

Meeting	Climate Change Policy and Scrutiny Committee
Date	9 March 2021
Present	Councillors Vassie (Chair), Baker (Vice-Chair), Fisher, Fitzpatrick, Melly and Wann Councillor Rowley was also in attendance as a non-voting member of the Committee
Apologies	Councillor S Barnes

7. Declarations of Interest

At this point, Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests or any disclosable pecuniary interests which they may have in respect of business on the agenda. None were declared.

8. Minutes

The Committee discussed the minutes from meeting held on the 8 December 2020. A number of grammatical corrections were requested and it was noted that under item 4. Climate Change Strategy a correction was made with the section worded 'He (the chair of the Committee) noted that while the Council was no longer targeting net zero for the whole city by 2030, he 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.' Be amended to read '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.'

Resolved: That the minutes from the meeting held on the 8 December 2020 be amended and brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

9. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been two registrations to speak

under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Deborah Cobbett raised a number of concerns and questions to the Committee firstly on the minutes of the last meeting, she also raised concerns that the Council was becoming less ambitious at tackling climate change and countries like the UK needed to be proactive not doing the minimum required. She highlighted that the Committee had held discussions with senior managers from a number of organisations and recommended that the Committee widen its participation. Finally she questioned the use of Council communications and how magazines like 'Our City' would advertise the work of things like the Climate Commission and a Council Road Map.

Tom Franklin spoke as the chair of the York Green Party and raised concerns regarding the Key Performance Indicators for a Zero Carbon Road Map as outlined in the Agenda. He highlighted that they did not take into account areas such as food, flying, or concrete. He asked that the Council maintain its commitment to a zero carbon York by 2030 and noted a number of recent decisions the Council had made including a decision regarding waste vehicles as a sign the Council was not doing all it can to achieve net carbon natural. Finally he raised concerns about the impact on the climate the duelling of the outer ring road would cause.

10. Carbon Literacy Training

The Committee discussed the training provided by Speak Carbon to the Committee on 2 March 2021, that was designed to provide an overview of the course and allow committee members to evaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of this format for a wider rollout. It was noted that the session was too short for its intended purpose and two hour sessions could be ineffective at delivering effective Carbon Literacy training. Members also discussed whether the training could be too broad as it was proposed in the meeting and how it could be altered to be more effective.

Discussion took place as to the purpose of the training and who it should prioritise being targeted too. Focusing on phrase one in the report that would recommend to the Executive Member whether to seek to commission training for Councillors, senior management, and internal climate emergency groups. The Committee supported an approach that targeted those with the ability to create structural change across the city. However, they also recommended that training should link into a specific groups area of work and help facility ideas on how to reduce Carbon production; this could include studying examples where services are delivered in more carbon producing efficient way and how this was achieved.

Members discussed what could be undertaken prior to training and how to deliver tailored training to avoid a one size fits all approach. Consideration was taken as to how and whether the a pre-training consultation could take place with those selected to attend in order to identify what they would be seeking to learn from the training and their current Carbon Literacy.

Resolved:

- i. That the Committee requested that a consultation be organised for councillors and senior officers to establish current Carbon Literacy.
- ii. That the Committee requested a procurement specification to be produced for the training provision and to be bought back to the Committee to consider the specification and provide feedback.

Reason: To ensure the Committee can recommend the most effective Carbon Literacy training for the Council to commission.

11. York's Tree Canopy Expansion Target

The Committee considered a report on the York's Tree Canopy Expansion Target. Officers confirmed the White Rose Forest were aiming to introduce a tree planting target, a proposal would promote an ambition for a 13% target for tree canopy cover by 2050 in York, equating to around 22-27 ha per annum. This target would result in an annual carbon sequestration rate at 2050 of circa 9,000tCO₂ per year; equivalent to around 1% of the regions total CO₂ emissions between 2020-2050.

Members considered how ambitious a target of 13% would be, noting that this would be an increase of 2.2% from the city's current average rate. However, it was also noted that funding for a sustained increase would be costly and could equate to requiring a similar budget to that set out for the Northern Forrester by the Council of approximately £3 million every two years. Discussion highlighted that the funding of any increase would not be able to come solely from the Council and that new industries could be encouraged in the city that would take advantage of new woodland. This highlighted the potential benefit of sustainable forestry and how this could feed into local building practices.

Members were provided with an update as to how York's planning department were incorporating things such as tree planting into their work and on the creation of Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Documents. The Committee noted the update and expressed a desire to be

able to feed into the creation of the Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Documents.

Resolved:

- i. That the Committee would recommend to the Executive Member that the Council adopt a minimum of 13% tree canopy coverage in York by 2050;
- ii. That the Committee requested to be consulted on the production of the Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Documents.

Reason: To bring York in line with the national average on tree canopy coverage and to assist the city in reducing its net carbon production.

12. Establishing Key Performance Indicators to drive a Zero Carbon Roadmap for York

Officers introduced the item on establishing key performance indicators (KPIs) and noted the prior consideration the Committee had provided on producing indicators to drive a Zero Carbon Roadmap for York. Discussion took place regarding whether or not the proposed indicators were broad enough to be capable of capturing the cities progress in a range of areas effectively. Members also highlighted the need for robust monitoring if the City was gain the maximum benefit from KPIs being set.

The importance of incorporating climate change into Council performance indicators to ensure it was taken into account across different areas of the city was highlighted, but it was also noted that focus needed to be on delivery of projects that reduced carbon production, not only on how accurate a baseline of recording that could be produced.

Resolved:

- i. To request a future item be added to the work plan with Business Intelligence to discuss how the Council can embed climate change into the Council's performance indicators.

Reason: To ensure the Council considers its impact on climate change across all of its services.

13. Work Plan 2020/21

The Committee considered whether it had any further items it would wish to be considered for its work plan, as well as, discussing the importance of including climate emergency in the Committees name.

Resolved:

- i. To add an update on how the Council will use its communications to highlight how the Council is tackling climate change and how it will advertise residence the work of the York Climate Commission.

Reason: To ensure residents are aware of the work that is being done in York to tackle climate change and to ensure residents are kept engaged and aware of how they can be involved.

Cllr Vassie, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.26 pm].

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