



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
& PETERBOROUGH**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

JAMES PALMER
CAMBRIDGESHIRE &
PETERBOROUGH MAYOR

Agenda Item No:3.6

Independent Commission on Climate Change - Interim report

To: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Board

Meeting Date: 24 March 2021

Public report: Yes

Lead Member: Mayor James Palmer

From: Paul Raynes, Director of Delivery and Strategy

Key decision: Yes

Forward Plan ref: KD2021/008

Recommendations: The Combined Authority Board is recommended to:

- a) welcome the initial report of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Commission on Climate (CPICC) and formally thank the Chair and members of the Commission for their work so far;
- b) develop a response to the Commission recommendations, with the engagement of member councils and the Business Board, to consider at an early future meeting of the Board.

Voting arrangements: A simple majority of all Members

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To welcome the initial report of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Commission on Climate (CPICC), and to set out a process for responding to its initial recommendations.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Board established the Independent Commission to examine the challenges facing the area from climate change. It was tasked to produce recommendations on how the area can mitigate the emissions of greenhouse gases and adapt to climate change impacts already happening.
- 2.2 Baroness Brown of Cambridge, Julia King OBE was appointed as Chair in June 2020 and the Commission held its first meeting in July 2020. The Commission focused on transport, buildings, energy and peat topics for its initial recommendations report, with a further report due in the late summer of 2021. It undertook two research projects, one into climate change risks and one into the costs/effectiveness of different types of action. Public engagement took place in autumn 2020.
- 2.3 The Commission launched its Initial Recommendations Report on the 15th March 2021. A copy of the report is attached at Appendix 1. It contains 31 recommendations.
- 2.4 The Commission found that:
 - (a) greenhouse gas emissions in the area are higher than average;
 - (b) the region is at high risk from the changing climate;
 - (c) urgent action is needed, and the transformation will need significant investment;
 - (d) the scale of the task is huge, but if national government, local government, local communities, businesses and individuals are all part of the transformation the changes needed can be made;
 - (e) addressing climate change can deliver multiple benefits;
 - (f) the Combined Authority has a key leadership role; and
 - (g) residents are keen to play their part.
- 2.5 The Commission highlights the need for urgency, and the challenges posed by the multiple actions needed by residents, businesses, local government and national government. It sets out the significant investment required, both public and private, and the need to ensure that those less able to pay are not disadvantaged. It also highlights opportunities as well, such as through growth in new businesses and related employment. It considers that the increased local risks from climate change by 2050, such as flood risk and water supply, can be mitigated and adapted to if the right interventions are put in place. The Commission recommends areas for further research, including on peat emissions, and for additional work on the impact of climate change on communities. The report's concluding chapter is specifically aimed at residents, giving advice on how they can immediately make some changes and signposting to other sources of advice and grant funding.
- 2.7 The Commission's report highlights examples of progress by the CPCA, Councils, and others. It encourages that leadership role, with the CPCA supporting residents and

businesses to take appropriate action. It calls for more devolution of resources and powers to maximise local delivery.

Response

- 2.8 In developing a considered CPCA response to the recommendations it will be crucial to understand any specific implementation issues faced by different parts of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. To do so the response will be developed with the engagement of member councils and the Business Board and brought to a future meeting of the Board. The response will include scope for action and timing.
- 2.9 Recognising that the recommendations are not just to the Combined Authority and member councils but also to government, utilities and businesses, the Combined Authority will work with those organisations to encourage their response to the recommendations.

Significant Implications

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 The Commission's recommendations could have significant financial implications for the Combined Authority. The Commission's report is supported by a specially-commissioned Leeds University research report. This contains locally-tailored cost-benefit analysis of individual measures which feature in the recommendations. The Commission has only made one individually costed recommendation for the Combined Authority (for activities of a Fenland Peat Committee) so costs for each recommendation that is applicable to the Combined Authority will need to be assessed as part of the response.
- 3.2 The Commission make a specific recommendation that £50,000 be allocated per annum to the activities of a Fenland Peat Committee, and provides a proposed terms of reference.
- 3.3 The Medium Term Financial Plan has a Subject to Approval revenue allocation of £100,000 for 2021/2022 for climate commission activities.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 To be considered as part of the response to the Commission's recommendations.

5. Other Significant Implications

- 5.1 The Commission identifies that its recommendations could have a differential impact on residents or businesses, depending on their circumstances and how that recommendation is implemented. For example, on transport it highlights the current cost of electric vehicles as one of the reasons restricting take-up rates. It recommends that all interventions need to be assessed for their equalities impact.
- 5.2 Implementation of the Commission's recommendations will reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions. Tackling greenhouse gas emissions will contribute to reducing

risks to the area from climate change. The Commission is still examining ways in which resilience to unavoidable climate change impacts can be improved.

- 5.3 The Commission stress the benefits of nature-based solutions, both to reduce net emissions and as part of resilience measures. There is a strong correlation between positive action on climate change and the Doubling Nature ambition of CPCA.

6. Appendices

- 6.1 Appendix 1 – CPICC Initial Recommendations Report – March 2021

- 6.2 An accessible version of this report is available on request from Democratic.Services@cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk

7. Background Papers

- 7.2 [A net-zero road map for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, University of Leeds/PCAN](#)