

**North Yorkshire County
Council
Climate Change Scrutiny Sub-
Committee**

Minutes of the meeting held at County Hall, Northallerton on 22 January 2020 at 10am

Present:

County Councillors Stanley Lumley (Chair), Helen Grant, Bryn Griffiths, David Goode, Paul Haslam, David Jeffels, Janet Jefferson, Stuart Martin, Andy Paraskos, Clive Pearson, and Annabel Wilkinson

Also in Attendance:

Executive Members: County Councillor Patrick Mulligan

North Yorkshire County Council Officers: Neil Irving (AD Policy Partnerships & Communities), Daniel Harry (Democratic Services & Scrutiny Manager), Melanie Carr (Principal Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer), Victoria Hutchinson (Senior Strategy & Performance Officer) and Ian Fielding (AD Waste Management).

Apologies for Absence were received from County Councillors Lindsay Burr, John Ennis, Helen Grant, Janet Jefferson, Zoe Metcalfe & Andy Paraskos

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

7. Minutes of the meeting of the Climate Change Scrutiny Sub-Committee held on 24 July 2019

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2019, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

8. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

9. Public Questions or Statements

There were no questions or statements from members of the public. However, County Councillor Stanley Lumley drew Members attention to a written statement received from a Stokesley & Villages Climate Action Group received after the deadline for public questions and statements, which had been circulated by email to the Committee Members ahead of the meeting. He thanked the representative of the Stokesley & Villages Climate Action Group in attendance at the meeting for their contribution and confirmed it had been noted.

10. Progress Update on the Work of the Executive Member Climate Change Task & Finish Group

Considered –

County Councillor Stanley Lumley introduced the report by summarising the Sub-Committee's work to date and the outcomes of the Sub-Committee's last meeting.

Neil Irving – AD Policy, Partnerships & Communities provided a progress update on the four main work streams previously identified by the Executive Member Climate Change Task & Finish Group.

The report provided data on the County Council's baseline carbon footprint, and it was noted that as the council's carbon footprint was created by a wide range of activities, not all of which the Council had complete control over, its ability to control those emissions was not easy to measure.

Having considered the report, some Members expressed concern that the County Council's commitment to net zero by 2030 was softening. Neil Irving suggested it was unlikely the County Council would be able to reduce its actual emissions down to zero by 2030, and therefore it was important to focus on how it could offset the emissions it generated and strive to influence its service providers to do so as well. He also confirmed that some technologies still needed to be developed further to enable electricity to fully replace those gas and petroleum products currently being used across the county as sources of energy. Members recognised the scale of the challenges involved.

Neil Irving went on to provide an overview of the development of the County Council's carbon reduction plan. Members noted the potential pathways and the associated cost implications and potential savings made identifiable by the new pathway tool, which would map progress to net zero and project the impact of additional projects.

Members were pleased to note that some of their ideas proposed at the last meeting had been included in the list of eight potential project areas under consideration, and acknowledged some projects could be quick and easy wins, whereas others would be more difficult and costly to the County Council. They also discussed:

- Solar farms
- Air source and ground source heating
- Use of hydro power
- Peat restoration
- Support for schools
- Potential for the use of the Pension Fund for investments
- Tree Planting
- Mitigating climate damages like flooding
- Ways of reducing business travel
- Subsidised bus services; the use of smaller buses; a demand responsive bus service – County Councillor Annabel Wilkinson agreed to circulate a presentation on Rural Mobility
- Better integration between bus and train services
- Reducing the use of plastics – concern was expressed that a previous motion to Council had yet to be progressed and it was confirmed that the Transport, Economy & Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee would be progressing it at their meeting in February 2020.
- Improving the electric charging infrastructure in order to achieve a greater modal shift
- The introduction of a Climate Change Champion

Members agreed the importance of governance and the County Council working with other Councils and the LEP. They were pleased to note the inclusion of the council's aspiration to be carbon neutral in the Draft Council Plan for 2020-24, and that the aspiration was not just for the County Council, but for the County as a whole. They also welcomed the

introduction of the climate change impact assessment tool as it would highlight the impact of future decisions on the County Council's carbon footprint.

Members also discussed how individual County Councillors could play their part as community leaders by:

- Encouraging communities, residents and local businesses to reduce their carbon emissions
- Best use of Locality Budgets
- Liaising with town councils, parish councils and schools – Members recognised the role that children could play in influencing their parent's behaviour.
- Encouraging the formation of similar groups to that of the Stokesley & Villages Climate Action Group in other areas.

Finally, Members agreed the need for government support and action, recognising that many of the changes needed were bigger than the County Council could do its self.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

5. Work Programme

Considered –

Daniel Harry – Democratic Services & Scrutiny Manager provided a verbal overview of the two options available to the Climate Change Scrutiny Sub-Committee i.e. either:

- Recommending the formation of a formally constituted, politically balanced committee to continue the scrutiny work or;
- Recommending that the five thematic Overview and Scrutiny Committees be instructed to take up the mantle of Climate Change and progress it through their individual remits. Scrutiny Board would co-ordinate the scheduling of items for scrutiny by those committees in liaison with the AD for Policy, Partnerships & Communities.

He identified the benefits of the second option and it was agreed that the Transport, Economy & Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee would be the lead Committee by the nature of their remit, and that Scrutiny Board would play a key role.

Following a query from Members, he agreed to provide some further information on what would need to be done to establish a formally constituted, politically balanced committee. However, after due consideration it was

Resolved – That the scrutiny of Climate Change be passed to the five thematic Overview and Scrutiny Committees to progress.

6. Other business which the Chairman agrees should be considered as a matter of urgency because of special circumstances

There was no other business.

The meeting concluded at 11:20am.
MLC