

North Yorkshire Council

Executive

20 August 2024

North Yorkshire Council Climate Change Strategy Delivery Pathway

Report of the Corporate Director Environment.

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To approve the North Yorkshire Council Climate Change Strategy Delivery Pathway

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Council recognises the need to continue moving forward on its pathway to Net Zero and to continue to rise to this challenge and be a leader; achieving positive change whilst working with the support of our local partner organisations, businesses, and residents in addition to help and support of the national government and regional partners. This continues to be a challenging ambition, but it also remains a great opportunity to improve our quality of life and create a region that is healthier, more sustainable, and fairer for everyone.
- 2.2 The Climate Change Strategy Delivery Pathway (CCDP) outlines the activities required to deliver the Climate Change Strategy (adopted in July 2023). These activities will promote our response to the Climate Emergency in support of our ambitions at both operational and regional levels to reach net zero. Approval is now sought for the CCDP which will enable implementation and performance monitoring. Importantly, this is a plan for climate change mitigation, which covers a wide range of sectors and seeks to support other existing Council plans, strategies, activities, and priorities.
- 2.3 Whilst at present, the CCDP remains a list of actions and cross cutting themes, it should not detract from the funding we have secured, or the climate actions and projects already being undertaken and implemented by directorates across the Council in response to climate change. This is also complemented by activity being undertaken proactively by residents, community groups, partners and through our partnerships.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The former North Yorkshire County Council, acting as shadow authority for new North Yorkshire Council, declared a Climate Emergency in July 2022 and pledged to play a full part in tackling climate change. The North Yorkshire Council Climate Change Strategy was approved on 18 July 2023 by Executive and the Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission (YHCC) pledge was also signed. Since then, we have sought to deliver climate action through a number of projects which tackle our own operational emissions as well as the emissions of our region as a whole.
- 3.2 The CCDP sets out the activities required to deliver the Strategy and further our existing climate activities to ensure that progress is continuously made, and opportunities are explored which benefit our organisation, region, and communities.

- 3.3 Nationally, local authorities are directly responsible for around 2% of total UK emissions, but they can influence up to 40% of emissions through their activities and powers. Recognising this, North Yorkshire itself as an authority directly contributes a small percentage of North Yorkshire's regional emissions, therefore the CCDP focuses on operational activity whilst also recognising the role and requirement for a collaborative effort from partnering organisations, businesses, and individuals to help achieve a shared climate ambition.
- 3.4 The CCDP sets out a framework for climate action to achieve our target of seeking to become operationally net zero by 2030, whilst also recognising our role in supporting regional decarbonisation through partnerships and collaborative climate actions.

4.0 CO-BENEFITS OF CLIMATE ACTION

- 4.1 There are also many associated economic, social and health benefits to reducing carbon emissions and taking responsible climate action, with examples including:
- Heightened energy security and a reduction in energy poverty due to a more sustainable energy supply.
 - More resilient individuals, communities, and infrastructure, seeing a reduced impact from climate hazards.
 - Better quality homes and offices and an efficient, cleaner, and more active transport network.
 - Better jobs, a more inclusive economy and enhanced green skills and education.
 - Improved access to high quality green spaces for people within towns/villages.
 - A more sustainable and localised food chain with improved food security.

5.0 INTERNAL SYNERGIES

- 5.1 Climate change is, by nature, a cross-cutting, holistic issue that impacts and is influenced by thematic areas. As a result, the CCDP has influence and relationships with multiple service areas across the council, key partners and community groups and residents.
- 5.2 The CCDP also has a synergy with and a positive role in supporting wider Council priorities plans and strategies, including key areas for example:
- Council Plan
 - Transport
 - Property
 - Local Plan and associated policies

6.0 THE NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL CLIMATE DELIVERY PATHWAY

- 6.1 The North Yorkshire Council Climate Change Strategy was approved on 18 July 2023. It outlines that a Climate Change Action Plan will be drafted by December 2023. The CCDP performs this role and was accordingly drafted by December 2023 for first review by Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee. (TEEEOSC). The final draft is in Appendix A.
- 6.2 The Delivery Pathway matrix of actions outline how the Strategy will be delivered. It consequently mirrors the structure of the Strategy with governance and the 3 themes outlined; mitigation, adaptation and supporting nature to thrive. There is also a section for actions specifically to support North Yorkshire Council's operational net zero emissions. It indicates:
- i. The proposed action and outcome.

- ii. Anticipated metrics – how outcomes and outputs will be collected. This will also provide narrative on how the delivery of co benefits of taking climate action, such as supporting economic growth, health as well as the financial impact.
- iii. Directorate lead responsibility for delivery.
- iv. Anticipated resource requirements – in both officer time and potential internal and external resources. Where this is a financial requirement, this will be explored further in collaboration with finance colleagues including how we utilise invest to save opportunities or innovative financial opportunities.
- v. Key partnership working areas are highlighted in orange text colour: Recognising North Yorkshire Council itself as an authority directly contributes a small percentage of district-wide emissions, the CCDP acknowledges the need for collaborative effort from partnering organisations, including the new, York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority, and individuals to decide if, what and how they will change their own activities to help achieve a shared climate ambition. Consequently, NYC actions are also complemented by actions being taken by residents, community groups, partners and through local partnerships such as the emerging North Yorkshire Climate Coalition, the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority. (Y&NYCA) and supported through regional collaboration by the Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission.

6.3 It is a dynamic document that can be flexed to accommodate new opportunities within the Council, legislative requirements and funding opportunities as these arise. For example, since vesting day significant progress has been made on a number of new corporate strategies which have impact on delivery of climate change in areas such as Economic Growth, Housing and the emerging Food Strategy. The CCDP will adapt to reflect these rather than replicate.

6.4 The focus is on activity to March 2025. This is partly because a number of climate projects and current funding programmes are being delivered up to that date. The document seeks to harness existing climate action whilst promoting new actions. On an ongoing basis, it will be regularly updated to reflect the new opportunities and initiatives which Directorates and service teams are delivering. These changes will be reviewed biannually by TEEEOOSC, and the new activities will be added to the Delivery Pathway

6.5 Performance monitoring is essential to ensure progress is made on delivering the Strategy:

- i. A key challenge currently is the availability of data required to accurately plot NYC's operational carbon footprint and therefore to successfully plan the trajectory required to reach our ambition to become carbon neutral by 2030. Whilst a lot of activity is being undertaken to decarbonise key drivers of fleet and property, it is not currently possible to provide verifiable data on carbon emissions at this time and consequently to set targets and milestones for reduction as outlined in the Strategy. Once this data is available, it is planned to establish a carbon budget to ascertain the cumulative amount of greenhouse gas (tCO₂e) emissions permitted over a period of time to keep within a certain temperature threshold – in this case to meet our net zero ambitions. It will then be possible to develop an approach to offsetting emissions.
- ii. In addition, the North Yorkshire Wide data which is published by Department Energy Security is only recently available only up to 2022 as there is an eighteen-month time lag. It is anticipated these metrics will be available for presentation to the next TEEEOOSC review on 17 October 2024.
- iii. In addition, the Y&NYCA are planning to review the 'carbon abatement pathway' data which will be available at local authority level and to use this to refresh the regional 'Routemap to Carbon Negative'. This data will enable a more granular approach to delivering the Climate Strategy.

- 6.6 A further challenge is how best to present this complex and interwoven range of activities and subsequent performance metrics. It is currently in excel format as presented in Appendix A. Officers are working to identify a more effective performance management platform that will enable efficient analysis.
- 6.7 It is noted that the 'adaptation' theme has not yet been developed. Officers will be working through the LGA Adaptation toolkit and utilising available resources to develop a climate risk, vulnerability and adaptation plan to ensure we can 'climate ready' or prepared to quickly recover from the negative consequences of a changing climate. This will be developed in the coming month's view of presenting it to Members in Q4, anticipated to TEEEOOSC in February 2025 to meet the timeline outlined in the Strategy.
- 6.8 The CCDP includes a spreadsheet which indicates the specific actions NYC needs to take reach operational net zero targets. These include an emphasis on fleet, property, and procurement. As outlined above, data collection for these prior to Local Government Reorganisation has not been possible to verify. However, it is anticipated that figures for 2023/24 will be presented to TEEEOOSC at the first CCDP review session.
- 6.9 As indicated in the Strategy, the activities in the CCDP will deliver many co-benefits to support communities, businesses, and the natural environment. Examples include reducing energy bills, improved access to services, supporting local economic development and transition to the low carbon economy and improving biodiversity.

7.0 FLEET

- 7.1 The North Yorkshire Council fleet consists of 960 vehicles, 135 of these are classed as Large Goods Vehicles (LGVs), 135 are buses or minibuses classed as Passenger Carrying Vehicles (PCV). The other 690 vehicles are cars and light commercial vehicles. There are also a significant number of plant items.
- 7.2 A draft fleet decarbonisation strategy, which will include a metric on the proportion of the councils' vehicles that are low carbon, is expected in the autumn and will compliment a grey fleet decarbonisation strategy focussing on reducing carbon emissions created by staff using their own vehicles for work purposes. The high level ambition from the strategy will be to reduce annual mileage requirements and then to source vehicles that:
- Reduce and eventually eliminate fleet tail pipe emissions,
 - Minimise other emissions associated with the manufacture and operation of vehicles,
 - Enable services,
 - Maintain safety and compliance,
 - Focus on our customer,
 - Achieve best value.
- 7.3 The transition to zero tailpipe emissions is naturally hampered by availability of technological solutions, for example electric large goods vehicles and the requirement for a network of accessible charging infrastructure. Coupled with this is the potential for higher cost of vehicle purchase with newer technologies being more expensive. We are currently undertaking a feasibility study into the production and utilisation of green hydrogen as an alternative low carbon fuel source for HGV fleet and are delivering a network of EVCPs throughout North Yorkshire to support the transition.
- 7.4 A further example of this is hydrogenated vegetable oil (HVO) as a low carbon fuel source. Whilst Scarborough Borough and Selby District Councils undertook respective trials of the fuel in 2023, there have been questions from the industry as to the legitimacy of the fuel as a genuine low carbon option. Accordingly, fleet are working to complete a review by the end

of 2024 on HVO to consider its use in the transition from fossil fuels to alternative fuel zero emission vehicles.

- 7.5 A holistic vehicle assessment is being undertaken to examine use of each vehicle and then to understand what solution would be best for each, for example when to move to EV, hydrogen.

8.0 CURRENT CLIMATE CHANGE GOVERNANCE

- 8.1 Cllr Greg White, the Executive Member for Climate Change, receives monthly briefings on activity. Cllr Paul Haslam is the Climate Change Champion and has regular liaison meetings with senior officers and prepares an annual update for the Scrutiny Committee. Executive will receive an annual update and Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee (TEEEOSC) will receive bi-annual progress reports.
- 8.2 The Beyond Carbon Board (BC) is the senior officer-based group that considers the operational carbon footprint of the Council. The Climate Change Strategy outlines a new role for the group, to ensure that all Directorates are taking climate responsible actions and supporting the delivery of the Strategy. It is chaired by Assistant Director Environmental Services and now has Directorate representatives that are able to report progress at each of the bimonthly meetings. Several of the Directorates have set up groups to support their BC representative with the diverse array of information and actions from each service.
- 8.3 The North Yorkshire Climate Coalition is a group of locally based climate and environmental groups. The group is preparing to 'formalise' and it is anticipated that this will act as an 'external reference group' as outlined in the Strategy. Officers plan to meet the group quarterly. It is anticipated that they will support actions and comment on progress against the CCDP through subsequent progress reports.
- 8.4 Veritau are conducting an internal audit of the Council's Climate Change Strategy as part of the annual audit plan. This will be presented to Audit Committee on 23 September 2024. This will include governance and monitoring arrangements, including Directorate Action Plans and risk registers. (Climate change remains the highest risk on the Council's risk register and the actions in the CCDP will contribute towards mitigation of risk.)
- 8.5 NYC will be participating in performance monitoring activity with both the UK Climate Emergency Scorecards (a campaigning group which assesses local authority performance) and the Carbon Emission Disclosure platform, CDP (an international voluntary assessment of a region's overall performance).

9.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES

- 9.1 The draft was reviewed by TEEOSC on 01 February 2024. Members discussed the document and the actions included with particular emphasis on housing retrofit, active travel, tree planting and working with town and parish councils.
- 9.2 The Beyond Carbon Board has regularly reviewed the development of the CCDP including the final draft on 18 June 2024. Management Board considered the CCDP on 25 June 2024
- 9.3 Two workshops (in person and online) were held in March 2024 for community environmental groups to review the draft and support further development of the activities.

10.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

10.1 The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and pledged to play its part in tackling the causes and impacts of climate change.

10.2 The Strategy delivers the following specific Council Plan ambitions:

- Place and Environment:
 - A clean, environmentally sustainable and attractive place to live, work and visit
 - A well connected and planned place with good transport links and digital connectivity
 - Communities are supported and work together to improve their local area
 - Good quality, affordable and sustainable housing that meets the needs of our communities
- Economy
 - Economically sustainable growth that enables people and places to prosper
 - Culture, heritage, arts and sustainable tourism all play their part in the economic growth of the county
- Health and Wellbeing
 - People are supported to have a good quality of life and enjoy active and healthy lifestyles
 - Reduced variations in health through tackling the root causes of inequality
- People
 - People can achieve their full potential through lifelong education and learning.
 - In times of hardship, support is provided to those that need it most
- Organisation
 - A carbon neutral council

11.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

11.1 The CCDP has been through various iterations throughout its development and consultation outlined in 6.0 above. The activities have been refined throughout this process and alternatives have been considered. It is important to clearly define the actions that NYC will take to deliver the Climate Change Strategy.

12.0 IMPACT ON OTHER SERVICES/ORGANISATIONS

12.1 The CCDP will have impact on a wide range of services as the three themes and ambition to be operationally net zero by 2030 are embedded into each Directorate climate action plans to become 'business as usual' activity. (This process is identified in the CCDP at NYC tab dii). There are also many co benefits further outlined in 4.9 above.

13.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

13.1 The financial implications of each element of the action plan will need to be considered in detail as they are developed and this consideration will need to take into account the Council's many statutory and critical responsibilities and the Council's financial circumstances and each will need to be approved through the Council's financial governance approval processes.

13.2 A budget of £1m (of which £262,441 remains) was made available to NYCC, disbursed through the Beyond Carbon Board in line with the original decision taken on 26 July 2021, to include approvals by Executive Member for Managing our Environment and the

Executive Member for Finance and Resources (or as was at that time), for pump priming projects to support operational net zero activity.

14.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

14.1 This is an area where legislation is international as well as regional and domestic and includes the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement. In terms of domestic legislation there are now a number of Acts which seek to deal with the implications of Climate Change. These include the Climate Change Act 2008 sets out a range of measures to deal with climate change including emission reduction targets which the UK must comply with and carbon budgeting and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 Section 19 (1A) which requires local planning authorities to have policies in their Local Plans securing that development and land use contribute to the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change. The Environment Act 2021 also contains further targets to protect the environment and to tackle the impacts of climate change. In addition, there are a raft of UK policy documents on climate change including Net Zero Growth Plan and Green Finance Strategy. Regard has been given to all relevant legislation and policy when preparing the CCDP. It is anticipated that new legislation will be brought forward following the Kings' Speech on 17 July 2024 to enable other net zero policies to progress.

15.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

15.1 Throughout the Strategy and consequent CCDP, 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. An Equalities Impact Assessment screening assessment (Appendix B) indicates a full EIA is not required at this stage. As the Strategy and Pathway progress equalities impacts will be reviewed at key stages.

16.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

16.1 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 C.

17.0 CONCLUSIONS

17.1 The CCDP brings together the activities from across the Council to respond to the Climate Emergency and meet our ambitions towards both operational and regional net zero. It is a dynamic document that will flex according to identified needs, new technology and new opportunities as they arise.

18.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

18.1 The CCDP will enable the delivery of the Strategy to be enacted and progress monitored.

19.0 RECOMMENDATION

19.1 That The North Yorkshire Council Climate Change Delivery Pathway be approved.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – North Yorkshire Council Climate Change Delivery Pathway

Appendix B – Equalities Impact Assessment screening

Appendix C – Climate Change Impact Assessment

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Climate Emergency: [Agenda for Executive on Tuesday, 5th July, 2022, 11.00 am | North Yorkshire County Council](#) .

North Yorkshire Council Climate Change Strategy: [Climate change strategy 2023 to 2030 | North Yorkshire Council](#)

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