

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 7
5 SEPTEMBER 2022	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	Adrian Chapman, Executive Director for Place & Economy	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Cllr Marco Cereste, Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Planning, Housing and Transport	
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CLIMATE CHANGE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM: Adrian Chapman, Executive Director for Place & Economy	Deadline date: NA
It is recommended that the Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note and comment upon the proposed approach to public engagement. 2. Note and comment upon the proposed approach to utilising consultation feedback in the development of the city-wide climate change action plan. 	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

1.1 The report is presented at the request of the Committee.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

2.1 This report is being presented to the Committee to allow them to scrutinise the proposed process for the public engagement in the development of the city-wide climate change action plan.

2.2 This report is for Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference No. Part 3, Section 4 - Overview and Scrutiny Functions, paragraph No. 2.1 Functions determined by Council:

4. Climate Change;

3. TIMESCALES

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	N/A
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4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 Every resident, business, organisation and community group have a role to play in supporting Peterborough to become a net-zero carbon city. This is an ambitious challenge requiring significant behavioural change and infrastructure improvements. To ensure that we have the highest chance of meeting this ambition, we need to develop plans to decarbonise which are supported by Peterborough's residents, businesses and communities. The proposed public engagement programme will aim to gather public insight to direct the development of the climate change action plan.

There are several key audiences and groups the council proposes to engage with, including;

- Residents;
- Businesses;
- Parish Councils;
- Schools.

The public engagement programme will aim to understand how people in our city believe we should decarbonise our buildings, our transport system, our waste system, the energy we produce, the purchases we make and the ways we use our land. The findings will be collated to steer the direction of the city-wide climate change action plan, which will be drafted following the public engagement programme.

There is limited capacity within the Council's climate change team to facilitate events, so it is proposed that in addition to in person events, the programme will include online events and guidance for external organisations to facilitate their own discussions.

It is proposed that the consultation period will be 8 weeks.

4.2 Peterborough Climate Debate

Citizens' assemblies are established to enable participants to discuss an issue with the aim of reaching a conclusion about what they believe should happen. Participants often discuss a single issue over multiple meetings in a defined time period. Citizens' assemblies have been used to inform local and national approaches to climate change.

There are three stages to the process: learning, discussion and decision-making. Within the learning phase, experts present information on the topic and participants have the opportunity to ask questions of the experts. Within the discussion phase, participants discuss their opinions aiming to understand the opinions of other participants. Experts can provide clarification but cannot share their opinions. In the decision-making phase, participants come to conclusions. They do not need to come to a consensus and can use voting to present multiple views.

Participants are selected who are representative of the wider population, the sample of participants is likely to match city-wide demographics such as gender, age, ethnicity, religion and disability status. In a climate citizens' assembly views on climate change may also be considered. A citizens' assembly often lasts six months and are typically hosted by an external and independent organisation from the one which commissioned the assembly.

Commissioning a citizens' assembly requires significant resources to plan, select and invite participants, run a series of expert-led discussions and collate recommendations. Whilst a citizens' assembly involves significant costs, the principles of an assembly can be adopted into engagement events.

It is proposed that a series of Peterborough Climate Debates be hosted by Peterborough City Council. The information provided may be presented by council staff or colleagues from local organisations with expertise in that field. It is proposed that the assembly format be condensed into a two-hour workshop, featuring the three stages of learning, discussion and decision-making. To ensure that there are equal opportunities to feed into the development of the action plan it is proposed that the Peterborough Climate Debates are held in various locations across the city and at different times throughout the week to maximise the likelihood of participants being able to attend.

Information may be shared before the Debate to ensure that participants are able to hold informed discussions.

It is proposed that the Peterborough Climate Debates are held as free ticketed events, with participants sharing demographic data when registering. This will enable the Council to

understand if it has engaged with a representative cohort of the city and to target future communications to ensure that we hear from a wide range of participants.

It is proposed that an additional version of the Debate, aimed for businesses, be hosted. Local businesses across the city will be invited to join this and share their views to shape the climate change action plan.

4.3 Facilitated discussions

In order to gather feedback from local organisations, it is proposed that the council provides a framework for a structured workshop that can be facilitated by external organisations. This will expand the reach of the engagement programme, enabling maximum participation. These facilitated discussions will consist of a recorded presentation introducing the climate science, setting the local context and providing details on potential solutions. Following this, discussion prompts and questions will be provided to initiate conversations. The final stage will be feedback. Depending on the group, a mechanism to feedback as a group or as an individual may be more appropriate.

It is proposed that a version of this format be developed for delivery by schools, Parish Councils and Councillors. There is no requirement that these groups run a facilitated discussion, but this format allows these groups to opt to do so.

- Schools
Children's voices are key to climate action. The format will be adapted to break the facilitated discussion into short time frames, perhaps of around 20 minutes each, to allow teachers to deliver material within lessons and/or form time. Provided presentations and discussion prompts will vary based on the age range of the intended participants.
- Parish Councils
Parish Councils have close relationships with the communities they serve and have local insight into opportunities and challenges within the local area. Parish Councils could run the facilitated discussion with members of the Parish Council, responding as a single organisation, or could facilitate the discussion as a community engagement event, asking participants to respond individually.
- City Councillors
City councillors also have close relationships with the communities they serve. It is proposed that councillors be provided with the means to run facilitated discussions with members of the public in their ward area.

4.4 Online

Materials used in the Peterborough Climate Debate and facilitated discussions will be shared online. This will allow residents who are unable to attend events in person to participate in the discussion.

A feedback mechanism will be provided online, structured in the same format as the facilitated discussions. This will be produced by the council to limit costs.

4.5 Consultation feedback

To become a net zero carbon city, every resident, business, community group and organisation will need to adopt behavioural changes and infrastructure across the city will need to be altered. The questions fielded will focus on how respondents across the city believe they can best be supported to make these changes. Questions may include topics such as: whether electric vehicle charging infrastructure should be provided on street or in a local hub; what would aid residents in cycling short journeys; what would aid residents in walking short journeys; what

would aid residents in reducing their carbon footprint from food; or what would aid businesses to promote their low carbon activities.

Due to limited resources for the evaluation of feedback, it is proposed that the majority of feedback is provided in quantifiable outputs, limiting the number of open text boxes. However, there will be some scope for ideas to be shared.

A just transition is an important concept throughout climate change action. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Commission on Climate identified a set of principles to follow to ensure that climate change plans follow a just transition. Different members of our communities will be impacted differently both by climate change and by the actions to tackle climate change, so our approach for climate change action must be fair to all. The benefits of addressing climate change should be shared by all and everyone should have equal opportunity to engage with action. The Commission's principles will be embedded into city-wide action plans and steps to ensure that a wide range of voices, reflective of the city's population, are heard will be undertaken.

4.6 Promotion of engagement activities

It is proposed that engagement activities are promoted through press releases, social media, website and through existing relationships with public facing services. Copy can be provided for external local organisations to share via their communications mechanisms.

Findings of the engagement activities will be shared when collated and communicated by similar mechanisms.

4.7 Incorporation of feedback into the city wide climate change action plan

Once the consultation period is closed, the findings will be collated and interpreted. These will feed into the development of the draft city-wide climate change action plan alongside key findings from the Local Area Energy Plan and other relevant research. It is proposed that the draft city wide climate change action plan be available for public consultation for 6 weeks. Following this the Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee then able to provide feedback on the draft action plan and the results of the consultation. The final city wide climate change action plan will then be taken to full council for adoption.

The proposed approach for incorporation into the city wide climate change action plan is outlined below:

- Public consultation on steps to decarbonise our city, as outlined in this document (8 weeks)
- Collate and analyse findings
- Incorporate public insight into the draft city wide climate change action plan
- Release the draft city-wide climate change action plan for public consultation (6 weeks)
- Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee to consider feedback from the public consultation and comment on the draft action plan
- Revision of the draft document to produce the final city wide climate change action plan
- Full council to decide whether to adopt the final city wide climate change action plan

5. **CONSULTATION**

5.1 The proposal sets out a recommended consultation approach. No consultation has been carried out to date.

6. **ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT**

6.1 It is anticipated that the Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee supports the approach to public engagement and provide their views on the programme.

7. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 It is recommended that the Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee note and comment on the approach to public consultation. Suggestions will be considered and may be designed into the approach.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 The option to not consult was dismissed as it will be essential to develop plans which are supported by residents, businesses and communities within the city. Public consultation was deemed a suitable mechanism to ensure that ideas included in the plan are well supported.

The commissioning of a citizens' assembly was dismissed as it was deemed that costs were prohibitively expensive. The Oxford Assembly is estimated to cost £200,000 - £250,000 with the Leeds Jury costing £30,000 - £40,000.

Purchasing external consultation software was considered, however was not deemed a suitable use of limited funds.

9. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

- 9.1 There will be a small cost of delivery, mainly through room hire for hosting of the Peterborough Climate Debate. This can be met through existing budgets.

The proposed approach can be delivered by current staffing capacity.

Legal Implications

- 9.2 None

Equalities Implications

- 9.3 Once the design of the public consultation programme is finalised an equalities impact assessment will be completed. It is proposed that in person events be held at multiple locations across the city, at different times to allow maximum attendance for those who have location or time-based constraints. Information will be shared online with online feedback also available to ensure that those unable to attend an in-person event will be able to help steer the programme. Registration with demographic information will enable the council to assess whether a wide range of views have been included in the discussion. The principles of a just transition will be utilised in the delivery of the programme and reflected in the consultation questions.

Rural Implications

- 9.4 Residents and businesses in rural locations will have the opportunity to participate in the public consultation to ensure that views are reflected in the development of the city-wide climate change action plan.

Carbon Impact Assessment

- 9.5 Should the proposed approach to public engagement across the climate change programme be taken forward, there is likely to be a minimal rise in travel emissions; however, the benefits of developing a climate change action plan with actions supported by the public is likely to result in greater carbon reductions. Multiple events will be held at different locations around the city, reducing the distance a resident would have to travel to attend the closest event. Online events will be held as an alternative to travelling.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

10.1 None

11. APPENDICES

11.1 None