



Scrutiny Review

Response to the Climate Change motion to Council on 27 June 2019



1. Introduction

This report sets out the response to the Climate Change motion brought to Council on 27 June 2019 that was referred to the Overview and Scrutiny committee.

This scrutiny review has been carried out by the Ryedale District Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee task group.

The task group wishes to thank all those who gave their time in contributing to this review.

2. Scope of the review

At the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny committee on 24 July 2019, the membership of the task group and first meeting date was agreed. [[O&S 24.07.19 Minute 28](#)]

The scope of the review was to consider the motion to Council and make recommendations on how Council should respond.

3. Membership of the Committee

A Task Group was formed to undertake the review consisting of Cllr Clark (Chair), Cllr Brackstone, Cllr Keal and Cllr Garbutt Moore. Membership was opened to all Council Members and attendance at Task Group has included:

Cllr J. Andrews, Cllr Arnold, Cllr Graham, Cllr Keal, Cllr Mason, Cllr Potter, Cllr Raper

Scrutiny Review Task Group supporting officers:

Ellie Hardie (Planning and Regulation Technical Support Officer)

William Baines (Programmes, Projects and Performance Officer)

4. Methodology

Council requested the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to undertake this review. [[Council 27.06.19 Minute 23](#)]

A task group was then set-up to carry out the scrutiny review

The Task Group held the following meetings in conducting the scrutiny review:

20.08.19 - Task Group first meeting

12.09.19 - Task Group meeting

24.09.2019 - Task Group meeting

5. Findings

As of result of the task group meetings, the motion has been examined and the following are the conclusions reached:

- a) **Declare a 'Climate Emergency' that requires urgent and immediate attention to achieve net zero carbon emissions across Ryedale by 2030**



The task group does not support the need to declare a climate emergency and the desire of the motion to achieve “net zero carbon emissions across Ryedale by 2030.”

Those in favour of a climate emergency felt it reflected the seriousness of the current situation on climate change and would trigger the council into working quicker to implement the recommendations of the recent scrutiny review, agreed in April 2019, and the other parts of the motion put to Council.

Those against declaring a climate emergency felt that the situation had not reached an emergency point yet, and that it would have a bigger impact if an emergency was declared by the council at a future time.

The desire of the motion to achieve net zero carbon emissions across Ryedale by 2030 was not felt to be realistic and outside of the influence of the council to achieve this across the whole district.

Therefore the task group does not support this part of the motion.

b) Establish a Climate Change and Environment Committee (CCEC) to design the policy framework and deliver a climate emergency action plan for net zero emissions by 2030.

The task group received a presentation from Simon Copley, Democratic Services Manager at the meeting held on 24 September 2019.

The option of creating a sub-committee to make recommendations on climate change was seen by the task group as the preferred option. The option of establishing a working party was also considered, but the ability of a sub-committee to scrutinise items of business across the council where it was felt that the climate change implications had not been considered was a key advantage.

This work would be supplemented by building on the successful start made by the Ryedale Environment Forum, with the forum to meet three to four times a year to harness the ideas of interested parties to feed into the work of the sub-committee.

A third strand to the discussions of the task group was on the need to embed climate change matters more broadly into the wider Constitution, so it becomes everybody’s duty to consider the implications on the work of the council on climate change.

c) Establish a Climate Change Partnership Working Group by autumn 2019 involving councillors, residents, community groups, academics, businesses and other relevant parties to advise the CECC

The task group came to the conclusion that the establishment of a working group was already covered in the Climate Change Scrutiny Review under Recommendation 1 e), f) and g) (see below)

e) Include a Member briefing on Climate Change as part of next cycle of Member training

f) Continue to develop Council policy to influence others by working with partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors and with residents to influence and encourage climate change reduction and adaptation policy and practice throughout Ryedale

g) Facilitate the Ryedale Environment Forum to encourage wider participation of the Ryedale community in the aspirations to reduce Climate Change amongst other issues.



As it is already part of the Climate Change Scrutiny Review agreed by Council, the task group does not support this part of the motion.

- d) Recommend that the Chief Executive employs a climate change and environment officer to work with and support councillors and officers to drive forward the climate change action plan.**

The task group supported this, with an expectation that the post would be at a Service Manager level or similar, subject to job evaluation, and reporting in to a member of Strategic Management Board to give it the necessary responsibility and influence to deliver the climate change agenda at the council.

- e) Ensure that all Council committees consider, in this council term, low carbon design and construction, energy efficiency and renewable energy generation as well as the impact of climate change when reviewing council policies, plans and strategies and that all approaches are in line with a shift to zero carbon by 2030.**

The task group felt that this was already in place as part of the Climate Change Scrutiny Review document under recommendation 2 (Assets and Estates) and 3 (Service Delivery)

As it is already part of the Climate Change Scrutiny Review agreed by Council, the task group does not support this part of the motion.

- f) Take a leadership role in offering vision, direction and support to empower residents, community groups, businesses, partner organisations and other relevant stakeholders to take appropriate action to tackle climate change**

The task group agreed that this was covered by Recommendation 1 f) from the Climate Change scrutiny review.

f) Continue to develop Council policy to influence others by working with partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors and with residents to influence and encourage climate change reduction and adaptation policy and practice throughout Ryedale

As it is already part of the Climate Change Scrutiny Review agreed by Council, the task group does not support this part of the motion.

Recommendations

The task group propose that the following parts of the motion are amended as follows:

- b) i) Establish a Climate Change and Environment Sub-Committee, under the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, ~~to design the policy framework and deliver a climate emergency action plan for net zero emissions by 2030.~~ to scrutinise the climate change work across the council and with powers of call-in.
- ii) The Ryedale Environment Forum will meet three to four times a year to harness the ideas of interested parties to feed into the work of the Sub-Committee.
- iii) Climate Change matters are to be embedded more widely into the Constitution, so that it becomes everybody's duty to consider the implications of the work of the council on climate change.



- d) Recommend that the Chief Executive employs a climate change and environment officer at a Service Unit Manager level or similar, subject to job evaluation, and reporting in to a member of Strategic Management Board to work with and support councillors and officers to drive forward the climate change action plan.

The task group does not support parts a), c), e) and f) of the motion and propose that they are not supported.

Terms of Reference - Scrutiny Task Group: Climate Change

Aim of the Review	To review the motion to Council on 27.06.2019 [Council 27.06.19 Minute 23] and put forward a set of recommendations to be agreed by O&S to send back to Full Council
Why has this review been selected?	Council automatically referred the motion to the Overview and Scrutiny committee on 27.06.2019.
Who will carry out the review?	<p>The review will be carried out by a Task Group including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of 3 members of the O and S committee [Cllrs Clark, Brackstone, Keal and Garbutt Moore] (but open to all members of Council) was agreed 24.07.19 • Support will be provided by the Planning and Regulation Technical Support Officer • Input from RDC Officers as required.
How the review will be carried out?	The Task Group will work through the measures outlined in the motion on climate change to consider the approach to be taken on each one.
What are the expected outputs?	It is expected that the Task Group will produce a report, summarising the response to the motion to take to Overview and Scrutiny committee to be agreed before going back to Council on 10 October 2019.
Timescale	As soon as possible