

Climate Change, Economy and Development Transitional Committee

Meeting held 10 November 2021

PRESENT: Councillors Mark Jones (Chair), Barbara Masters (Deputy Chair), Neale Gibson, Tim Huggan, Dianne Hurst, Douglas Johnson, Abtissam Mohamed, Chris Rosling-Josephs, Martin Smith and Paul Turpin

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 No apologies for absence were received.

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the public and press.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 Councillor Paul Turpin declared a personal interest in item 6 on the agenda (item five of these minutes) - Draft 10-Point Plan For Climate Change Action, as a director of an insulation company.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 7th October, 2021, were approved as a correct record.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 Members of the public were invited to raise questions and/or comments on the Draft 10- Point Plan For Climate Change Action, and the following six people attended the meeting to raise their questions.

(a) George Rees

One of the benefits stated in the 10-Point Plan is "Improving people's homes so they are suitable for the changing climate". The plan includes a welcome recognition of the greater progress that can be achieved by working together: "5. Bring the city together to make the changes we need".

(Q) A significant proportion of the city housing stock is terraced houses. Many of these have single-brick external walls so they leak heat and require external solid wall insulation. Particularly for terrace-houses there's a strong benefit from insulating multiple adjacent houses together - this offers a more effective solution (reduced thermal gaps), improved appearance (harmonious), and lower-costs

(reduced set-up costs). What is the Council offering, or planning, in terms of facilitating or supporting multiple privately-owned adjacent terrace-house owners to work together in this way? For example, the Council could offer an expert insulation-advisor to attend a meeting with residents of a particular terrace street, or the Council could support the negotiation with contractors for lower-prices for externally-insulating of multiple-adjacent terrace homes.

(b) Renee Meijer

Given that food generates around 30% of our carbon footprint, what plans do the Council have to ensure that fair and sustainable food is an integral part of this 10-Point Plan?

(c) Andrew Mitchell

- (i) I applaud SCC for recognising the need to take action, but I see no tangible actions in any of the 10 SCC priorities listed. The greatest impact on emissions that SCC has a direct influence on is Housing which accounts for 40% of all CO2 emissions. Housing first. Fabric First.
- (ii) What is the actual strategy for reducing CO2e in Sheffield. That is what specific areas have been identified as the most effective in terms of cost vs CO2e saved and SCC authority (i.e. they have the authority to implement this)?

(d) Gillian Gehring

Is the Council going to rethink public transport? Might it consider seeking funds to establish a large fleet of free small electric minibuses that would run at a frequency of ~ 5 minutes over an area inside the inner ring road linking the bus and rail stations and transport hubs e.g. the Cathedral with the rest of the city. They might be permitted in the pedestrianised areas provided they kept to a very low speed limit in these areas. (There is such a scheme in Manchester).

(e) Karine Nohr

- (i) Why are petrol-guzzling private SUVs, which are resource hungry and have poor fuel efficiency, excluded from the £10 charge to enter the Clean Air Zone?
- (ii) Why no mention of the Arup Report?

(f) Jonathan Frost

- (i) What do you think of the Wakefield Climate Action Plan?
- (ii) What aspects could usefully be used in the Sheffield equivalent?

5.2 The Policy and Improvement Officer (Alice Nicholson) read out the two following questions from members of the public, who had indicated that they had wished to

attend the meeting in person, but had no longer been able to do so:-

(a) Minesh Parekh

Point 4 of the Plan states that 'We will work towards reducing Council emissions to net zero by 2030'. The Council's original declaration and its Arup report talked in terms of being zero carbon by 2030. Is this plan a pivot away from zero carbon and downsizing our emissions ambitions?

(b) Gillian Green

What is SCC's plan to increase the amount of different types of plastics and tetra-packs that can be recycled via my blue bin collection please? I cannot take to supermarket recycling bins as I am disabled?

5.3 The Policy and Improvement Officer made reference to further questions and comments which had been raised by members of the public and interested groups/organisations, and which were set out in a document which had been circulated to members at the meeting, and which would be posted on the Council website.

5.4 The Chair (Councillor Mark Jones) stated that, given the number of questions and comments raised, a generic written response would be provided to everyone.

6. DRAFT 10-POINT PLAN FOR CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION

6.1 The Committee received a report of the Head of Strategic Transport, Sustainability and Infrastructure, Place, containing a draft 10- Point Plan for Climate Change Action. The draft Plan, which had been requested by the Committee at its last meeting held on 7th October 2021, set out a framework for the Council's approach to acting on climate change, together with committed high level and specific actions that were identified as priorities over the short-term. The report also set out details regarding the next steps in the process.

6.2 The report was supported by a presentation by Mark Whitworth (Sustainability and Climate Change Service Manager) and Tom Finnegan-Smith (Head of Strategic Transport, Sustainability and Infrastructure).

6.3 Also in attendance for this item were Mick Crofts (Executive Director, Place) and Victoria Penman (Sustainability Programme Officer).

6.4 Mark Whitworth reported on the response to suggestions of the Committee raised at its meeting held on 7th October 2021, the proposed structure of the draft Plan, the transformation of priorities and actions and enabling priorities. Tom Finnegan-Smith provided further detail on the transport strategy element of the Plan.

6.5 Members of the Committee raised questions and the following responses were provided:-

- It was noted that a significant proportion of the greenhouse gas emissions

in the food sector involved the transportation of food. There was a commitment to develop a plan which focused specifically on food, as well as a plan for decarbonising transport in the city, including freight. Every effort needed to be made to ensure that local food supplies came from sustainable sources, and work was required to look at the supply chains. As part of the Plan, the Council wished to look at how more food consumed in the city could be generated locally in order to reduce emission levels created by food transportation. Work had been undertaken a few years ago, as part of the Heart of the City project, looking at cleaner methods of transporting food into the city, such as the use of the canal or by creating a consolidation centre near the motorway. There was a big opportunity for the Council to work with its partners, such as Sheffield Hallam University, with regard to looking at modern food growing techniques. The Council needed to work with ShefFood, and other similar networks in the city, to support them and help them develop further. Many of the problems were caused simply by people's decisions, such as where they purchased their food from, and how wasteful they were in terms of throwing food away, and work was required to try and encourage people to make such informed choices

- Veolia still operated two electric refuse collection vehicles which were used to support general duties by completing extra or missed collections.
- With regard to housing, and specifically the options available to people, the Council would need to try and offer some clarity to the public in terms of the different forms of the technology available to them, and signpost people to where they could get correct information and advice, to enable them to make informed choices.
- Details of those areas where the Council aimed to make a difference were set out in the plan including, for example, the decarbonisation of transport and businesses. The further work would require the Council to work closely with businesses and other organisations to discuss the various changes they may need to consider.
- There was currently some funding in place for small businesses to help them to decarbonise, such as upgrading their systems and features, such as lighting and roller shutters. Information on this was made available through Business Sheffield. The Council was currently in discussion with the Chamber of Commerce and the Sheffield Sustainability Network around the work they were undertaking, and to discuss how the Council could work with both organisations to try and maximise the uptake of the available grants. The Council was also looking at how it could support local businesses to access the funding made available through various Government programmes, such as the Industrial Energy Transformation Fund. The Council was also working with the University of Sheffield in connection with the development of a South Yorkshire Sustainability Centre, with the aim of linking research, innovation and academic skills with sustainability-related challenges and opportunities in the city and wider

region. It was acknowledged that there were many small businesses who did not have the staff or time to find out about the various grants and initiatives available, and this was something the Council could look at. Officers would provide an update in terms of grants and information on various initiatives and schemes available to small businesses, through the Local Area Committees.

- The nature of the Plan reflected the high levels of cultural changes and institutional learning that would be required to make progress on this agenda. Officers would look at how people could be motivated in terms of taking action and to volunteer. The relevant pages on the Council website would be updated to provide information which would enable people to act. The questions asked today would receive responses and these would be published. It was important to allow people the opportunity to provide comments and suggestions, and the ways of doing this would be explored, as well as helping to signpost people to places where they can find information. Whilst the Plan set out a number of requirements the Council could undertake during the next two years, it was not a comprehensive, detailed programme of the outcomes. Officers were meeting with colleagues in the Human Resource's leadership team to discuss the issue of training and how the plans could be rolled out across the Council.
- There would be an Equality Impact Assessment undertaken in respect of the Plan. The specific detail regarding equality issues would be considered as part of the individual delivery plans as and when they emerged.
- There would be further work undertaken with regard to communications and engagement, which include updating the Council website. Specific work was required in terms of messaging, in that different messaging worked for different people. Further work was also required in connection with trying to encourage people to change their behaviour and adapt to the changes that are coming.
- Carbon reductions from the transport sector had been lower than in other areas, as has been the case across the country. Reducing transport emissions requires the public to take conscious and daily decisions to change the way that they travel, as well as huge investment in transport infrastructure. There had been a legal requirement to take action on air quality in the shortest possible timescale, hence the implementation of the Clean Air Zone. In addition to this, however, further work was required in the longer-term to try and influence people to make changes and encourage them to use public transport, as well as walking or cycling when possible to improve air quality, as well as to reduce carbon emissions from transport. The Government had recently granted £570m for transport improvements in South Yorkshire, which would enable the Council to roll out measures under the Connecting Sheffield programme, directly aimed at sustainable modes of transport

6.6 Mark Whitworth continued the presentation, reporting on the potential roles for this Committee as part of the Plan, the implications of a transition zero economy for workers and delivering the retrofitting of homes equitably.

6.7 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the contents of the report now submitted, the information reported as part of the presentation and the responses to the questions raised;
- (b) thanks Mick Crofts, Tom Finnegan-Smith, Victoria Penman and Mark Whitworth for attending the meeting and responding to the questions raised; and
- (c) agrees that it should focus on the decarbonisation of housing in the city, and requests officers to submit a report setting out possible actions and interventions for consideration at a future meeting.

7. DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

7.1 The Policy and Improvement Officer (Alice Nicholson) submitted a report containing the Committee's draft work programme for 2021/22.

7.2 Members indicated that the Business Recovery Plan and Local Plan be prioritised as areas for consideration by this Committee.

7.3 RESOLVED: That the Committee approves the draft Work Programme for 2021/22 now submitted, taking the comments now made into consideration.