



<b>CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY BOARD</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM No: 3.3</b>
<b>27 NOVEMBER 2019</b>	<b>PUBLIC REPORT</b>

## **CLIMATE CHANGE**

### **1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1. This report recommends the establishment of an independent Commission on Climate Change, on the model of the highly successful Independent Economic Review, to provide authoritative recommendations on the options available to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to decarbonise the economy, mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change, in the context of the Combined Authority's ambition to see rising prosperity shared across the area.

<b><u>DECISION REQUIRED</u></b>	
<b>Lead Member:</b>	<b>Mayor James Palmer</b>
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	<b>Paul Raynes, Director of Delivery and Strategy</b>
<b>Forward Plan Ref: n/a</b>	<b>Key Decision: No</b>
The Combined Authority Board is recommended to:  (a) Approve the establishment of an Independent Commission on Climate Change with a mandate to report within the next 12 months;  (b) Agree the proposed terms of reference of the Commission set out in the Annex to this paper;  (c) Authorise the chief executive, in consultation with the Mayor, to appoint a chairman and members of the Commission; and	<b>Voting arrangements</b>  Simple majority of all Members

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| (d) Approve a revenue budget of £125,000 to support the Commission's work. |  |
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## 2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1. There is a widespread and growing acceptance that businesses, public sector bodies and households should take account of the scientific consensus on the risks of climate change by changing what they do. In particular, the science suggests that drastic reductions in the net production of the gases – especially carbon dioxide - that contribute to global warming are needed. Credible forecasts of future warming also indicate that adaptation will be needed, as seasonal temperatures and rainfall change.
- 2.2. Businesses and councils in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have begun to take positions and develop action plans in response to this imperative. A number of councils have declared a climate emergency and are considering how that needs to be reflected in their plans. Meanwhile, at national level, the government has adopted a policy of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050.
- 2.3. Very valuable work is under way locally and nationally to model the scale of response needed to meet that net zero carbon ambition. Different organisations have begun to adopt action plans.
- 2.4. The Mayor and Combined Authority have a potentially very significant role to play in enabling carbon reduction and adaptation to climate change, through, for example:
  - the implementation of the Local Transport Plan (transport, from all modes, accounts for two-fifths of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's carbon emissions)
  - the development of a spatial strategy and work to increase the supply of affordable homes (domestic buildings account for another fifth of emissions)
  - encouraging business development and productivity improvement (business, including agriculture, accounts for just over a third of local emissions).
- 2.5. These activities and policies are already informed by an ambition to tackle climate change (this was, for example, a core aim of the consultation draft of the Local Transport Plan and that theme will be strengthened in response to the consultation responses received). What we do not have, however, are
  - an overall view of the total policy effort necessary to achieve net zero (it is relatively easy to model the effect of retrofitting zero carbon heating to every house: it is not so clear what encouragement – from education to subsidy to

regulation - might be needed to support householders to make such a change actually happen);

- an overall view of how the plans of different sectors and organisations fit together, whether the sum of those parts amounts to the whole effort that will be needed, including understanding whether the plans of some organisations create externalities which others will need to manage;
- an estimate of the overall cost of change, and of who will pay which costs;
- an estimate of the impact of meeting the zero carbon ambition on the economy and on growth, if any (since 2005, emissions have fallen by a quarter in our area while the population has grown 14%, suggesting that rapid growth and successful carbon reduction can be mutually supportive).

2.6 What is needed at this crucial time for decision making is a climate change evidence base which can command the same consensus and authority as the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Review (CPIER). As with the CPIER, such an evidence base would not only provide a common understanding across the area, but also help the area collectively in its advocacy with central government, regulatory bodies, and national and multinational business decision-makers whose help we are likely to need to meet a zero carbon ambition.

2.7 Given the success of the CPIER, it seems appropriate to replicate that approach. An independent expert group led by Professor Ian Leslie, Cambridge University's lead on environmental sustainability, has developed a proposal for an independent Commission's scope which is reflected in the Terms of Reference attached to this paper. The Commission would consist of around 12 independent non-political members, would be asked to report within a year, and would commission its own research using a budget provided by the Combined Authority. Its focus would be on

- taking stock of the area's carbon footprint and progress towards reducing it;
- recommending specific targets, where possible based on the science;
- understanding what is material and what is not;
- recommending micro level actions and ways of empowering individuals and firms to carry them out;
- recommending macro level actions;
- making recommendations about agriculture;
- assessing and making recommendations about the risks and opportunities of climate change for the Fens;
- examining the potential of the hydrogen economy;
- assessing the implications of climate change for natural capital.

2.8 The Commission would be supported by a management group and a technical group. The management group would include officers from constituent councils.

## **SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS**

### **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1. The suggested budget in support of the Commission is £125,000. This has been taken into account in the draft MTFP submitted to the November Board. It is suggested that the Commission should be authorised to accept further contributions to its budget from councils or others, provided appropriate safeguards are in place to ensure that its independence is not compromised.

### **4.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Order 2017 granted to the Combined Authority a General Power of Competence under the Localism Act 2011. The general power of competence enables the Combined Authority to appoint the proposed Commission.

### **5.0 OTHER SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1. None.

### **6.0 APPENDICES**

- 6.1. Appendix 1 – Draft Terms of Reference

<b><u>Background Papers</u></b>	<b><u>Location</u></b>
None	