

City of York Council	Committee Minutes
Meeting	Climate Change Policy and Scrutiny Committee
Date	8 December 2020
Present	Councillors Vassie (Chair), Baker (Vice-Chair), S Barnes, D Myers, Wann, Melly and Fenton (substitute for Cllr Fisher)
	The Committee were also joined by non-voting co-opted member Terry Smithson, from Yorkshire Wildlife Trust.
Apologies	Councillor Fisher

1. 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. None were declared.

2. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on the 10 March 2020 be signed as a correct record, subject to an amendment to the recommendations to Minute 36 (One Planet York Update) to read that the Committee resolved to recommend to the Executive that it explore One Planet York's involvement in any Climate Change Commission that could be set up.

3. Public Participation

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

4. Climate Change Strategy

The chair outlined the actions taken by Council since in 2019 declaring a Climate Emergency and agreeing to a target of York becoming Net Carbon Zero by 2030. It was noted that the Carbon Pathway presentation received by the Committee did not target Net Carbon Zero by 2030, however it was outlined that the Council had not changed its commitment to becoming a Net Carbon Zero York by 2030. The chair also highlighted the progress he

felt the Council had made and that the Council should be in a stronger position to decarbonise than it had been a year ago.

The Committee welcomed the Council's new Head of Carbon Reduction officer who provided a presentation on the formation of the York Climate Change Strategy and provided an update on the role of the York Climate Change Commission. It was then agreed that Members would use the information from the presentation provided to inform discussion in the next item on York Emissions Reporting & Carbon Neutral Ambition.

Resolved:

- i. The Committee noted the presentation on the York Climate Change Strategy.

Reason: So that the Committee remain updated on the progress of the York Climate Change Strategy.

5. York Emissions Reporting & Carbon Neutral Ambition

Officers introduced the report and discussed the challenges of York reaching net zero carbon by 2030 including government policy, available technology, and cost to the Council. The Committee discussed the amended objectives and the opportunity to link up with objectives from other organisations in the region. While the significant challenge of achieving net zero carbon for York by 2030 was noted, a pathway taking us beyond this date could still keep emissions across the city at a level that contributes to limiting global temperature increase to 1.5C. Members supported the amendments based on the data provided, but stressed the importance of aiming to meet these objectives quickly and being a leader in decarbonisation and to encourage other organisations to also aim to meet the same targets as the Council.

The Committee supported the objective for the Council to become net zero carbon by 2030, noting that it would allow the Council to provide a leading role in the city. However, it was confirmed that there would be challenges to achieving this goal and officers confirmed that this would likely not include services that were not wholly delivered by the Council. Other examples that would likely not be included were housing provided by housing associations or Waste collection services provided by organisations such as YorWaste. The Committee noted that they would welcome the opportunity to review the objective for the Council to become net zero carbon by 2030, once more detail was confirmed.

Members discussed the importance of a roadmap to plan out the Council's objectives, as well as, the potential benefits to create clear plans for projects which can attract external and government funding. Members enquired as to whether the Council could include a Local Energy Area Energy Plan, it was confirmed this could be a benefit to produce a plan and would allow the Council to work with third parties to develop energy production solutions within the Council's territory. The Committee also considered wider challenges in planning and working with developers and suggested that the Council consider special planning documents to improve higher energy standards in the city.

The estimated cost of York reaching net carbon zero being between £1.1 and £2.3 billion was discussed. It was noted that the city would require external funding to be able to deliver this including Government funding programmes. It was confirmed that while it would cost a lot to deliver net carbon natural, the costs to achieve this would create a cost benefit to many of the projects delivered. With this in mind the Committee recommended the Council identify quick wins and areas to achieve a net zero carbon York which would be the most challenging.

Resolved:

- i. Noted the evidence for setting a decarbonisation pathway for York and support the ambition for making the city carbon neutral ahead of the Climate Change Policy which will be produced in Spring 2021.
- ii. The Committee recommended that the Executive make a commitment to achieving a net zero carbon council by 2030.
- iii. That the Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change use best endeavours to ensure planning is sufficiently resourced to deliver the special planning documents required to ensure higher energy standards in York.

Resolved: To ensure the Committee remain updated on the progress towards the creation of the Council's Climate Change Policy and to promote the objective of making York net carbon neutral.

6. York Climate Commission

Members were joined by the Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change for the item. Officers introduced the report setting out the rational for the creation of the York Climate Commission. The Executive Member noted the importance of Commission to bring together stakeholders across the city to advise the Council and promote positive change in helping York reach its Climate Change objectives.

The Committee discussed the proposed commission and expressed concerns regarding the lack of proposed members from a range of sectors across the city. The Executive Member noted that recommendations for who could be invited to join the commission were made from across the Council, and that while some of those approached had turned down the opportunity to join the commission, she noted that there would be an opportunity for new members to join or be part of working groups. It was agreed that it was important that members on the commission came with strong expertise to share and a desire to actively engage in the commission's work.

The Committee discussed how the terms of reference could be amended, to ensure key stakeholders could be added to the commission, as well as, engage York's wider public. The Committee also discussed whether there would be a benefit to involving cross party representation on the commission, as voting or non-voting members. Members of the Committee requested if it would be possible to provide a list of all stakeholders that were approached about joining the commission and how the council undertook the work of making invitations.

The role of the Executive Member for Environment and Climate change was discussed in both the setting up of the proposed membership of the commission and there role as the first chair of the commission. The Committee agreed to recommend that the terms of reference state that a new chair be elected within 12 months of the commissions formation. The Committee also noted that the terms of reference could be clearer in setting out how new stakeholders could join and how chairs of the commission would be selected in future years.

Members also suggested that this Committee should receive more updates from the commission from what was currently recommended. The importance of ensuring that the commission does not duplicate the work of the Committee was highlighted, as well as, concern that the commission could overlap work with One Planet York, an organisation the Council had a role in setting up, but was currently struggling financially to continue its work in the city.

Resolved:

- i. That this Committee receive regular updates or minutes from the meeting of the York Climate Commission;
- ii. That the Terms of Reference be amended to confirm that the Executive Member for Environment and Climate Change would not exceed 12 months as chair of the commission;

- iii. That the Committee receive a presentation at a future meeting on performance indicators showing how we can reach a carbon council and city.

Reason: To support the creation of the York Climate Commission and to ensure the Committee continues to support the Council in achieving its carbon reduction ambitions.

Cllr C Vassie, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.47 pm].