**February 2021**

**Leeds Climate Commission Terms of Reference**

1. **Background**
   1. Informed by the work of the UK Committee on Climate Change, the Leeds Climate Commission seeks to be an independent voice in the city, providing authoritative information on steps towards a low carbon, climate resilient future so as to inform policies and shape the actions of local stakeholders and decision makers. It will monitor progress towards meeting the city’s carbon reduction targets and recommend actions to keep the city on track and advise on the assessment of the climate-related risks and adaptation opportunities in the city and on progress on climate resilience.
   2. The Commission aims to foster collaboration on projects that result in measurable contributions towards meeting the city’s climate reduction targets and the delivery of enhanced climate resilience, particularly in the area of flood risk. It will promote best practice in public engagement on climate change and its impacts in order to support robust decision-making.
   3. The Commission will also act as a forum where organisations can exchange ideas, research findings, information and best practice on carbon reduction and climate resilience.
2. **Vision**

See separate Visioning Matrix.

1. **Local policy context**
   1. Leeds City Council declared a climate emergency in March 2019, with the stated ambition of working towards a net zero carbon city by 2030. The Council has accepted that very urgent action is required to make our contribution to containing global temperature rises within 1.5C. Beyond this limit, there is a strong scientific consensus that there will be catastrophic consequences for both humanity and the natural world. Since the declaration the Council has adopted a new way of working, changing its own structures and governance processes to incorporate the new climate emergency priority.
2. **Scope**
   1. The Commission is there:-

* To promote leadership in the city on climate change, encouraging stakeholders to take effective action now, while maintaining a long term perspective;
* To connect and mobilise local actors, promote partnership working and the co-production of climate action, and to extend the reach and capacity of local government;
* To promote inclusive processes that involve and empower local actors, support meaningful representation of different groups and work towards fair/legitimate outcomes;
* To build a sense of common ownership and shared responsibility, helping to turn an over-whelming challenge into practicable, deliverable activities;
* To serve as an independent and trusted voice in the area, building climate/carbon literacy, acting as a critical friend and a focal point/clearing house for information;
* To be a positive voice, emphasising how climate action can be an opportunity to deliver on other social, economic and environmental objectives;
* To strengthen the evidence base and commission, prepare, support and/or promote the adoption and delivery of local climate action plans;
* To inform, guide, support and track progress towards appropriate local climate targets and promote transparency;
* To review current activities, celebrate successes and promote the replication/scaling up of different forms of best practice;
* To provide neutral spaces for the review of different issues, and publish position papers on contentious issues to support informed, balanced debate;
* To provide on-going, longer-term support for climate action that spans electoral cycles and variations in public awareness, business support etc.
  1. The Commission is NOT
* A place for marketing or lobbying
* An attempt to take over Council responsibilities
* A substitute for direct public representation
* A body that directly designs or delivers programmes or projects
  1. Leeds Climate Commission covers the geographic area of the unitary authority of Leeds City Council.

1. **Deliverables**
   1. Leeds Climate Commission aims to achieve the following deliverables:-

* A Carbon Roadmap calculating the city’s carbon budget: the amount of carbon emissions (as a proportion of the global carbon budget) that Leeds can emit between now and 2050 in order to stay within the 1.5°C temperature rise recommended by a United Nations special report released in October 2018; and the mix of economically viable actions, technically viable actions, innovative actions and behavioural actions needed in order to stay within the carbon budget;
* A Climate Action Readiness Assessment of how ready Leeds as a city is to take action in different sectors and to identify strategic interventions needed to build readiness;
* Interventions to remove barriers to progress and to increase support for achieving carbon reductions;
* Agreed strategic and shared priorities and opportunities for carbon reduction and climate resilience across the city;
* To facilitate a pipeline of investable low-carbon projects within the city which will be supported by work to address barriers to the availability of cost effective finance;
* Collaboration 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 evaluating progress across the city towards the city’s climate reduction target and advising on future measures and updating data on emissions;
* A communications platform (website and social media presence) which will set out the committee’s objectives, outline its programme / projects and provide key contacts etc.

1. **Membership**
   1. Membership of Leeds Climate Commission is open to individuals representing key organisations from the public, private and civic sectors across the city that can contribute to the promotion of a low carbon and/or climate resilient economy/society within Leeds. The balance of membership of the Commission reflects the need for cross-city representation and for the Commission to be able to address both climate mitigation and adaptation. Prior to appointment, members must have ensured that their participation in the Commission has been authorised at a senior level within their organisation.
   2. The Commission will explore mechanisms for wider participation with the Commission and its work.
   3. Members of Leeds Climate Commission are recruited periodically via an open process. Commissioners 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 Leeds Climate Commission;
* That although some members will represent large organisations which can make a specific commitment, others may be able to represent their sector (eg housing / small businesses) but cannot make commitments on behalf of their sector;
* That they can deliver useful, accurate and timely data to Leeds Climate Commission;
* That they can demonstrate expertise, knowledge, leadership and skills to contribute usefully to the expert work of Leeds Climate Commission;
* That they can commit the required amount of time to Leeds Climate Commission;
* That they have access to good networks and connections that will add value to Leeds Climate Commission;
* That they are available to attend 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.

1. **Governance**
   1. Leeds Climate Commission was formally established in January 2017.
   2. Leeds Climate Commission is an independent advisory body, chaired initially by the University of Leeds which will also provide a secretariat. Leeds City Council will be the Vice-Chair.
   3. In order to ensure accountability and scrutiny of the work of the Commission and hence provide an opportunity to report the progress that is being made by all sectors and partners towards the city’s carbon reduction target, Leeds Climate Commission will report progress on an annual basis to Leeds City Council and other city wide fora as appropriate.
   4. Leeds Climate Commission is made up of a Commission (and supporting Panels – see below) comprising a Chair (initially from the University of Leeds), Vice-Chair (from Leeds City Council) and 22 other representatives appointed to it from across the public, private and third sectors in the city. The Commission will meet 4 times per year:

* To oversee a programme of Deliverables;
* To take an overview of initiatives, projects and activities to ensure co-ordination, 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;
  1. At each Commission meeting, the Chair, or in his / her absence, the Vice Chair, shall preside. A Commission meeting will be quorate if either the Chair or Vice Chair as well as seven members are present.
  2. Decisions within Leeds Climate Commission will be made jointly with a preference for a consensus-based approach to decision-making. If a vote is taken, each member of Leeds Climate Commission will be entitled to one vote, with a two-thirds majority being required.
  3. The Commission may establish Panels to focus on particular topics and deliverables. Panels may operate flexibly in response to the needs of the topic (i.e. it is not anticipated that they will work as conventional working groups with regular meetings, but have a mixture of activities responding to the needs of the topic and/or the deliverable). To ensure appropriate accountability Panels will have a minimum of two meetings a year and will be made up of around 12-15 people, two of whom will be co-chairs and one of whom should be drawn from the Commission.

1. **Principles**
   1. The following principles are proposed within which Leeds Climate Commission is expected to operate:-

* No party has a monopoly on best practice, initiative or solution
* All information is shared openly where possible
* Problems are solved jointly
* Innovative proposals are positively received and reviewed
* Working relationships are friendly
* Wherever possible risks are shared
* Work is delivered to the highest standards of quality