

Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change
Date	10 November 2021
Present	Councillor Widdowson

45. Declarations of Interest

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 discloseable pecuniary interest that she might have in respect of the business on the agenda. None were declared.

46. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the Decision Session held on 6 October 2021 be approved and signed by the Executive Member as a correct record.

47. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been 2 registrations to speak at the session under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Cllr Pete Kilbane spoke on the Corporate Emissions Report and the York City-wide Emissions Inventory. He stated that he welcomed work done to reduce carbon emissions, but felt the report presented a partial picture by excluding scope 3 emissions. Cllr Kilbane stated that the rhetoric of a net-zero York by 2030 was not being matched with appropriate action, since he believed that 70% of emissions were not being counted. He asked whether a specific piece of work had been commissioned with the York & North Yorkshire LEP on measuring scope 3 emissions and the timescale for its completion. He also spoke on air quality, noting improvements over the Covid-19 pandemic, but warning on returning on how to the status quo, calling for the removal of all non-essential vehicles from the city centre and the creation of a local transport plan.

Katherine Crocker spoke on matters related to the general remit of the committee, namely about air pollution on Fishergate. She stated that 25

years ago she had complained about air quality to a Fishergate Ward Committee and that she wanted more information on the Fishergate monitoring system introduced then. She stated that air quality had improved during the Covid-19 pandemic as a result of less traffic, but that air quality, especially in levels of particulates was much lower than World Health Organisation guidelines. Ms Crocker further stated that electric cars would not help with this issue since particulates were emitted by car tyres and brakes. She requested that monitoring station data be used to push for a policy of reducing traffic congestion to improve air quality through the local transport plan, out of town parking and the usage of electric buses.

48. Corporate Emissions Report

The Executive Member will considered a report which monitored progress against City of York Council's target to reduce carbon emissions from corporate activity to net-zero by 2030. The Head of Carbon Reduction was in attendance to present the report and respond to questions.

Key points raised during the presentation of the report included:

- That this was the first report of direct emissions created by the City of York Council's corporate activity.
- Over 50% of emissions came from the Council's fleet, however there was a programme over the next 4 years to transition all vehicles over 4.5 tons from combustion engine to electric, which would have a significant positive impact.
- Gas consumption for heating of corporate sites was another significant cause of emissions, for which Heat Decarbonisation Plans were to be produced for the Council's highest consuming buildings, which would present a pathway to accessing public grant funding through the Public Decarbonisation Scheme.
- The Council's switch to purchasing 100% renewable energy in April 2020 had created a positive impact on emissions, and behaviour change campaigns for staff and further improvements through the retrofit programme were also planned to reduce emissions.
- The Council's direct corporate emissions accounted for 3.8% of the city-wide greenhouse gas emissions which showed that York could not achieve net-zero by 2030 through the Council's efforts alone.

The Executive Member noted:

- That she was pleased with the rate of reduction of emissions.
- That identifying what was under the Council's control to change would enable emissions to be reduced further.
- Emissions from all buildings across the city needed to be reduced, since they accounted for 60% of total emissions for York.

Resolved:

- i. That the City of York Council Corporate Emissions Report be approved and the council's contributions to city-wide emissions be noted.

Reason: This report fulfils the commitment in the Council Plan to report on City of York Council's corporate emissions, using the standardised and transparent SCATTER methodology.

- ii. That the actions recommended in the report be approved.

Reason: To progress towards City of York Council becoming a net zero carbon emitter by 2030.

49. York City-wide Emissions Inventory

This report presented the Emissions Inventory for the city of York. This data was to be used to monitor progress against the City of York Council ambition to achieve net zero carbon emissions for the city by 2030. The Head of Carbon Reduction was in attendance to present the report and respond to questions.

Key points raised during the presentation of the report included:

- This was the second report examining city-wide emissions, since the first conducted last year.
- Over 60% of total emissions in York were generated through buildings, with a roughly even split between homes and other buildings – the vast majority of these emissions were through space heating and hot water.
- Transport contributed to just under 28% of the city's emissions, with other large factors being waste and industry.
- City-wide emissions reduced by just under 2% between 2017 and 2018. It was understood that emissions will have markedly changed in more recent years, but the data was not yet available to be examined.

The Executive Member thanked officers for their work on the report and asked members of the public to increase the efficiency of their homes if possible, through green energy tariffs, insulation and looking on the City of York Council's website for potential funding opportunities to do so.

Resolved:

- i. That the York Emissions Inventory report be approved.

Reason: This report fulfils the commitment in the Council Plan to report on city-wide carbon emissions and monitor progress towards the net zero ambition.

50. Air Quality – Annual Status Report

This report details the latest air quality monitoring results for York and progress on achieving measures in York's third Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP3) to deliver further improvements. The Head of Public Protection was in attendance to present the report and respond to questions.

Key points raised during the presentation of the report included:

- There had been widespread improvements across the board in air quality in 2020, likely due to the Covid-19 pandemic, however air quality had been improving in the city for a number of years.
- There were plans to continue and perpetuate these improvements through the 4th Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP4), and linking to the Local Plan, Local Transport Plan and the Climate Change Strategy.

The Executive Member noted:

- That since 2012, reductions in air quality had been significant, although there were still areas for improvement, with one bus stop area not yet meeting air quality guidelines.
- The reduction of traffic during the Covid-19 pandemic had provided a snapshot for how air quality ought to be in the future.
- This work had made available funding for interventions on the 'last mile' into York for deliveries which was the most polluting and expensive mile of travel, which would improve air quality even further.
- She thanked officers for the work and the report.

Resolved:

- i. That the contents of the report be noted, including the continuing improvements in air quality in 2020 and proposals to update current AQAP to complement other key CYC strategies.

Reason: To enable the Executive Member to remain updated on the continuing improvements in air quality.

Cllr P Widdowson, Executive Member

[The meeting started at 3.00 pm and finished at 3.17 pm].