

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 6
12 JULY 2023	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	Adrian Chapman, Executive Director Place and Economy	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Cllr Nigel Simons, Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Climate Change	
Contact Officer(s):	Hannah Swinburne, Principal Climate Change Officer	Tel. 01733 453479

INTRODUCTION TO CARBON LITERACY AND CARBON LITERACY TRAINING

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM: Adrian Chapman, Executive Director of Place and Economy	Deadline date: N/A
It is recommended that the Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee:	
1. Comment on the proposed approach to Carbon Literacy training.	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

1.1 The report has been requested by the Climate Change and Environment Scrutiny Committee.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

2.1 This report is brought to the Scrutiny Committee to share a proposed approach to Carbon Literacy training. Councillors are requested to review the approach and provide comments.

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 the Council:

- 4. Climate Change;
- 5. Reducing Carbon Emissions and achieving Net Zero Carbon Emissions;

3. TIMESCALES

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	N/A
---	-----------	----------------------------------	------------

4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 Background

Peterborough City Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and committed to becoming a net zero carbon organisation by 2030. The council also committed to supporting Peterborough to become a net zero carbon city. To achieve this, all our residents, businesses, organisations, and

community groups will need to make changes to reduce emissions. The council can play an important role in educating our communities on the importance of tackling climate change and options to reduce emissions.

In the recently adopted Council Climate Change Action Plan, the council committed to providing carbon literacy training to more staff and councillors. Recently the council was successfully awarded funding through the Shared Prosperity Fund to deliver a Community Carbon Literacy programme. This programme will run until March 2025.

4.2 Carbon Literacy training

The Carbon Literacy Trust has developed a series of toolkits tailored for different audiences to educate and empower trainees to deliver upon carbon reduction activities. The training covers the science of climate change, how to estimate carbon footprints, how an individual or organisation can reduce carbon emissions, and why climate change is relevant for the specific audience. The Council has used these toolkits to provide training to officers and colleagues.

Trainees are asked to submit a short assessment to become certified as carbon literate. The assessment requires trainees to commit to making two carbon reduction pledges. This ensures that climate education is coupled with tangible carbon reduction action too.

There are a number of toolkits created by the Carbon Literacy Trust which may be useful to Peterborough City Council:

- Local Authority: leaders
- Local Authority: elected members
- Parish and Town Councils
- Community Leaders
- Education Leaders
- Custom courses can be developed, e.g., for businesses.

Each course is around 7-8 hours and can be delivered in a single session or in multiple shorter training sessions. Training can be delivered in person or online, as best suits the audience.

The model used by the Carbon Literacy Trust is that organisations deliver training in-house or sign up to training delivered by a commercial partner. The council has delivered Carbon Literacy training in house to officers and councillors. Once a trainee has completed their Carbon Literacy training course, they are able to deliver carbon literacy training to trainees themselves. If they require additional support, they can complete an additional hour-long training session run by the Carbon Literacy Trust which focuses on training techniques. They are also encouraged to share climate knowledge with people from their organisations or networks by other means.

Currently the Carbon Literacy courses relevant for Local Authorities are free to deliver, however from October 2023 a small licence cost will be introduced for access to some of the courses. The costs and discounts are dependent on which courses we obtain a licence for; for access to the full range of courses listed above it would cost £1,950 for a 3-year licence, plus a one-off fee of £500 to accredit a custom course. Assessment for each trainee currently costs £10 in addition to officer time.

4.3 Future plans

Carbon Literacy Training for Councillors

The Council has delivered Carbon Literacy training to 16 current Councillors. It is proposed that carbon literacy training continues to be offered to all councillors, with a forward plan of course dates developed to enable members to schedule training. The programme will include options to attend during a working day, weekend, or a number of evenings. A minimum number of participants will be required to ensure that a specific training course is able to run.

Carbon Literacy Training for Council Officers

The Council has delivered carbon literacy to 21 currently employed officers and key partners. It is proposed that Carbon Literacy training is tailored to each service. Discussions with each Head of Service could determine a method which best embeds climate change understanding into the service.

Options to explore include offering training to:

- senior members of staff covering each department in the service
- a central core group of staff
- a nominated member of staff within each department in the service

Following training, the climate change team will provide support for, and monitor progress on, carbon reduction commitments to ensure that actions are implemented, and that the Council maximises the opportunity for carbon reduction. Significant actions from both councillors and officers may be incorporated into future iterations of the Council or city-wide climate change action plan.

Community Carbon Literacy training

Recently the Council was successfully awarded £87,000 funding through the Shared Prosperity Fund to deliver a Community Carbon Literacy programme. This programme will run until March 2025. The Council intends to offer carbon literacy training to individuals from organisations such as:

- Parish Councils
- Community Groups, including faith groups
- Local businesses – including SMEs and supply chain partners
- Education leads
- Charitable and voluntary sector, including social landlords

It is anticipated that individuals who have undertaken the training course can disseminate information and learning throughout their organisation, community group and networks to increase the impact of the training.

A Carbon Literacy programme tailored to our local community and delivered by the council can offer several benefits, such as:

- Local insight, local examples of good practice and local opportunities can be included in the training. This would benefit trainees as there would be an increased understanding of current and future decarbonisation opportunities that are, or will be, available locally.
- Following the training, progress on carbon reduction actions could be discussed with participants, and support and advice can be given if required.
- Engaging directly with members of our communities would enable their views to be captured within the council's wider climate change programme.
- A network of interested parties could be created, who are able to share learnings and good practice.
- An inclusive programme can be designed which enables participation from all our communities. By working with colleagues, both training and communications can be tailored to ensure that a wide range of people can participate in training.

Employing an officer who will be dedicated to the delivery of climate change education and carbon literacy training will enable this programme to deliver the above benefits.

4.4 Next steps

A communications plan will be developed with the council's communications team to maximise the uptake of the training in the community. Councillors will be asked for input as to how to communicate these opportunities to members of their communities and networks.

The recruitment process for a Climate Change Public Education Officer has commenced, and it is anticipated that the successful candidate will be in post over the summer.

5. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

5.1 The Economy & Inclusive Growth

The delivery of carbon literacy training will have a direct impact on carbon emissions. Training can be offered online, and if trainees opt to undertake the course in person, training will take place at a central location. Through increased climate education and promoting carbon reduction action, emissions are expected to reduce. The Carbon Literacy Trust quote a 5-15% reduction in carbon emissions achievable per participating person.

Sustainable Future City Council

Some carbon reduction projects completed by Council Officers and Councillors may lead to cost savings.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 No consultation has been undertaken as part of this work.

7. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

7.1 It is anticipated that Councillors provide comment on the approach to Carbon Literacy training delivery.

8. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

8.1 The Council has previously committed to increasing the delivery of Carbon Literacy training to internal audiences. The council has also received funding for the delivery of community Carbon Literacy training, with the post fully funded.

9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 The option of not delivering carbon literacy training is dismissed, as education is deemed an important step in encouraging climate actions. The Council was successful in receiving funding to employ a Climate Change Public Education Officer who can deliver Carbon Literacy training, and therefore the option of not delivering a Community Carbon Literacy programme is dismissed.

10. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

10.1 The Climate Change Public Education Officer and assessment fees are fully funded by the Shared Prosperity Fund.

Course licence costs will be met from existing budgets (c£2,500).

Legal Implications

10.2 There are no legal implications.

Equalities Implications

10.3 The Community Carbon Literacy training will be offered to all local community groups. Officers will work with Think Communities colleagues to ensure that this opportunity is promoted within all communities.

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

- 11.1 [Peterborough City Council's declaration of a climate emergency, July 2019](#)
[Council Climate Change Action Plan, June 2023](#)

12. APPENDICES

- 12.1 N/A

This page is intentionally left blank