

## **Climate Change Policy and Scrutiny Committee**

10 September 2019

Report of the Assistant Director – Legal & Governance

### **Terms of Reference**

#### **Summary**

1. This report sets out the remit for the newly created Climate Change Policy and Scrutiny Committee at City of York Council.

#### **Background**

2. At Full Council in March 2019, a climate emergency was declared and within the creation of the new administration, it was agreed that a Climate Change Policy and Scrutiny Committee would be established.
3. At Annual Council in May 2019, delegated authority was given to the Monitoring Officer to agree Terms of Reference in conjunction with the Leader and the Chair of the Committee. The Terms of Reference agreed are outlined below and will be added to the Council's constitution.

#### **Remit**

4. The Climate Change Policy and Scrutiny Committee's remit is to recommend to the Executive, actions that will deliver the ambition approved in the Climate Emergency Motion at Full Council on 29th March 2019.
5. The Committee will work with city partners and local stakeholders – including residents, businesses, and academic institutions – to develop a citywide climate change strategy that can deliver a carbon neutral York by 2030. This is to ensure that York plays its part in limiting the impacts of climate change locally, nationally, and globally.

## **Objectives**

- Production of a ten-year Climate Emergency Action Plan and a Sustainable Energy Action Plan that engage and involve all departments within the Council and the wider city;
- Review the Council's practices, policies, and procedures to develop an understanding of emission impacts on the city;
- Seeking advice from experts to recommend 5-year carbon budgets, across all the Council's activities;
- Establishment of a carbon emissions baseline for the city that can be maintained to quantify the challenges that York faces and to provide annual reports on citywide progress towards the 2030 target;
- Development of mitigation strategies to enable communities to become more resilient in the face of climate change;
- Learning from best practice in other cities;
- Review best practice across major UK institutions and local authorities on moving away from holding investments in fossil fuel companies that have not aligned their businesses with the Paris Climate Accord by 2023;
- Identify external funding streams, locally, nationally and EU-wide, that may help us deliver a carbon neutral York;
- Consider how our recommendations would reduce carbon emissions, to be developed in the context of environmental responsibility, economic prosperity, social equity and cultural vitality;
- Endeavour to ensure that our ten-year Climate Emergency Action Plan obtains cross-party support and commitment to guarantee its delivery.

## **Chair's Supporting Remarks**

6. The latest report from the Inter- Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in October 2018 gave us 12 years to implement changes to keep global warming to a maximum of 1.5 degrees in order to avoid

widespread drought, food scarcity, heat related deaths and loss of biodiversity including insects and vital food crop pollinators.

7. Individuals cannot be expected to make this reduction on their own. Society needs to change its laws, taxation, and infrastructure to make low carbon living easier and the new norm, local government has a responsibility to lead the way.
8. Bold climate change action can deliver economic and social benefits in terms of new green jobs, economic savings and market opportunities, as well as much improved well-being for York residents – for example through reducing fuel poverty and energy bills, encouraging healthy, active travel and improving green spaces and access to nature.
9. The approved motion commits City of York Council to a target of making York carbon neutral by 2030, taking into account both production and consumption. It requests a report within six months setting out the immediate action the Council will take to address this emergency and a plan to measure annual city-wide progress towards meeting the 2030 target. The motion also tasks City of York Council to work with partners across the city and the region to deliver this new goal through all relevant strategies and plans and drawing on local and global best practice. Lastly the motion asks Council to lobby the Government to provide the additional powers and resources needed to meet the 2030 target.

### **Consultation**

10. The terms of reference outlined above have been created in consultation with the Chair, Leader and Monitoring Officer as agreed at Annual Council.

### **Council Plan**

11. The new Council Plan is currently under consultation, however the work of the Climate Change Policy and Scrutiny Committee is likely to impact on all aspects the Council Plan.

### **Implications**

12. There are no known Financial, Human Resources, Equalities, Legal, ICT or other implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

## Risk Management

13. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy, there are no known risks associated with this report.

## Recommendations

14. Members are asked to note the Terms of Reference above, as they have already been agreed by the Chair, Leader and Monitoring Officer.

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**Report  
Approved**



**Date** 02/09/2019

**Wards Affected:**

**All**



**For further information please contact the author of the report**