

North Yorkshire County Council

Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee 12 October 2022

Climate Change Sub-Group – Report of the Meeting held on 27 September 2022

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report the proceedings of the recent meeting of the Committee's Climate Change Sub-Group.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Climate Change Sub-Group met on 27 September 2022 for 2 hours. The meeting was convened to discuss climate change issues which Zero Carbon Harrogate had raised during the item "Public Questions and Statements" at the meeting of Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee held on 9 June 2022, and other related issues which Committee Members had raised at that meeting.

3.0 ATTENDANCE AT SUB-GROUP MEETING

- 3.1 The under-mentioned persons attended the Sub-Group's meeting:-
- County Councillor Arnold Warneken in the chair; and County Councillors Paul Haslam, Pat Marsh and Mike Schofield.
 - Zero Carbon Harrogate:- Jemima Park and Tim Larnar.
 - Harrogate District Climate Change Coalition:- Mike Kaye, Louise McManus and Danny Wild.
 - NYCC officers:- Jos Holmes, Allan McVeigh, Jon Savage and Ruth Gladstone.
 - Harrogate Borough Council officers:- Jonathan Dunk, Mark Lee, Alicia Turner, John Ward-Campbell and Harriet Clarke.
 - In attendance:- County Councillor Greg White (Executive Member).
- 3.2 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Phil Ireland and Wallace Sampson OBE (Harrogate Borough Council) and Chris Arnott and Alex Hornby (Harrogate District Climate Change Coalition).

4.0 KEY INFORMATION PRESENTED

Context

- 4.1 There is considerable context within which current climate change activity is being delivered. This includes commitments, strategies and guidance at international, national, regional and sub-regional levels. A key document at sub-regional level is the York and North Yorkshire Routemap to Carbon Negative which provides and evidences a pathway to a regional ambition to be carbon neutral by 2034 and carbon negative by 2040. The Routemap was adopted by the York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership in July 2022.

Latest Statistics for Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- 4.2 Latest statistics for greenhouse gas emissions from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) now include methane and nitrous oxide. This

has led to a statistical increase for North Yorkshire, with agriculture now being the highest sector emitter, transport being second, and domestic being third. Recognising that agriculture is a key part of the North Yorkshire economy, officers are working with the farming community, in particular Grow Yorkshire, to support change and ensure practices are as climate friendly as they can be.

Current Activity

- 4.3 Current climate change policy and activity is summarised in **Appendix 1** in respect of the County Council, and in **Appendix 2** in respect of the Borough Council. Several highway projects are underway to encourage behavioural change and thereby reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Where we want to be

- 4.5 Whilst the two Councils are currently focussing on operational emissions and procurement/commissioning, the new unitary Council will widening the sphere of local authority influence both directly and indirectly, through its place shaping and engagement activities, thereby using its powers and resources to deliver its climate change ambition. This will be done using two 'once in a lifetime' opportunities, namely:-

- Local Government Reorganisation - several officer Workstreams are bringing together councils' services, and climate change is a 'design principle' running through all those Workstreams. An officers' Climate Change Working Group is advising those Workstreams on how to embed climate change. Also the eight Carbon Plan Strategies are being brought into one for the new North Yorkshire Council.
- Devolution - the vision is for North Yorkshire and York to become England's first carbon negative economy. The Devolution Deal has the York and North Yorkshire Routemap to Carbon Negative at its core, with many references to the ambition.

- 4.6 A North Yorkshire Council Climate Change Strategy Consultation Draft is being prepared for consideration by Councillors in December 2022, public consultation between January and March 2023, and amendment and subsequent adoption by the Council in May 2023. It is proposed that the target of the Strategy will mirror the York and North Yorkshire ambition. The Strategy will have four themes, namely:-

- Mitigation – decreasing greenhouse gas emissions by using less fossil fuels, generating renewable energy and decreasing the amount of products we generate by keeping them in circulation longer.
- Sequestration – locking up carbon emissions before they enter the atmosphere. Sequestration usually refers to natural processes of tree growth, where carbon is stored. However, we also need to move to 'carbon capture and storage' for industrial emissions.
- Adaptation – preparing our services and our communities for the impacts of known global warming eg heat, storms and flooding.
- Biodiversity – making the link between our 'natural capital' resources and climate change, thereby supporting nature to help us to combat climate change.

- 4.7 Strategic influencers, with whom officers will work, are elected Members, residents, businesses, communities, and town/parish councils.

4.8 A North Yorkshire Climate Change Action Plan will talk about:- direct operational services; place shaping (ie what enables people to take low carbon choices); enabling and influencing; communications; and could have some sort of external partnership or challenge group, perhaps like Harrogate District Climate Change Coalition.

5.0 PRESENTATION BY ZERO CARBON HARROGATE

5.1 Jemima Parker and Tim Lerner, on behalf of Zero Carbon Harrogate, made a presentation to the Climate Change Sub-Group in which they said that it was encouraging to hear about the number of different projects which were being undertaken by the County Council and the Borough Council. They highlighted, however, that many projects were running, some dependent on particular funding streams and particular timeframes to suit those funding pots, and questioned:- the extent to which the Coalition's projects joined up to the 'bigger picture' and the ambition to be carbon net zero by 2034; and how the Local Area Energy Plan was going to feed into planning policy. Zero Carbon Harrogate felt that, whilst projects and programmes were good, there were five further 'Ps' which needed to come into play if the new Council was to achieve carbon net zero by 2034 and carbon negative by 2040. The further 'Ps' were:-

- pathway to demonstrate the correct scale of activity year by year;
- procurement and whether suppliers were being pushed sufficiently;
- policy for the western arc housing schemes and the use of gas boilers and building standards;
- public engagement and a communication plan to encourage the general public to come on-board and also understand the co-benefits of reducing carbon emissions; and
- publicity of the good work which was being undertaken by Councils and local businesses, and not publicising things which worked against the climate change agenda.

Zero Carbon Harrogate also expressed the view that 1 hour of non-mandatory training on climate change was woefully inadequate for Council staff, and that a programme of 8 hours would only just start the journey of understanding how the different areas of their work could relate to embedding climate change within their workplace.

Members thanked Zero Carbon Harrogate for their comments. Jos Holmes referred to procurement and advised that it would be very easy for the Council to say that it would buy only from suppliers who could show their carbon footprint. However, the vast majority of suppliers were unlikely to have that information at present and, if the Council was to include this stipulation in all its procurement exercises, those suppliers would be unable to supply the Council, the market would shrink, and prices would increase. Instead, a piece of work was being undertaken to work with suppliers, engaging specifically with 200 of them, to bring them with the Council on the climate change journey. Zero Carbon Harrogate suggested that the Council should look at the NHS's procurement criteria. A representative from Harrogate District Climate Change Coalition highlighted that there was an issue around slavery within the solar industry. Jos Holmes suggested that the Council needed to take a global approach whereby, if it bought in a new source of fuel eg solar panels, the Council needed to understand the impact that that would have across the globe. The representative agreed and advised against having total focus on one technology eg heat pumps (for which gas had to be burned to supply the electricity to run the heat pumps).

6.0 FURTHER INFORMATION SUPPLIED IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS

- 6.1 The creation of green energy hubs was being frustrated by the National Grid and the distribution network operators (DNOs). Jos Holmes acknowledged that this was a huge bottleneck. She advised that the Local Area Energy Plan would map out the supply and demand for energy, now and in the future, and would say where solar farms, short wind, and off-shore wind facilities etc were likely to be located. The Plan was intended to help guide the DNO Northern Power Grid as to where their investment was put. It was suggested that, if that investment was not there, lobbying of the Government might be needed.
- 6.2 The Community Renewal Fund had successfully bid last year to the Government to provide a Home Energy Programme, which had paid for the Local Area Energy Plan. It had also paid for feasibility and research work on domestic retrofit to make changes to existing homes to reduce energy consumption and emissions. A deep dive was being undertaken into how a Victorian house type, and how a stone house type, could be best retrofitted.

7.0 OTHER ISSUES

- 7.1 John Ward-Campbell undertook to obtain the most recent data concerning the local carbon footprint for the Harrogate district area, for forwarding to Area Constituency Committee Members.
- 7.2 In response to Committee Members' request for information about air quality, Mark Lee has provided the following link to the Borough Council's local air quality reports:- <https://www.harrogate.gov.uk/downloads/download/163/local-air-quality-reports>

8.0 SUGGESTIONS OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE SUB-GROUP

- 8.1 Members of the Climate Change Sub-Group raised the following suggestions:-
- (a) The Council should advise suppliers of the procurement criteria it will have in place in future regarding climate change. Tenderers should have opportunity to explain to the Council the added value they can provide in terms of protecting the climate and this should be taken into account in the tender evaluation process.
- (b) The audit and governance of climate change is important and needs clarifying, including the unit of measure such as the number of cars taken off road or journeys taken by train, or whatever is the best measure. County Councillor Paul Haslam suggested that the Council should focus only on Scope 1 emissions (*direct greenhouse emissions that occur from sources that are controlled or owned by an organisation*) and Scope 2 emissions (*emissions that an organisation causes indirectly when the energy it purchases and uses is produced*) and thereafter on those emissions that the Council creates, and how does it prevent such emissions, to enable the community to do their part in reducing their greenhouse gas emissions. He described this as a 'notional Scope 4'. County Councillor Paul Haslam advised that he felt that resources should not be devoted to monitoring Scope 3 emissions from others in the case of procurement, but focus on his 'notional Scope 4'. He highlighted that procurement is a huge part of the County Council's Scope 3 emissions but they are the suppliers' emissions. He suggested that supplier emissions should be measured and managed by the suppliers themselves. We, however, should be sure that they are measuring their emissions and targeting net zero and following Council procurement policy especially where climate change is concerned if they wish to continue

to supply the Council after X date – whatever date the Council believes appropriate.

- (c) VAS signs should be introduced, showing either a smiley face or a sad face to reflect the air quality trend at that location, using the inexpensive technology that is now available, although such technology is not approved by Defra. For example, if a school knows that it has very poor air quality, and this coincides with parents bringing their children to school by car, the awareness of this situation might lead to positive behavioural change.
- (d) All highway projects undertaken should assess the number of cars which, as a result, will no longer need to be on the road.
- (e) The number of local bus services in Harrogate needs to increase because currently communities within the town are car-reliant.
- (f) Developers should be pushed, as far as legislation allows, to build sustainable homes.
- (g) Consideration should be given to the new Council working more closely with the City of York Council because York appears to be more advanced in terms of tackling climate change. However, it is recognised that North Yorkshire has more opportunities to reach net zero carbon.
- (h) Greater encouragement needs to be given to all elected Members and staff to do the online climate change training, which takes between 60 and 90 minutes, to help embed climate change into every service.
- (i) The presentation made to the Climate Change Sub-Group meeting should be repeated at a County Council Members' Seminar so that all Members are aware of the content for when the presentation is made to local communities and town/parish councils etc.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 That the report be noted, subject to any comments which the Committee decides to refer to the Executive or relevant Executive Members.

County Councillor Arnold Warneken
Chair of the Climate Change Sub-Group

Report author: Ruth Gladstone, NYCC Democratic Services

Background Documents: Agenda and presentation slides considered by the Climate Change Sub-Group on 27 September 2022

➤ **Council Plan – Our Values and Ambitions**

- **Environmentally aware** - considering the environment when making decisions to help achieve our aspiration that the council becomes carbon neutral and climate resilient
- **Leading for North Yorkshire** - Reducing the causes and impacts of climate change, now and for future generations

➤ **Beyond Carbon Transformation Programme:**

- To deliver the NYCC Carbon Reduction Plan to reach ambition to be operationally carbon neutral by 2030 or as near to that date as possible.
- Communications
 - External: 'Q' reports , Leader's statement, Website and E Newsletter in development.

➤ **Climate Emergency Declared – July 22**



Pump Priming so far....

- Climate Change Policy Officer
- EVCP Strategy
- EV Pool cars and service vehicles + EVCPs
- Pilot lease vehicles and home EVCPs for domiciliary care staff
- Procurement supply chain research
- Community Engagement (including young people and libraries)

Harrogate Borough Council Carbon Reduction Strategy

- By **2038** we will have a net zero-carbon economy.
- Ensuring the council's own operations are clean and efficient.
- Playing a positive role enabling the wider district to achieve net-zero emissions.

Carbon Reduction Strategy Themes

Domestic
Energy Demand
Reduction

Sustainable
Transport

Land Use &
Agriculture

Working with
partners

Influencing New
Development

Operational
Buildings & HCC

Operational
Transport

Working
Practices

Snapshot of activity:

- Launch of ECO schemes and social housing scheme
- Rolling out EVCPS
- Woodland creation
- Climate Change Coalition
- Maltkiln DPD
- Hydro decarbonisation
- Staff Car Share Scheme
- Staff Green Group

Carbon Reduction Strategy Quarterly Monitoring Report - August 2022

Progress rating
The progress of each action is categorised by the following matrix:

On track (23)	N/A (7)
Off track (4)	(Future action/Too early/Delayed)

Strategic Theme 1: Domestic Energy Demand Reduction			
Action	Progress	Update and next steps	Key contact(s)
Implement LADS energy efficiency scheme	On track	Cabinet approval obtained for procurement (led by York CC), Contractor appointed, now starting pre-launch agreements with consortium	John Ward-Campbell
Implement Phase One of net-zero carbon social housing project	On track	Inviting consultants	
Better Homes Yorkshire – Prepare successor scheme	Future action	New scheme	
Commission housing stock energy performance modelling study	On track	A housing commission current	
Enforcing energy efficiency standards in private rented sector	On track	This will enforce Proactive continuation	

Strategic Theme 2: Sustainable Transport			
Action	Progress	Update	Key contact(s)
Implement sustainable transport measures within Transforming Cities Fund project	On track	Second phase of construction	
Install public electric vehicle charge points	On track	Contract Northern phase 1 begin in October or ready to go	
Increase membership of Harrogate car share scheme	On track	Community	
Cycling, sustainable transport and accessibility improvement projects	On track	A-Frame and Pan under development	
Expand car club in Ripon and Knaresborough	Delayed	Delayed	
Expand car club in Ripon and Knaresborough	Delayed	Delayed	

Strategic Theme 3: Land Use and Agriculture			
Action	Progress	Update and next steps	Key contact(s)
Woodland creation: Horseshoe field Knaresborough	On track	200 additional whips to be planted this autumn, along with an area to be fenced off to help promote natural regeneration of saplings	Alex Boulton
Woodland creation: B100 triangle	Complete	Continued management of the woodland under a 15 year management plan with the White Rose Forest Partnership.	Alex Boulton

Strategic Theme 4: Engaging Businesses and Public Sector Partners			
Action	Progress	Update and next steps	Key contact(s)
Implement Carbon Reduction Fund programme (also action in ST6)	Too early	Internal discussions underway on prioritised list of projects, to go for Management/Cabinet member approval summer 2022.	John Ward-Campbell
Harrogate District Climate Change coalition	On track	Active participation in coalition ongoing. Next board meeting August 2022.	John Ward-Campbell / Alicia Turner
Climate Action Festival 2023	Too early	Coalition approval of 2023 festival. No further updates at present.	John Ward-Campbell / Alicia Turner
Promoting Resource Efficiency within business	On track	4 companies in Harrogate made contact as part of BEB initiative in 2022 and are on various stages of process, from getting assessments to awaiting grant approval. There are a few months left of the scheme.	Dan Harper / Alistair Forbes
Communicate our internal carbon reduction activity to partners and the wider public.	On track	Communications plan for promoting the Carbon Reduction Strategy has been written and will be promoted in due course, but communications about our wider carbon reduction activity is an ongoing process.	Alicia Turner
Implement Our Planet Your World festival	Complete	Event successfully delivered in February 2022. Accounts and post event evaluations completed by March 2022.	John McGivern

Strategic Theme 5: Influencing New Development			
Action	Progress	Update and next steps	Key contact(s)
Draw up climate change strategy for new settlement	On track	Subject to Member approval, the Pre-submission (regulation 19) Draft New Settlement DPD, including climate change policies, is due to be published for formal consultation in early October. Comments received will form the basis of an independent examination expected spring 2023. The NC CCS will be published alongside the DPD.	Joe Varga
Incorporate low carbon principles in development	On track	Recommend closing action and replicating with: Implement climate change strategy through inclusion of climate change policies in the New Settlement DPD and on-going work with developers. Planning application progress: discussions are ongoing to resolve some matters prior to planning committee, including committed sums, biodiversity, drainage and ground stability. If members were minded to approve (subject to change), we would be looking at the following measures to incorporate low	Genevieve Gillies (Andy Hough to be the contact for subsequent reports)

