



## Climate Change Scrutiny Joint Sub-Committee

22 January 2020

### Progress Report - Executive Member Climate Change Task & Finish Group

#### 1. Purpose of report

To provide Members with a progress report on the work that is being undertaken by the Executive Member Climate Change Task and Finish Group.

#### 2. Key background information

- 2.1 This report is an update on the progress made since the report to the Climate Change Scrutiny Joint Sub-Committee on 24 July 2019 and focusses on four main work streams: the council's carbon footprint; development of a carbon reduction plan; governance; and the climate change impact assessment.
- 2.2 This report refers to CO<sub>2</sub>e which is the carbon dioxide equivalent – a standard unit for measuring carbon footprint which allows different greenhouse gases to be compared on a like for like basis.
- 2.3 To clarify the context of the county council's aspiration for carbon neutrality by definition this means annual zero net anthropogenic (human caused or influenced) CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions. Whilst we should be able to change the way we deliver some services to reduce CO<sub>2</sub>e, given the need to provide services across a large rural county it will not be possible to eliminate all emissions with the current technology available. Therefore, to achieve carbon neutrality every tonne of anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub>e emitted would need to be compensated with an equivalent amount of CO<sub>2</sub>e removed eg carbon offsetting (sometimes referred to as carbon sequestration). This could be achieved through various measures such as the planting of trees.

#### 3. The council's carbon footprint

- 3.1 Figure 1 demonstrates core areas under the council's direct control moving outwards to elements where we could potentially influence carbon reduction. Whilst there are a number of areas within the council's wider influence the main focus of the initial baseline review has been the council's direct energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, with the establishment of an assessment tool to monitor progress to reduce energy consumption and emissions.
- 3.2 A baseline carbon footprint figure for 2018/19 of 13,492 tCO<sub>2</sub>e has been established (Table 1) which includes the following elements: corporate buildings,

street lighting and business travel. The NYCC fleet is vehicles owned or leased by NYCC, the grey fleet is staff and member travel on council business using their own vehicles.

Figure 1 – 2018/19 Carbon Footprint (CO2e tonnes)

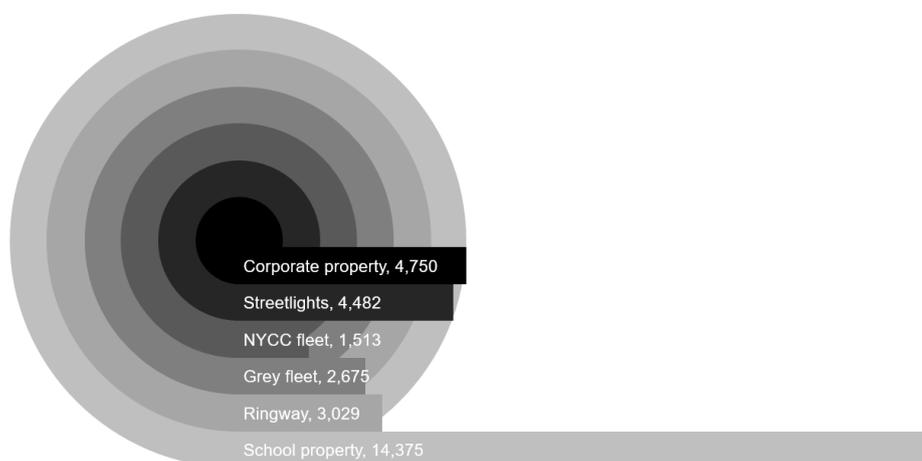


Table 1 - NYCC Baseline tCO2e

Corporate property*	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Electricity	3316	2794	2150	1760
Gas	3794	3660	3478	2931
Water	29	26	25	26
Oil	180	80	48	33
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>7320</b>	<b>6559</b>	<b>5701</b>	<b>4750</b>

Business travel	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
NYCC fleet	1356	1356	1324	1513
Grey fleet	2997	2934	2841	2675
Rail**	-	-	-	72
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>4425</b>	<b>4362</b>	<b>4237</b>	<b>4259</b>

Streetlights	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>7829</b>	<b>6313</b>	<b>5225</b>	<b>4482</b>

Grand total	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
	19574	17235	15163	13492

\* Corporate property includes all offices, libraries, care homes, highways depots etc. The data is not weather corrected so will fluctuate due to cooler and warmer weather from year to year

\*\* Rail – data before 2018/19 is not available

- 3.3 It is important to note that companies in the Brierley Group are not included in these figures. Neither is data for other services and goods purchased by the council; these are very difficult to quantify and at this stage only those areas which can be directly managed by the council or where there is a greater degree of influence have been included. Neither is data for schools as these are not directly managed by the council.

3.4 Figures 2 and 3 indicate that the carbon footprints of corporate buildings and street lighting have already reduced over the last 5 years through a combination of efficiency measure and links to the 2020 programme. This reduction also reflects the progress being made across the UK in the decarbonisation of electricity generation.

Figure 2 – Corporate buildings only CO2e (tonnes) emissions by year

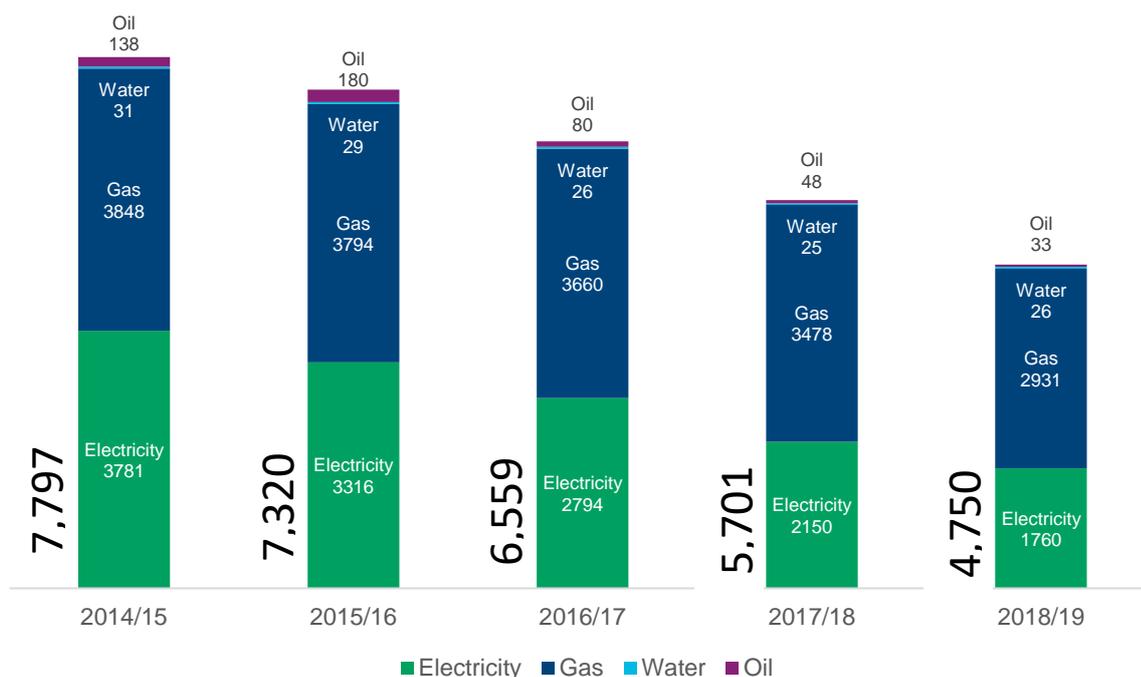
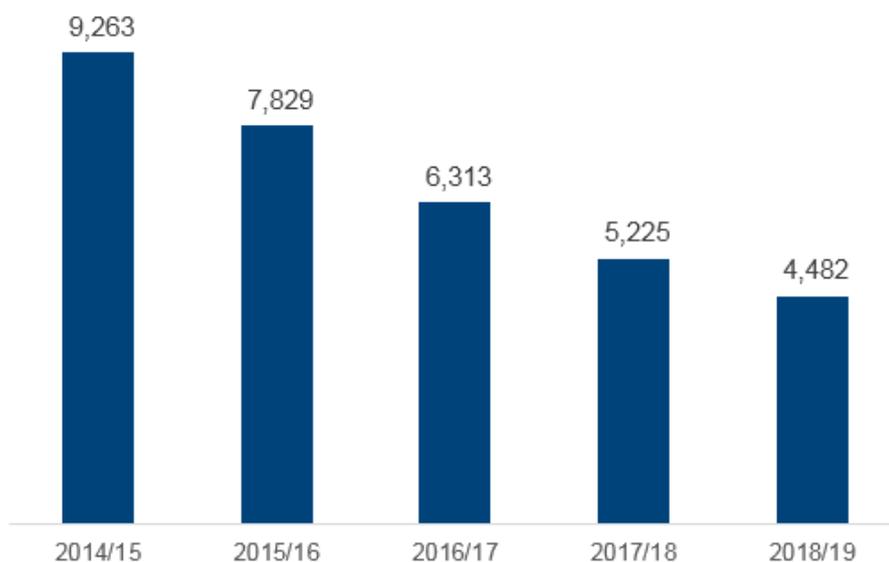


Figure 3 – Street Lighting CO2e emissions (tonnes) by year



3.5 Whilst we have already achieved some reductions in our carbon footprint, it is important to continue to work to reduce the carbon footprint particularly for business

travel and our buildings where gas consumption is still significant. It is also necessary to start quantifying the emissions for the North Yorkshire locality, alongside partners including the district councils, and consider where and how the County Council could influence the wider county carbon footprint.

#### **4. Carbon reduction plan**

- 4.1 A carbon reduction pathway tool has been developed which enables the potential pathways to, and the cost implications of, NYCC achieving carbon neutrality to be visualised. The main chart (see Appendix A for a screen shot of the demonstration version of the tool) includes actual emissions and projected emissions to 2035 and is intended to provide an overview of the scale of action required with associated costs and potential savings.
- 4.2 The tool takes into account the positive impact of already implemented projects, for example the conversion of street lighting to LEDs. We are working with the Integrated Finance team to ensure the tool is fit for purpose.
- 4.3 We have begun to identify potential project areas which could help the council to achieve the 2030 aspiration including giving consideration to those ideas proposed at the scrutiny meeting in July (see Appendix B). The draft carbon reduction plan will set out in more detail various potential projects and whilst some of these projects have been already been identified for implementation, for example the County Hall campus boiler replacement programme, others are at the ideas stage, for example solar farms, and require detailed investigation before proceeding through formal decision making processes.
- 4.4 Suitable projects will feed into the carbon reduction pathway tool, therefore the next stage is to work with individual service areas to develop more accurate figures and to fully consider the costs and deliverability of projects including a timeframe for delivery. There is also a need to consider the acceptable financial rate of return for the county council when appraising projects that will deliver a considerable carbon saving or offsetting.

#### **5. Climate change impact assessment tool**

- 5.1 A new climate change impact assessment tool will be used to ensure that climate impacts are fully considered in council decision making. This will not replace situations where more detailed statutory environmental assessments are required eg Environmental Impact Assessment, Strategic Environmental Assessment or where planning permission is sought. The impact assessment tool and accompanying guidance is currently being trialled with a number of projects from different directorates.

#### **6. Governance and partnerships**

- 6.1 Work is taking place to ensure that climate change is included as a priority within the Council Plan that will be presented to full council in February 2020. The next

round of service planning will also include a section on the environment. Consideration also needs to be given to the commissioning and early implementation of appropriate training and development to help officers and members to embed climate change within the organisation.

- 6.2 Recognising that other local authorities are facing similar challenges we have been engaging with others locally and regionally, including through the Local Enterprise Partnership's circular economy and low carbon workshops, to consider the most effective ways to communicate and share best practice. We have established links with each of the officer leads on climate change in the North Yorkshire and York authorities and set up a Knowledge Hub site which is an online platform for public service knowledge sharing.

## **7. Government support and action**

- 7.1 Whilst many of the actions identified in the draft carbon reduction plan relate to the county council and the North Yorkshire locality, it is clear that local authorities will not be able to tackle every aspect of carbon reduction nor achieve meaningful reductions without government support and action. Significant changes in national infrastructure will also be required, eg increases in generation, distribution and/or storage of electricity.
- 7.2 The council could consider lobbying government on specific areas of policy and funding such as: the re-introduction of grants and financial incentives for renewable energy and energy efficiency measures; use of taxation and legislation to influence carbon emissions; funding, provision and quality of public transport and active travel infrastructure across the country; requiring developers to build to zero carbon standards.

## **8. Next steps**

- 8.1 To support the next stage, a delivery plan is being developed with timescales to develop business cases and better understand the investment required and expected returns, as well as the opportunity costs of implementing any new schemes.
- 8.2 Alongside the draft carbon reduction plan the council will need to highlight the wider benefits of reducing emissions both in terms of regional opportunities, eg economic opportunities relating to emerging green industries providing new jobs, opportunities for cost savings arising through energy efficiencies, reducing climate damages like flooding; as well as the benefits for individuals, eg quieter streets, cleaner air, healthier lifestyles with more active travel and healthier diets.
- 8.3 Comments from the Climate Change Scrutiny Joint Sub-Committee will support progress on the four work streams.

## **9. Key implications**

- 9.1 Financial - these will need to be identified through the delivery plan.
- 9.2 Human resources - these will need to be identified through the delivery plan.
- 9.3 Legal - these will need to be identified through the delivery plan.
- 9.4 Equalities - these will need to be identified through the delivery plan.
- 9.5 Environmental impacts / benefits - the progression of this work has the potential to have a positive impact and mitigate the impact of county council operations on climate change.

## **10. Conclusion**

- 10.1 As outlined in the report, significant progress has been made on the four work streams since July. Officers will continue to progress each area including the development of the carbon reduction plan to better understand the investment required and expected returns.

## **11. Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Climate Change Scrutiny Joint Sub-Committee considers and comments on the work that is being undertaken by the Executive Member Climate Change Task and Finish Group.

Neil Irving  
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13 January 2019

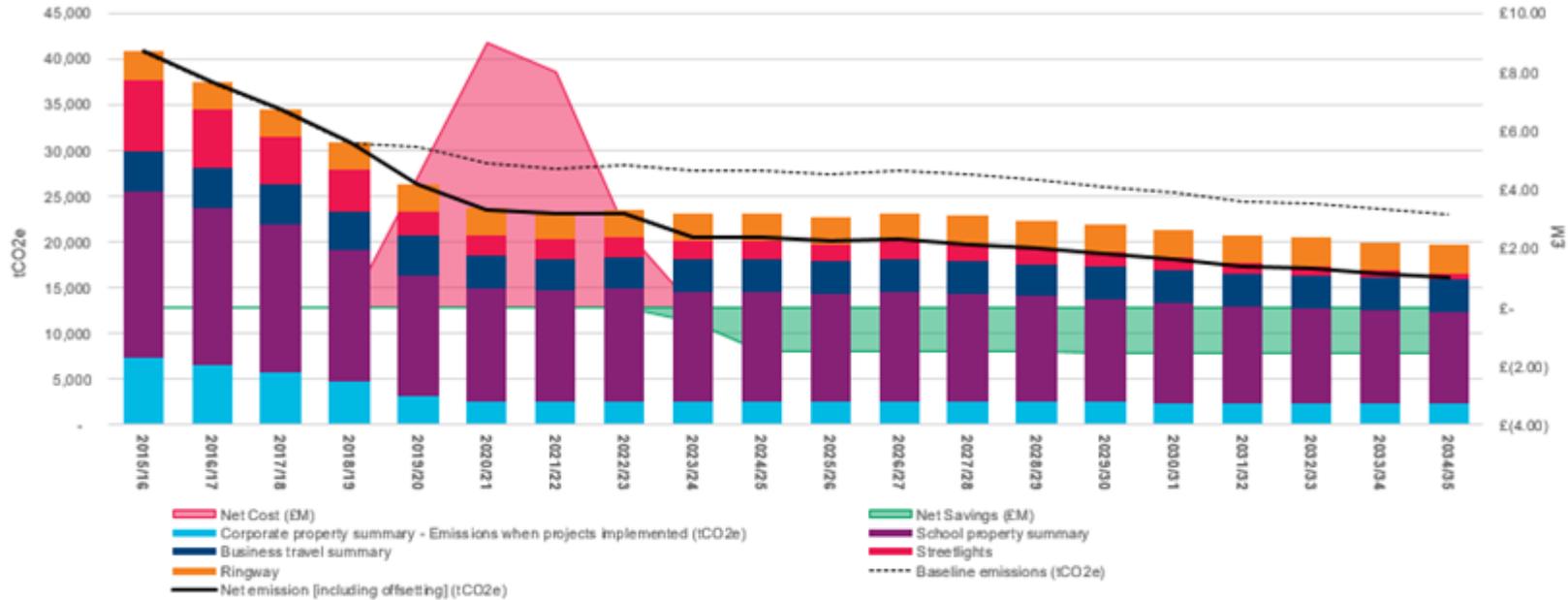
## **APPENDICES:**

Appendix A – Screenshot of the demonstration version of the NYCC Carbon Reduction Pathway tool

Appendix B - Response to Suggestions from the Climate Change Scrutiny Joint Sub Committee 24 July 2019 meeting

Appendix A – Screenshot of the demonstration version of the NYCC Carbon Reduction Pathway tool

Pathway summary



Year	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
<b>Total</b>	<b>Actual</b>				<b>Forecast</b>															
<b>Baseline emissions (tCO2e)</b>	40,768	37,457	34,480	30,896	30,475	28,560	27,943	28,309	27,733	27,811	27,310	27,806	27,383	26,788	26,105	25,353	24,479	24,141	23,579	22,937
<b>Emissions when projects implemented (tCO2e)</b>	40,768	37,457	34,480	30,896	26,339	23,721	23,263	23,535	23,107	23,165	22,793	23,161	22,848	22,406	21,898	21,340	20,691	20,440	20,023	19,663
<b>Emission reduction through projects (CO2e)</b>	-	-	-	-	4,136	4,839	4,680	4,774	4,626	4,646	4,517	4,645	4,536	4,383	4,206	4,013	3,788	3,700	3,556	3,273
<b>Net emission [including offsetting] (tCO2e)</b>	40,768	37,457	34,480	30,896	26,259	23,561	23,023	23,215	20,557	20,535	20,033	20,271	19,828	19,256	18,698	18,090	17,391	17,090	16,623	16,213

**Appendix B - Response to Suggestions from the Climate Change Scrutiny Joint Sub-Committee 24 July 2019 meeting**

Element	O&S Suggestion	Response
<p>Identifying quick wins - County Council stated its renewed commitment to climate change, and identified some initial actions to demonstrate that commitment</p>	<p>Introduce a Climate Change Champion</p>	<p>The aim is to embed climate change across existing processes to ensure it is everyone’s responsibility. Training would help ensure that climate change is considered at all levels of the council and with a consistent message.</p>
	<p>Instruct the Area Constituency Committees to develop and draw together local level initiatives</p>	<p>Initial focus on corporate carbon footprint but could potentially involve ACCs as appropriate where local projects arise</p>
	<p>Consider the introduction of a Citizens Assembly</p>	<p>Potential to consider in future as work to identify the county carbon footprint develops</p>
	<p>Assess its current actions to see what could be scaled up in the short term to start the programme of work.</p>	<p>Various short term actions including changing source of electricity to renewable supply under consideration. Looked at existing energy efficiency programme and rolling out across all corporate property.</p>
	<p>Improve/increase signage in council owned buildings to switch lights off etc.</p>	<p>Signage could be implemented as part of the corporate property Phase 3&amp;4 lighting upgrade. Energy and Water Saving Roadshows took place in Nov/Dec across different county council properties to promote staff behaviour change and new ideas.</p>
<p>Identifying Best Practice</p>	<p>Concern was expressed over the timeframe of the four work streams identified by the Executive Member Task Group. It was suggested that whilst not all the ways climate change was being addressed by other local authorities may be appropriate for NYCC, best practice and information on lessons learnt by other Local Authorities should be sought to help speed up the process.</p>	<p>Best practice and information from other authorities has been sought to support the work.</p>
	<p>Specifically in regard to the proposed impact assessment tool, whilst it was agreed it was a good idea, it was noted that the use of other similar tools already in place was patchy and required constant monitoring by Democratic Services</p>	<p>Concern noted. The impact assessment tool will be embedded within existing process as far as possible with the future intention to develop a clear workflow process with an online tool on the intranet to guide officers through the process of undertaking a climate change impact assessment from the conception of the project through to implementation.</p> <p>Consideration needs to be given to the commissioning and early implementation of appropriate training and development to support</p>

Element	O&S Suggestion	Response
		officers and members to embed climate change within service planning and to implement the new impact assessment tool. This could encourage personal responsibility with more detailed training for decision makers on the impact assessment tool and the low carbon / circular economy concepts.
Joint Working	There is a need for a whole county approach not a county council approach, and there may be many opportunities to maximise carbon dioxide emissions reductions by working together eg Planning decisions, Local Development Plans, use of s.106 monies, land management etc. The Leader confirmed that the North Yorkshire LEP was already working on climate change initiatives, and that City of York Council and the District Councils had already expressed an interest in joint working. It was agreed that any work with North Yorkshire District Councils would need to match the pace of change at NYCC, and it was suggested that Parish Councils be included if they could keep up.	<p>We have been engaging with others locally and regionally, including through the Local Enterprise Partnership's circular economy and low carbon workshops, to consider the most effective ways to communicate and share best practice.</p> <p>We have established links with each of the officer leads on climate change in the North Yorkshire and York authorities and subsequently set up a Knowledge Hub site which is an online platform for public service knowledge sharing.</p> <p>We will continue to engage with district councils, for example the forthcoming climate change scrutiny review in Scarborough in February.</p>
Behavioural Change	It was agreed that educating the public was key. There would be a long term benefit to improving education to children on the issues – some schools were already engaged, holding eco-days etc, others could be encouraged to do so. Improved use of social media would help engage adults and young people. Changing the mindset of the middle age bracket was crucial as they were the least engaged. The use of incentives or the introduction of a financial implication for not doing so, was suggested.	The draft carbon reduction plan and the forthcoming NYCC Air Quality Strategy will consider the wider areas which the council could potentially influence including the public (for example through transport choices, waste reduction) and through schools.
Influence & Leadership	It was agreed the county council needed to influence behaviour at every level. Initially it could focus its influence on a small number of key areas or groups /partnerships to take action to help reduce overall carbon dioxide emissions.	Noted.
Target setting	It was suggested that the Executive could identify a series of annual carbon dioxide reduction targets over	The development of the council's carbon reduction pathway tool allows for a number of different scenarios and pathways to net carbon neutrality

Element	O&S Suggestion	Response
	<p>the 10 year period up to 2030 to ensure progress can be effectively tracked. It was suggested that officers be tasked with working out how to deliver a stepped change that achieves the targets set by the Executive. However the Leader was of the view that both Members and officers had a role to play in identifying how the council delivered on being carbon neutral by 2030.</p>	<p>by 2030 to be considered, dependent on the carbon reduction projects implemented.</p> <p>With the establishment of a baseline corporate carbon footprint for 2018/19 it may be possible to implement a series of reduction targets but this would be need to be realistic given the challenges of achieving net zero.</p>
<p>Funding &amp; Investments</p>	<p>Members agreed funding opportunities and revenue generators needed identifying. This could be via the LEP, regional and national funding and/or through the use of Locality and Environmental Budgets. The county council would need to have a complete understanding of the financial implications associated with the decisions being made. But it was recognised that it was about balance eg some actions may create a smaller cash return but result in a higher carbon reduction.</p> <p>It was suggested the Council's investments and Investment Strategy could be targeted at companies, organisations and business opportunities that promote carbon dioxide emission reductions.</p>	<p>We will continue to investigate funding opportunities, including working with the LEP on low carbon and circular economy priorities.</p> <p>Working with finance to ensure that the pathway tool takes into account cost and projected savings.</p> <p>Further investigation into carbon accounting and the potential for ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) investment of council funds is required.</p>
<p>Procurement</p>	<p>A procurement approach could be developed that favoured suppliers that produce goods and supply services that have a high environmental gain. However, it was suggested a measured approach to change was required in order to reduce the possibility of unintended consequences eg a holistic view of the implications would need to be considered when procuring services. Members accepted it would be difficult to only buy in services that were eco-friendly. They also recognised that local suppliers delivering goods over shorted distances resulted in lower carbon emissions.</p>	<p>The carbon footprint of the goods and services purchased by the council are very difficult to quantify and have not been included in the corporate carbon footprint at the current time.</p> <p>Potential actions to consider sustainable procurement are included within the draft carbon reduction plan and we have been exploring with the LEPs the potential to use the low carbon element of the West and North Yorkshire business rates pool to support the Strategic Procurement Group in the development of tools to help bring carbon reduction into supply chains.</p>
<p>Natural Heritage and Business</p>	<p>Members questioned whether this was an opportunity for North Yorkshire to become a centre of environmentally friendly business, recreation and tourism through links</p>	<p>It is important to recognise the economic opportunities that could arise through climate change mitigation for example there is an opportunity to support the LEP's aims for a circular Yorkshire and low carbon region</p>

Element	O&S Suggestion	Response
	with the LEP, LNP and Welcome to Yorkshire, and with a focus on the Yorkshire brand	and the new job opportunities this brings whilst at the same time safeguarding North Yorkshire unique and special environment which attracts tourists to the area.
Movement of people and freight	Stronger representation be made to central government for an integrated transport policy for the region.	Noted.
	Travel plans could be expanded to cover a broader range of options for public sector staff, private and voluntary sector employees linking in with other organisations (with a greater emphasis on cycling).	A corporate travel plan is in development. The council currently supports school and business travel planning with the aim of increasing walking and cycling to work and school through the Open North Yorkshire Project which is funded by the Department for Transport's Access Fund.
	Electric charging infrastructure needed addressing to enable the expansion of ownership of electric cars	Officers are exploring options to support an increase in electric vehicle charging infrastructure, including potential external funding opportunities.
	If bus usage is to encouraged, bus fares will need to be addressed	Noted.
Consumption and waste	Members discussed reviewing current practices at a district, county and regional level to see whether there were opportunities to make changes. They also agreed the focus should include renew and reuse as well as recycle and suggested lessons could be learnt from the work that the LEP had done in Malton in creating the county's first 'circular economy' where everything is recycled or reused.	Actions for waste reduction and more efficient use of existing waste assets are under consideration, and would need to be considered in conjunction with district and regional partners.
Energy generation	Members considered the purchase of energy from sources with a lower carbon dioxide yield, and whether the Council could do more to develop more environmentally friendly energy generation on its land eg solar, wind, tidal, hydroelectric, methane from landfill etc. Specifically in regard to the refurbishment of County Hall, it was suggested that consideration should be given to a ground source heat pump.	A change in the source of corporate electricity to a renewable supply has been costed, however there is concern that this would not have a significant impact on the environment due to the fact that the UK's energy supply is already decarbonising.  The draft carbon reduction plan will include consideration of renewable energy generation including solar power, and greener alternatives to fossil fuel heating.
Mitigation opportunities	Members discussed tree buying initiatives, land for tree planting possibly linked into the 'Northern Forest' initiative, and opportunities to partner with the Dales and Moors National Parks	Tree planting will be included as a potential action in the draft carbon reduction plan subject to further investigation. Contact has been made with the national parks to explore their existing tree planting programmes.