

**Fulford Parish Council**  
**Climate Emergency Working Group (CEWG)**  
**Terms of Reference**

## **1. Background**

The UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has produced three special reports on Climate Change. The first, on Global Warming (2018) states that we have already caused a 1°C rise in global temperature since the pre-industrial era, and this could rise to 1.5°C as soon as 2030 if we do not take action. The second report, on Climate Change and Land (2019), points to overproduction and overconsumption of food, and high rates of food waste (25-30%). The third report on the Oceans and the Cryosphere (2019) is concerned with loss of sea ice, rising sea levels and the acidification of the marine environment attributable to human activity and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. These global impacts affect us locally and can be mitigated by local actions.

City of York Council declared a Climate Emergency in March 2019 and made a commitment towards a specific measurable target of zero carbon emissions by 2030.

Fulford Parish Council declared a Climate Emergency in November 2019. It might seem that an area like Fulford and its Parish Council are too small to make a difference, but we can improve our immediate environment for the people of Fulford and also make a contribution to the global system that sustains us.

Many Parish Council activities relate to climate change, for example creating green spaces in our communities for people and nature, working with City of York Council and other bodies to improve infrastructure for walking and cycling and reduce car use, and providing feedback on wider council strategies for transport, housing and wellbeing. We can provide specific feedback on planning applications. We could work with local people to consider innovative energy provision, as one example.

All levels of government have a duty to secure our community from the negative impacts of climate breakdown. Parish councils need not wait for local councils to take action, nor does local government need to wait for national government to change their policies.

This proposal therefore provides justification for integrating climate change into decision-making processes for Fulford Parish Council. Our recommendations and decisions should be aligned with City of York's goal of achieving zero carbon emissions by 2030.

## **2. Purpose of Climate Emergency Working Group (CEWG)**

The working group will be formed to:

- Inform and advise Fulford Parish Council about opportunities for local action to promote resilience to the effects of climate change.
- Involve local people in discussions about opportunities for local action.
- Prepare a draft Strategy for Action, to be submitted to Fulford Parish Council for consideration.
- Coordinate action towards making Fulford a sustainable community, by making Fulford parish carbon neutral and working to reverse nature loss.
- Set targets and measure progress against that goal.

- Work with other organisations towards the same aims.

### **3. Reporting**

The group will report to Fulford Parish Council.

### **4. Status and responsibilities**

The CEWG is a working group of Fulford Parish Council. It will act in an advisory capacity to the Parish Council. It has no powers to commit the Parish Council to spending and does not hold decision-making powers. The CEWG may liaise with other Parish Councils, consult with other organisations and seek expert advice. The final version of the Terms of Reference shall be approved by the Parish Council.

### **5. Time**

The CEWG will be constituted for an initial period of 1 year. This period may be extended by the Parish Council for an agreed period.

### **6. Membership**

The CEWG will include representatives of the Parish Council. Additional members may be co-opted and/or other interested individuals in the parish will be invited to contribute skills and expertise.

- The minimum number of CEWG members will be 6 to include at least two Parish Councillors. In addition, the Parish Council chairman is an ex-officio member.
- Quorum will be three with at least one Parish Councillor in attendance.
- The group will appoint a chair and a secretary.
- The membership will be approved by the Parish Council.

### **7. Meetings**

The CEWG shall regulate its own business and procedures. Notes of each meeting should be kept and a monthly report including any recommendations given to the Parish Council in writing. Such reports will be filed in the Parish Council minute book for future reference. The meeting schedule will be set by the CEWG as required.

### **8. Conflicts of interest**

All members of the group who have a prejudicial interest in a matter on the agenda must declare that interest at the start of the meeting. If the interest is of significant pecuniary value to themselves or the organisation they represent, they must absent themselves from the room for discussion of that item and not vote on that matter.

### **9. Expenses**

The group has no budget so no reimbursement will be made for members' time or food and drink expenses. The group may apply to the Parish Council for reasonable out of pocket expenses incurred in the course of the working group's work. A recommendation should be made to the Parish Council as to expenses for inclusion in the council's annual budget.

Proposed 12 May 2020