

**High Peak Borough Council
Climate Change Working Group
Terms of Reference (DRAFT)**

Introduction

On 15th October 2019 recognising the serious threat posed by climate change, the responsibility our institutions, businesses and communities have to eliminate net CO2 emissions and also the need to take immediate measures to prepare for climate change impacts, High Peak Borough Council passed the following resolution:

Climate Change is an existential threat. Humans have already caused irreversible climate change, the impacts of which are being felt around the world. Global temperatures have increased by 1 °C from preindustrial levels. Atmospheric CO2 levels are above the 400 parts per million (ppm). This far exceeds the 350 ppm deemed to be safe for humanity. Extreme weather events have already caused damage and destruction in this country. Locally the effects of climate change are seen in falling water levels and erratic weather conditions affecting farming and infrastructure. Natural habitats, wildlife and biodiversity are in peril not only from Climate Change but also from human intervention, which in turn is increasing the effects of the climate and biodiversity crises. Scientists warn that we have little over a decade to implement urgent action to reduce and limit CO2 emissions before we reach a global tipping point. Action is required at international, national and local level to achieve the carbon reduction levels needed. Councils around the world and in UK are responding by declaring a Climate Emergency and committing the resources to address this emergency. This Council pledges to:

- 1. Declare a Climate Emergency*
- 2. Make High Peak Borough Council carbon neutral in its internal operations and the services it delivers by 2030, and work with partners to achieve this target across High Peak*
- 3. Call on the UK Government to provide the powers and resources to make the 2030 target possible.*
- 4. Work with partners across the county and region to deliver this new goal through all relevant strategies*
- 5. Work to mitigate the biodiversity crisis in its actions across the Borough*
- 6. The establishment of a cross-party working group to assist in investigation, prioritisation, drafting and delivery of a strategy, action plan and timetable including targets for CO2 reduction, working with officer support and drawing on wider expertise.*
- 7. The inclusion of local residents and businesses chosen in accordance with 'citizens' assembly' principles in drawing up this strategy and plan.*
- 8. To include a cross section of local people in drawing up this plan.*
- 9. To report back to Council by end of March 2020 with this plan*
- 10. Ensure that all Council committees and scrutiny panels consider the impact on climate change and the natural environment when taking decisions and reviewing policies.*
- 11. Review progress against the target and report back every six months.*

Aim

To translate the aspiration expressed in the emergency resolution for a carbon neutral High Peak 2030 into a deliverable action plan.

Membership

Cross party membership nominated by group leaders, non voting external representatives/ individuals co-opted at the discretion of the Working Group.

Task

To develop a Climate Action Plan for High Peak which:

- Sets deliverable targets that will reduce the Council's (direct and indirect) carbon emissions. This includes consideration of the cost and benefits of the proposed measures.
- Considers how local business and households and can be encouraged and assisted to reduce their carbon emissions.
- Identifies key local actions to prepare for the impact of climate change and increase local resilience in both the natural and built environment.
- Identifies key measures, policy changes and actions by government which the Council should seek to influence.
- Gains community support and further galvanises local action.

Proposed Approach

- Organise initial 'Carbon literacy' training for members and officers – work to ensure a common understanding of the science, the key challenges and what other councils are doing.
- Scope the task – which Council actions, activities and processes are relevant.
- Consider the local data, including trends, identifying key issues for the Borough.
- Develop and undertake a process of community engagement and draw on the external expertise and support available.
- Identify and learn from best practice within the Borough and elsewhere.
- Identify low cost/no cost 'quick wins' to generate momentum.
- Develop costed options for consideration by the Council
- Develop a draft Plan.

Structure

Establish:

- Climate Change Working Group
- Officer group – to support the Working Group, to identify and start to take actions, to act as service champions
- Links with community groups/climate action group and ensure engagement in the Working Group process
- Links with local businesses/ business groups and ensure engagement in the Working Group process

- The Citizen's Panel to engage with the plan.

Key Milestones

- Carbon Literacy Training for Councillors and Council staff (January 2020 onwards)
- Network Event to engage key community stakeholders (January 2020)
- Establish the Working Group (February 2020)
- Interim Report to Council – with initial action plan (February 2020)
- Update report to Council (May 2020)
- Citizen Panel meetings (July – October 2020)
- Present Full Plan to Council for agreement (November 2020)