



## **WETHERBY TOWN COUNCIL**

# **Climate Emergency Working Group Terms of Reference**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The recent 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report on climate change states that we have already caused a 1°C rise in global temperature. The difference between the impacts of global warming of 2°C and 1.5°C is much greater than previously thought and we are currently heading for a catastrophic 3°C rise. We are running out of time and need to get to Zero Carbon emissions by 2030.
- 1.2 Growing numbers of parish, town and county councils are declaring a Climate Emergency. This is a genuine commitment to work towards a specific measurable target. Wetherby Town Council declared a climate emergency on 12th November 2019.
- 1.3 Climate change is relevant to many of the Town Council's activities; creating and maintaining green spaces in the town, providing feedback on wider council strategies for transport, housing etc as well as specific feedback on planning applications.
- 1.4 All levels of government national, regional and local, have a duty to secure our community from the negative impacts of climate breakdown. Local Councils should not wait for national government to change their policies. This proposal provides justification to treat climate change as a factor in future decision making.
- 1.5 The Climate Emergency Working Group shall be administered and managed in accordance with these Terms of Reference and the Council's Standing Orders.

### **2. Scope**

- 2.1 The Climate Emergency Working Group is constituted as a Working Group of Wetherby Town Council.
- 2.2 The aim of the Group is to:
  - Develop a plan and co-ordinate action for working towards making Wetherby Town Council, and the wider Wetherby community, sustainable and carbon neutral.
  - Set targets and measure progress against that goal.
  - Work with other organisations towards the same aims in wider or separate areas.
- 2.3 The Climate Emergency Working Group will act in an advisory capacity to Wetherby Town Council, making recommendations for consideration at a meeting of the Full Council.
- 2.4 The Group may liaise with other, local Parish Councils and consult with other organisations working in, and for the benefit of, the Wetherby community.

### **3. Membership**

- 3.1 The Climate Emergency Working Group shall consist of up to ten members to include up to five Town Councillors. Town Councillor representatives on The Climate Emergency Working Group will be elected annually at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council.

- 3.2 Non-Councillor representatives of the local community, interest groups, businesses etc may be appointed as members of The Climate Emergency Working Group. Appointments must be made at a Full Council meeting of Wetherby Town Council. Non-Councillor members of the Group will have voting rights and will be working on a volunteer basis.
- 3.3 Non-Councillor representatives shall have the following qualities, experience and skills:
- An understanding of the Wetherby community;
  - Relevant skills and experience they can bring from other projects or their own organisation. These include knowledge of climate issues, expertise in buildings, transport, energy, green spaces or investments;
  - An ability to think strategically and creatively.
  - Commitment to working collaboratively and inclusively without a conflict of interest;
  - Access to and commitment to engage with the wider Wetherby community, including residents, businesses, services or academic contacts.
- 3.4 The Working Group will appoint a Chair and a Secretary at its first meeting after each Annual Meeting of Wetherby Town Council. The Chair of the Group is to be a Town Councillor.
- 3.5 In the event of the resignation, death or disqualification of a Committee member during the year any vacancy on The Climate Emergency Working Group will be filled at the next meeting of the Full Council.
- 3.6 Non-Councillor Members of The Climate Emergency Working Group will be expected to abide by the Council's Code of Conduct when acting in their role as a Group Member. A copy of the Code of Conduct will be provided to each Group Member at their time of appointment.

#### **4. Meetings & Voting**

- 4.1 Meetings of The Climate Emergency Working Group will be convened as necessary.
- 4.2 Agendas for Working Group meetings will be published and distributed to Members three clear days in advance.
- 4.3 Members of the public shall, under the direction of the Chair, have the opportunity to participate at Group meetings, however meetings need not be open to the public as this is not a formal committee of the Town Council.
- 4.4 Decisions will be taken by consensus of opinion amongst Group Members whenever possible. However, if no consensus can be reached, a majority vote, based on one vote per member, will carry the decision, with the Chair having the casting vote if the vote is equal.
- 4.5 Three Members of the Group, including at least one Town Councillor, shall constitute a quorum.

#### **5. Reporting**

- 5.1 The Group will report to every meeting of Wetherby Town Council.
- 5.2 Minutes of all meetings will be taken by the Group's Secretary and circulated for approval at the next Group meeting and submitted to Full Council meetings for information.



5.3 The Minutes of Working Group meetings will be displayed on the Town Council's website, [www.wetherby.co.uk](http://www.wetherby.co.uk)

**6. Finance**

6.1 The Climate Emergency Working Group shall have no power to incur expenditure on behalf of the Town Council.

6.2 Wetherby Town Council will usually make budgetary provision to help fund the activities of The Climate Emergency Working Group, but approval for expenditure must be sought through recommendations tabled at meetings of the Full Council.

6.3 Reimbursement for Members' time will not be made. Members of the group may apply to the Town Council for reasonable out of pocket expenses incurred in the course of the working group's work.

**7. Review**

7.1 The Climate Emergency Working Group will be constituted for an initial period of 18 months. This period may be extended by the Town Council at the Annual Meeting of Wetherby Town Council in May 2021.

7.2 The Climate Emergency Working Group's Terms of Reference are to be reviewed annually at the Annual Meeting of Wetherby Town Council.

