

## York Climate Commission

### **1 Vision**

Act as an independent, technical body representing and reflecting the public, private and civic sectors from across the City of York; providing strategic oversight and accountability for progressing the City's climate change agenda.

### **2 Background & context**

The City of York Council (CYC) recognises that no single organisation has the power, authority, resources or ability to achieve the city-level change needed to deliver our ambition of becoming a carbon neutral city by 2030.

Bringing together key partners across the city is essential in creating shared ownership and accountability but also benefiting from the collective experience and expertise that exists within York.

CYC has proposed the establishment of a York Climate Commission (the Commission) to acknowledge the collective responsibility of our climate change ambition and provide leadership in delivering on this ambition.

### **3 Scope**

The scope of the Commission is to:

- Promote leadership in the city on climate change, encouraging stakeholders to take effective action now, while maintaining a long term perspective;
- Provide authoritative independent advice on the most effective steps required to meet the city's carbon reduction target so as to inform policies and actions of local stakeholders and decision makers;
- Monitor and report on progress towards meeting the city's carbon targets and recommend actions to keep on track;
- Advise on the assessment of climate-related risks and adaptation opportunities in the city and on progress towards climate resilience;
- Bring together major organisations and key groups in York to collaborate on projects that result in measurable contributions towards meeting the city's climate reduction target;
- Make the economic case for project development, implementation and investment in low carbon and climate resilient projects in the city;
- Promote best practice in public engagement on climate change and its impacts in order to support robust decision-making;
- Act as a forum where organisations can exchange ideas, research findings, information and best practice on carbon reduction and climate resilience.

The Commission is not intended to be a lobbying or campaigning organisation and instead has a clear focus on providing independent advice and bringing together organisations to collaborate on specific projects and work-streams. It may, however, act as an advocate for further devolved powers which would enable the city to achieve more.

## **4 Deliverables**

The Commission aims to achieve the following deliverables:

- The collation of existing carbon reduction targets and measures for organisations across the city using an agreed methodology;
- Agreed strategic and shared priorities and opportunities for carbon reduction and climate resilience across the city;
- To support York based organisations' understanding of the importance of energy and low carbon initiatives to the success of their business and helping overcome barriers to successful implementation.
- Collaborate with other organisations to identify effective carbon reduction and climate resilience measures, research and develop projects, and attract funding for project development and/or delivery;
- An annual report monitoring project delivery and evaluating progress across the city.

## **5 Membership**

Membership of the Commission is open to individuals representing key organisations from the public, private and civic sectors across the city who can contribute to the development and delivery of a low carbon and/or climate resilient economy/society in York. The balance of membership of the Commission reflects the need for cross-city representation and for it to address both climate mitigation and resilience.

Prior to appointment, members must have ensured that their participation in the Commission has been authorised at a senior level within their organisation.

Any operational costs will be shared equally across members.

Members of the Commission are recruited periodically via an open process. Members are appointed on the basis:

- That they are representative of a significant organisation or sector;
- That they will engage with their organisation and sector to promote the work of the Commission;
- That although some members will represent large organisations which can make a specific commitment, others may be able to represent their sector (e.g. housing / small businesses) but cannot make commitments on behalf of their sector;
- That they can deliver useful, accurate and timely data to the Commission;
- That they can demonstrate expertise, knowledge, leadership and skills to contribute usefully to the expert work of the Commission;
- That they can commit the required amount of time to the Commission;
- That they have access to good networks and connections that will add value to the Commission;
- That they are available to attend the Commission meetings. Alternate representatives would not usually be allowed to attend. If a member is absent for three meetings in succession, membership will be reviewed and may be revoked

## **6 Ways of Working**

The Commission will be Chaired by the Executive member for Environment and Climate Change for an initial 12 months from formation. At which point, the Chair will be appointed

from amongst the other Commission members, with the Executive member for Environment and Climate Change taking up the role of Co-chair.

The Commission will act as a strategic body and as such will meet on a quarterly basis. It is intended that administrative support will be provided jointly.

The Commission will meet quarterly. Meetings will be held privately; however, to ensure accountability and scrutiny of the work of the Commission and to report the progress that is being made by all sectors and partners towards the city's carbon reduction target, the Commission will discuss progress on a 6 monthly basis to CYC Climate Change Policy Scrutiny Committee.

Decisions within the Commission are made with a preference for a consensus-based approach to decision-making; however, when necessary a vote can be taken to secure the decision.

These Terms of Reference shall be adopted (with any proposed amendments) at the Commission's first meeting, then be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure their continued relevance.

## **7 Structure**

### York Climate Commission:

Comprising a Chair, Co-Chair and representatives from key organisations or sectors, including at least one person from each Working Group. The Climate Commission group meets four times per year:

- To oversee the programme of deliverables;
- To take an overview of initiatives, projects and activities to ensure coordination, reduce duplication and foster synergy between projects;
- To act as a problem-solving forum;
- To agree, communicate and publish advice on meeting carbon reduction targets;
- To agree, communicate and publish advice on risk / opportunity assessment of climate change.

### Working Groups:

Working Groups will be established by York Climate Commission members (who join Working Groups) and include technical or subject specialists. Working Groups will concentrate on key areas of climate action; the Working Groups are under development and will be formalised within the first 3 months of the Commission. Working Groups will meet four times per year and focus on:

- Information gathering by monitoring the performance of actual and proposed projects in the city, capturing carbon reduction data in an agreed format and preparing reports;
- Providing a more complete picture of the contribution of the city to carbon emissions;
- Overseeing effective mechanisms to bring projects from different stakeholders together where appropriate in order to achieve economies of scale or greater strategic synergy between projects;

- Project portfolio delivery, funding and finance by taking a city-wide view of the carbon reduction and resilience projects and how they could be financed, including securing funding for the work of the Commission.

York Climate Commission, December 2020