



Report Reference Number: PR/19/9

To: Policy Review Committee
Date: 15 October 2019
Author: Michelle Dinsdale, Senior Policy and Performance
Lead Executive Member: Councillor Richard Musgrave, Executive Member for Place Shaping
Lead Officer: Stuart Robinson, Head of Business Development and Improvement

Title: Proposals for establishing a Policy Review Low Carbon Working Group

Summary:

This report looks to progress Councillor Musgrave's proposal at Council on 17 September that the Council establishes a Policy Review working group to lead on the development of the Council's approach to the challenges of low carbon. It requests that Members discuss and agree a Terms of Reference, which sets out options for the scope of the group. It also provides Members with details of current projects and suggests potential opportunities for further action to address climate change.

Recommendations:

- 1. Policy Review Committee to put forward members of the Committee to be part of a Low Carbon Working Group;**
- 2. Agree the Terms of Reference for the group.**

Reasons for recommendation:

To implement Cllr Musgrave's proposal for Policy Review Committee to lead on the development of the Council's carbon reduction policy and, in doing so, progress the draft Corporate Plan 2020-2030 priority around 'respond to our developing understanding of the impacts of climate change to foster local resilience and assurance through identifying and promoting low carbon'.

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1** At full Council on 16th July the Leader of the Council set out a proposal in his report to address the low carbon agenda by setting up a cross party working group of Members who will work with officers and report their recommendations to the Executive. Cllr Musgrave is the Executive member taking this work forward.
- 1.2.** At the Council meeting held on 17 September Cllr Musgrave proposed to ask Policy Review Committee to lead on the development of the Council's carbon reduction

policy and to report to Executive with recommendations for actions with targets for delivery in line with the Government's 2050 target.

- 1.3 The Executive will then report to Council their recommendations, including justification if they differ from the views of the Policy Review Committee Working Group, so that the Council can agree and adopt a Policy.

2. Policy Review Low Carbon Working Group

2.1 Draft Terms of Reference

Members are asked to discuss and agree a draft Terms of Reference (ToR) – see Appendix A. These set out how the group might work and the roles and responsibilities of members.

In respect of the key points, Policy Review may wish to specifically consider the following.

Key points to consider

Membership A sub-group is suggested. Policy Review may wish to consider whether the whole Committee should be involved. If it is to be a sub-group, Policy Review to consider which members should be involved.

Scope It is proposed to focus only on the activities of the Council. The Committee may wish to expand this to cover the wider district – although the ability of the Council to influence this may be limited.

Policy Review to consider whether to align with the work streams (and the work) of the North Yorkshire County Council Climate Change Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

Timescale A six month timescale is proposed. Policy Review may wish to consider whether this is appropriate.

Officer Support The draft ToR suggests officers from the following service areas:

- Planning Policy
- Policy and Performance
- Economic Development and Regeneration
- Environmental Health
- Property Services
-

Policy Review may wish to consider:

- a. whether to include officers at all; and
- b. if officers are to be involved, are there any alternative suggestions.

Frequency of meetings Monthly is proposed – is the committee happy with this.

Reporting mechanism and frequency The Chair of the sub working group to report back to the Policy Review Committee at each meeting – is this feasible? Two key milestones for reporting to Executive are proposed – at 4 and 6 months respectively. Policy Review to consider whether this gives sufficient time to undertake the review.

In line with other current Member sub-working/tasks and finish groups a Member Code of Conduct is also included in the draft Terms of Reference.

2.2 Current and planned work

Work is already on-going in a number of areas linked to carbon reduction. These are listed below (detailed in Appendix B), together with details of the lead Officer:

- Electric Vehicle Charging Points - Wayne Palmer (Environmental Health Team Leader)
- Housing Delivery – Caroline Skelly (Planning Policy Manager)
- Council Homes Energy Efficiency – Phil Hiscott (Property Management Team Leader)

If Policy Review decide to include officers in the working group, it would be beneficial for a representative from each of the above service areas to be included, in addition to a number of other key officers (see draft Terms of Reference).

2.4 Potential Future Actions

Opportunities for future actions could include the following:

- Waste management/minimization
- Investing in solar energy
- Procurement - ensuring suppliers demonstrate a commitment to climate change mitigation
- Influencing travel behaviour of both council staff and residents
- Replacing SDC fleet with electric vehicles
- Supporting businesses, especially SMEs to become more sustainable
- Park and open space management/Planting more trees on council land.

3. Alternative Options Considered

None

4. Implications

4.1 Legal Implications

On 12th June 2019 the Prime Minister committed the UK to net zero carbon emissions by 2050. It was enshrined in law through an amendment to the Climate

Change Act laid in parliament on that day. This project will ensure that the Council plays its part in supporting this commitment.

4.2 Financial Implications

None as a result of this report – other than potential for the group to tap into the small Scrutiny Budget (£2k) in order to support the work of the Group.

Delivery of the recommendations will require financial resources. Where possible options to apply for external funding for specific projects will be explored.

4.3 Policy and Risk Implications

The formation of the working group will serve to mitigate the risk of an uncoordinated approach to climate change across the Council.

4.4 Corporate Plan Implications

The draft Corporate Plan 2020-2030 proposes a priority that Selby district is a great place to enjoy life, one of the objectives of which is improved environmental quality. The headline delivery priority is to respond to our developing understanding of the impacts of climate change to foster local resilience and assurance through identifying and promoting low carbon – including aiming for the Council to be carbon neutral by 2050. This work will enable the council to progress with this priority.

4.5 Resource Implications

The working group will be delivered within existing resources.

4.6 Other Implications

There will be implications for existing priorities in providing resources for this work

4.7 Equalities Impact Assessment

None at this stage. An Equality, Diversity and Community Impact Assessment screening will be undertaken once proposals are confirmed.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1** In order to progress with the low carbon agenda it is proposed that Policy Review Committee form a working group. The working group are asked to discuss and agree the Terms of Reference, which include when and how progress will be reported back to the Executive with recommendations for actions with targets for delivery in line with the Government's 2050 target.

6. Background Documents

Council minutes 16 July 2019
Council agenda 17 September 2019

7. Appendices

Appendix A – Policy Review Low Carbon Working Group Draft Terms of Reference
Appendix B – Low Carbon Agenda – Details of Current and Planned Work

Contact Officer:

Michelle Dinsdale
Senior Policy & Performance Officer
mdinsdale@selby.gov.uk
01757 292041