

North Yorkshire County Council

Executive

17 January 2023

Draft North Yorkshire Council Climate Change Strategy 2023-2030 and York and North Yorkshire's Routemap to Carbon Negative

Report of the Assistant Director Policy, Partnerships and Communities

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. To propose endorsement of York and North Yorkshire's Routemap to Carbon Negative.
- 1.2. To propose a public consultation on a Draft North Yorkshire Council Climate Change Strategy 2023-2030.

2. Background

- 2.1. North Yorkshire County Council and the seven district and borough councils in the county have all previously made commitments to reduce their own carbon footprints and become net zero (carbon neutral) as organisations; to support the region's ambition to become net zero and carbon negative; and to encourage residents, businesses and visitors to take climate responsible actions. North Yorkshire County Council also declared a climate emergency in July 2022.
- 2.2. The proposal to Government advocating the creation of North Yorkshire Council said that a single unitary council offers an opportunity to take a more co-ordinated approach to tackle emissions and responses to future climate change events, and to maximise the value of our natural capital assets to improve the health of our county's environment.
- 2.3. The York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) led the development of York and North Yorkshire's Routemap to Carbon Negative, aiming to develop a co-owned plan about how the region as a whole (businesses, communities and public sector) can achieve net zero by 2034 and carbon negative by 2040.
- 2.4. It is proposed that North Yorkshire Council adopts a climate change strategy, taking account of the Council's broader responsibilities and the Council's difficult financial circumstances, setting out how the Council will become net zero as an organisation and contribute towards the delivery of York and North Yorkshire's Routemap to Carbon Negative.

3. York and North Yorkshire's Routemap to Carbon Negative

- 3.1. Over the past two years, the York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has been leading the development of York and North Yorkshire's Routemap to Carbon Negative, aiming to develop a co-owned plan about how the region as a whole (businesses, communities and public sector) can achieve net zero by 2034 and carbon negative by 2040.
- 3.2. To ensure an evidence-based approach the LEP commissioned several studies that have informed the development of the Routemap. This includes initial research undertaken by the Tyndall Centre to establish a carbon budget for the region that ensures it makes a 'fair' contribution towards the Paris Climate Change Agreement.

- 3.3. To understand how the region can get to net zero and stay within this carbon budget, the LEP commissioned a study to develop potential pathways to decarbonise high-emitting sectors – transport, buildings, industry, power, and land use and agriculture. This study provided the scale of ambition required to reach net zero by 2034, from the number of trees that need to be planted to the number of heat pumps that need to be installed.
- 3.4. Within York and North Yorkshire and across high emitting sectors in the region - power, heat, and buildings; transport; industry and business; land use; agriculture and marine - transformative change is needed if the ambitions set out in the Routemap are to be achieved. The Routemap sets out a long-term direction of travel and key strategic priorities to deliver these changes.
- 3.5. Between 2020 and 2021, the LEP led a stakeholder engagement process, including an open consultation and workshop sessions, to challenge, refine and validate these scale of ambition targets. A key piece of feedback received from the consultation was that the delivery of net zero was dependant on a number of critical factors that are outside of the direct control of the York and North Yorkshire region, particularly national funding and policy change. As a result of this feedback, each of the Routemap sections sets out the risks and dependencies.
- 3.6. To ensure the effective implementation of the Routemap, the LEP and partners will build on the high-level action plans to develop detailed implementation plans. As part of these implementation plans, key milestones, success criteria and risks registers will be developed to enable performance to be tracked against the interventions set out in the Routemap. The implementation of the Routemap will be overseen by the LEP Board until new structures are established through the proposed mayoral combined authority.
- 3.7. The Routemap has been developed collaboratively and must be delivered collaboratively. Every public sector body, business, organisation, and community has a role to play, and everyone's contribution will be required. Every individual can make a difference.
- 3.8. The Routemap is attached as appendix one.
- 3.9. It is proposed that the Executive endorses the Routemap and progresses with developing a Draft North Yorkshire Council Climate Change Strategy that will set out the ways in which North Yorkshire Council will make its own contribution towards delivery of the Routemap, whilst recognising that many of the ambitions and actions in the Routemap are the responsibility of others and outside the control and influence of the Council.

4. Draft North Yorkshire Council Climate Change Strategy 2023-2030

- 4.1. The draft Strategy aims to set out the current position in North Yorkshire and outlines North Yorkshire Council's own high-level response to the Climate Emergency. It builds on the plans and strategies developed by the eight predecessor local authorities and outlines where the Council can best deploy its resources to make its contribution in relation to its own operational activity and support residents, businesses and visitors in the county to take climate responsible actions.
- 4.2. It is proposed that the Strategy will cover mitigation (decreasing greenhouse gas emissions), adaptation (preparing for the climate to change), supporting nature (helping the natural world, on which we depend, to thrive).
- 4.3. It is also proposed that Council will, continuing the policies adopted by the predecessor local authorities, commit to achieve net zero in its own operational activity by 2030.

- 4.4. Every service that the Council will deliver will need to transform to a greater or lesser extent to reduce carbon emissions, both directly and to support residents, businesses and visitors in the county to take climate responsible actions.
- 4.5. Following adoption of the Strategy an action plan will be developed setting out how the Council will deploy its resources to deliver the Strategy. Initially this will bring together the eight action plans from the predecessor local authorities and by 2024 the action plan will have a directorate and service level focus to identify how each part of the Council will contribute.
- 4.6. The Strategy and the action plan will need to take into account the Council's many statutory and critical responsibilities and the Council's difficult financial circumstances.
- 4.7. The Council should be ready and prepared to seize all appropriate opportunities for additional funding to help achieve the ambitions for the Council set out in the Strategy and for the region in the Routemap.
- 4.8. The draft Strategy has been developed by officers of the eight councils and reflects the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) cross cutting climate change principle. The working draft of the draft Strategy was considered by the Transport, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee in October 2022. Relevant community organisations have also been engaged informally.
- 4.9. The draft Strategy is attached as appendix two.
- 4.10. It is proposed that a public consultation is held on the draft Strategy. After the conclusion of this consultation, a further report will be brought back to the Executive outlining the results of the consultation.

5. Financial implications

- 5.1. The draft Strategy is a high-level document and will lead to the development of a detailed action plan. The financial implications of each element of the action plan will need to be considered in detail as it is developed, and this consideration will need to take into account the Council's many statutory and critical responsibilities and the Council's difficult financial circumstances.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1. The County Council will need to contribute to national legal targets for carbon emissions reduction.

7. Climate change implications

- 7.1. The report outlines the climate change interventions that are required to secure our local and global future and meet locally derived ambitions and nationally required targets. The issues identified in the report have direct relevance to the activities we take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to prepare for climate change and to support nature to thrive. A full climate change impact assessment is in appendix three.

8. Equalities implications

- 8.1. The consultation draft has been developed to reach as many people as possible and seeks to engage all sectors of society through the use of plain English, online survey tools that

meet accessibility standards and 'in person' support to understand the text and respond accordingly. Throughout the Strategy, the opportunities to support an equal transition to a low carbon economy are highlighted, including the development of community owned assets and upskilling in low carbon technologies. A full Equalities Impact Assessment is included at appendix four.

9. Reasons for Recommendations

- 9.1. All of the predecessor local authorities have climate change plans and strategies, including commitments to become operationally net zero. It is essential that North Yorkshire Council itself has a clear climate change strategy.
- 9.2. In addition to setting out the commitment to become operationally net zero, the Strategy should set out the ways in which the Council will make its own contribution towards delivery of York and North Yorkshire's Routemap to Carbon Negative, whilst recognising that many of the ambitions and actions in the Routemap are the responsibility of others and outside the control and influence of the Council.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1. The Executive is recommended to:
 - i. endorse the York and North Yorkshire's Routemap to Carbon Negative, whilst recognising that many of the ambitions and actions in the Routemap are the responsibility of others and outside the control and influence of the Council;
 - ii. agree to undertake a public consultation on the Draft North Yorkshire Council Climate Change Strategy 2023-2030 and authorise the Assistant Director Policy, Partnerships and Communities to make any necessary changes to the text following the discussion at this meeting; and
 - iii. receive a further report, after the conclusion of the public consultation, outlining the results of the consultation and including the proposed North Yorkshire Council Climate Change Strategy 2023-2030.

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5 January 2023

Appendices:

Appendix one - York and North Yorkshire's Routemap to Carbon Negative
Appendix two - Draft North Yorkshire Council Climate Change Strategy 2023-2030
Appendix three - Climate Change Impact Assessment
Appendix four - Equalities Impact Assessment

