

Minutes

Low Carbon Working Group

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| Venue: | Committee Room - Civic Centre, Doncaster Road, Selby, YO8 9FT |
| Date: | Thursday, 16 January 2020 |
| Time: | 5.00 pm |
| Present: | Councillors K Arthur, J Cattanach, M Jordan, A Lee (Chair), R Packham and J Shaw-Wright |
| Officers present: | Dave Caulfield - Director of Economic Regeneration and Place, June Rothwell – Head of Operational Services, Caroline Skelly – Planning Policy Manager, Sarah Thompson – Environmental Health and Housing Service Manager, Michelle Dinsdale – Senior Policy and Performance Officer, Victoria Foreman – Democratic Services Officer |
| Others present: | N/A |
| Public: | N/A |
| Press: | N/A |

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M McCartney.

2 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest.

3 LOW CARBON WORKING GROUP - SCOPE AND AIMS

The Working Group agreed that the first meeting would be an opportunity to discuss the starting points for the work of the group. Officers provided an introduction to the various aspects that could be considered as part of a low carbon agenda and made the following points:

- The Council's Corporate Plan now included a target to be carbon neutral before 2050.
- Members were asked to consider the scope of the working group's ambitions, which needed to be realistic and were focused on things that the Council could tangibly deliver.
- Timescales for the work were discussed, with a six month time frame suggested as an initial target for reporting back to the Executive.
- In relation to the Corporate Plan, the group could help to deliver the Council's understanding of moving towards low carbon, and also where the Council stood at present, i.e. baseline data gathering and information.
- Members were asked to also consider the corporate policy development that may be required, whether external assistance and additional internal resources could be needed to complete the work.

The above discussions were summarised as needing to understand:

- The scope and timescales of the work.
- The baseline evidence.
- Member ideas as to what projects were possible.

In light of the above, Members of the Working Group went on to make the following points:

- The design of the Council Offices should be looked at, and whether they were meant to be more environmentally friendly.
- It was noted that North Yorkshire County Council had set a target to be carbon neutral by 2030.
- It was queried whether the Working Group could report straight to the Executive, or if any recommendations or findings would need to go through the Policy Review Committee. Officers were asked to find out.
- That there was some ongoing work by the Woodland Trust, who were encouraging private landowners to plant trees on their land; this is something the Council could be a part of.
- Some Members felt that the Working Group should not set a date yet for reporting back their findings or completing the work, as it could limit its scope. It was initially proposed that an interim report could be produced around May 2020, with a more final report around July or August.

- The group should draw on best practice of other authorities or bodies that had been looking at the low carbon agenda.
- Members agreed about the importance of having both a deliverable and tangible plan that was not overly ambitious and achievable. Partnership working with other organisations that were already doing work in this area should be encouraged.
- It was vital that baseline data and information was collated and presented to Members as soon as practicable in order to inform the scope of the work they could suggest. Area to look at included Council owned buildings, Council related vehicle activity (such as bin lorries etc.) and Council homes.
- Officers explained that a lot of the information could be obtained relatively easily, but if Members wanted further details and to drill down into some of the data, external expertise could be needed, i.e. from organisations such as the Carbon Trust, who had done similar work at authorities such as Kirklees.
- The Working Group suggested that once the baseline information had been presented, there may be immediate and obvious changes that could be made quickly, and some which would be more medium to long term.
- Members also suggested looking at tree planting on Council land, and making more of low carbon ideas in relation to development management, such as electric vehicle charging points with new build homes, better insulation and so on. Officers emphasised the importance of a policy background to support such ideas, i.e. the new Local Plan, which climate change would be at the core of.
- Members suggested that once the baseline information had been presented, the Working Group identify a series of projects categorised as short, medium and long term.
- Officers suggested that alongside the collation of the data, some investigation into the cost of external expertise and assistance could be explored and brought back to Members at the next meeting. Officers also explained that there may be Programme for Growth funding available from April 2020, which could be used by the Working Group for particular projects.
- Other local authorities such as Ryedale, City of York, Leeds City Council and the East Riding had undertaken comprehensive work on their carbon footprints that had led to new waste and recycling strategies and other substantial policy changes.
- Officers agreed to provide the Working Group with information about

the work that other local authorities near Selby were doing, including the County Council who were also looking into the matter. Officers were asked to circulate the County Council's Action Plan to the Working Group.

- The importance of accessing central government funding for the low carbon agenda was emphasised, as was partnership working with organisations such as the Woodland Trust and the LEPs.
- Officers were asked to arrange the next meeting of the Working Group in February, and to provide an update on the Working Group at the next Policy Review Committee meeting. Members asked that any background and information documents be circulated to Members as they became available.
- Officers would look into the provision of a shared drive for information sharing that could be accessed by both the Working Group Members and Officers.
- Lastly, Members emphasised that the Low Carbon Working Group did not necessarily need to be time limited, as it may become apparent that there was scope for a lot more work and as such, it would need to continue to meet in the future.

RESOLVED:

- i. To ask Officers to establish whether the Low Carbon Working Group could report directly to the Executive, or if it would need to be fed through the Policy Review Committee first as its parent committee.**
- ii. To agree an initial timescale of an interim report of the Working Group to the Executive (subject to clarification of point (i) above) in May 2020 and a more final report in July/August 2020.**
- iii. That the work and best practice of other local authorities in relation to the low carbon agenda be examined and considered by the Working Group, and that partnership working with other authorities and organisations be encouraged.**
- iv. To ask Officers to gather baseline data and information as discussed for circulation to the Working Group at the next meeting (or before). Once this information had been received, the Working Group could identify short, medium and long term projects for the Council.**
- v. To ask Officers to investigate the cost of external**

expertise and assistance with the low carbon work, and report this back to the Working Group.

vi. That North Yorkshire County Council's Climate Change Action Plan be circulated to the Working Group.

vii. To ask Officers to arrange the next meeting of the Working Group in February 2020, and to provide an update on the Working Group at the next Policy Review Committee meeting.

viii. That any background or information documents be circulated to Members as they became available.

ix. To ask Officers to investigate the provision of a shared drive that could be accessed by both the Working Group Members and Officers.

The meeting closed at 6.00 pm.