon Disclosure Project).

The Executive Member thanked the officer for the work on this issue, and in answer to her questions regarding opportunities for further reductions, the officer confirmed that:

- the largest emissions reductions related to commercial premises and transport, and due to the rise of post-pandemic hybrid working, there was potential for those reductions to be maintained or reduced further.

- public transport usage, alongside other modes of active travel, would be promoted more effectively.

Resolved: That the York Emissions Inventory Report be approved for publication.

Reason: To provide transparency of progress against the ambition for York to be net zero by 2030.

Cllr Ravilious, Executive Member

[The meeting started at 10:01 am and finished at 10:21 am].