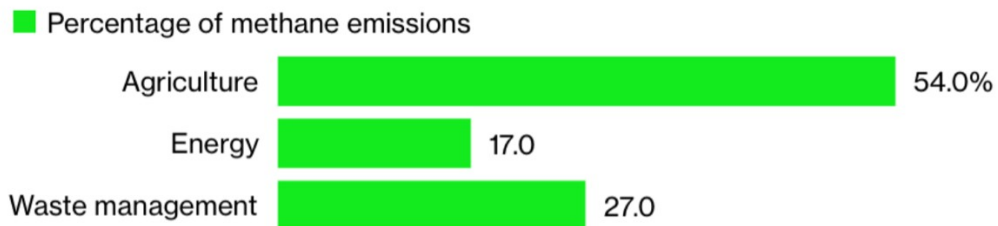


Calderdale Green Party

Response to the Climate Action Plan for Calderdale

1. Calderdale Green Party (CGP) welcomes the fact that we now have a draft climate action plan (CAP) for Calderdale – although we should have had it for consultation years ago. We appreciate that the CAP identifies various areas that need further development in the coming year. However, here we want to list things we think should go into the CAP after the consultation has finished on 21-11-2022. Where we identify page numbers, we refer to the printed version of the CAP 2022-2025.
2. Although the CAP mentions (page 5) ‘it is not just CO2 but other gases like methane and nitrous oxides’ that needs to be reduced. However, the CAP does not identify how other gases than CO2 should be reduced, in what quantities and by when, other than there is a reference to the need to eat less meat and dairy. This is a big omission in the plan and needs addressing. Methane for example is a very dangerous gas in the short term (over 20 years). It is also a gas which can make quick reductions in and therefore get quick results. The majority of methane comes from agriculture:

Agriculture makes up the bulk of the EU's methane emissions



Source: EU, Bloomberg https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-10-06/eu-is-falling-short-of-its-global-methane-pledge-ambition?cmpid=BBD100722_GREENDAILY&utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_term=221007&utm_campaign=green_daily

3. Another big emission in the CAP is identifying how adaptation should take place in Calderdale and by when. The CAP correctly identifies regular flooding in Calderdale as examples of climate change. One can also mention this Summer of drought resulting in a hosepipe ban as an example. These weather events will be more extreme and regular and as well as mitigating the reasons behind rising temperatures we need to prepare ourselves for what is coming very soon by having a plan for adaptation, not just identify places people can take shelter from flooding, cold, heatwaves, etc. but how we protect our communities against the worst effects of these extreme weather events. It is good walls are being built along our rivers to reduce flooding and that Slow the Flow build natural flood management using volunteers but we need a comprehensive plan, which could include tree planting in towns and cities, painting

roofs white, growing grass on flat roof areas like bus stops, put up PV solar panels above all car parks and possibly on lakes, etc. to reduce the heat dome in built-up areas (which should also reduce air pollution – so a win-win).

4. The CAP does not give a clear direction on food. On page 43 it both mentions for ‘Future farming will have to involve a large reduction in sheep and cattle numbers...’ but then goes on to say ‘However, grazing has to be part of the management of grasslands for many years – no grazing, too little or too much can be hugely damaging to the habitat and dependent species....’ A bit of ‘on one hand but on the other hand’ attitude with no clear direction. First of all, we of course have to help farmers in this transition, through education, practical advice and support. Secondly, we have to encourage the public to eat less meat and dairy and switch to plant-based food. A good place to start is among the younger generation. Schools, colleges, hospitals, dinner clubs, etc. should make this transition gradually and explain to students, parents, patients, pensioners, customers, etc. why you do it. It could for example be that you start with a choice between meat and vegan food every day, then have one day a week in 2023 where you only have vegan food, two days in 2024, three days of vegan food only in 2025 and four days in 2026.

On the topic of diet, the NFU often makes a play on how low UK animal ag’s emissions are compared with the global 18.5% minimum contribution to climate change across the globe. However, their 10% of UK emissions doesn’t include anything other than the direct emissions of some (not all) farm animals. Also, the figures do not include a whole range of other emissions including those associated with Amazon deforestation to grow animal feed imported into this country. There are also the animal ag emissions abroad relating to meat and dairy consumed in this country. That is why we are keen to advocate for including something in the CAP to capture scope 3 emissions. In one study, animal ag accounts for 42% of global methane emissions whereas the oil and gas industry only accounts for 36%. Waste is the source of a further 18%. To quote a Joint US-EU Press release dated 18th September 2021:

‘Rapidly reducing methane emissions is complementary to action on carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, and is regarded as the single most effective strategy to reduce global warming in the near term and keep the goal of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius within reach.’

5. On page 5 the CAP states: ‘The study [Emissions Reduction Pathway] taught us that it is technically possible for Calderdale to reach close to Net Zero.’ It is actually 19%

short of reaching Net Zero if everything else falls into place. Hence the need to be more ambitious!

6. On page 6 the CAP states 'no one should be left behind.' This is a really important point but one that the CAP does not explain how it will be done, in what time scale – other than a reference to having access to retraining to be able to join the green economy. Will this training be free of charge or do individuals have to pay thousands of pounds just to participate? Will they be guaranteed a decent income while training so they can afford to look after the family (mortgage, food, transport, etc.)? This obviously depends on regional and national policies – no policy is an island; they are all interconnected. On page 26 the CAP supports the mayor of WYCA pledges to create 1,000 well-paid, green skilled jobs for young people. Our aim should be to create tens of thousands of green jobs for all ages and abilities. We need everyone to be offered a decent job in the green economy.
7. On page 10 the CAP states: 'The West Yorkshire Mayor has a role. Other regional bodies like the Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission can also help bring people together and support action.' With Calderdale being one of the local authorities in the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) it has some influence on what is happening in West Yorkshire, including on transport. However, the priority is still road building and the mayor of West Yorkshire still want to expand the Leeds-Bradford Airport. So, the CAP really needs to be specific on what Calderdale demands of WYCA and the national government. The Local Government Association (LGA) can be lobbying both.
8. On page 11 the CAP mentions the need to communicate and training staff, decarbonising fleet and staff travel. We are not against this but we need to address all transport by making it cheap, reliable to use in most areas. We need to have good, cheap and reliable mass public transport (ideally free) to get people out of their cars (or use cycling and walking). Electrical vehicles (EVs) are not the solution to either climate change or air pollution although EVs will help compared to cars, lorries, buses, etc. using fossil fuel. However, on page 25 in the CAP a target is set to increase sales of electric cars by 4,300 per year.' The target should be on public transport, not EVs, and train staff, decarbonise the vehicle fleet and reduce staff travel.
9. We should count all emissions in the production and transport of the goods we import and consume in this country. This will add around 50% to our current produced emissions in the UK. If we did that, we would not really have achieved any net reductions in the last couple of decades.

10. Page 18-19 in the CAP refers to buildings, which account for 51% of emissions and the need therefore to retrofit 2,800 homes per year by 2038. However, the Local Plan for Calderdale plan a huge housebuilding in Calderdale but the building standards for Calderdale are the same minimum ones set by the government. Calderdale could set much higher building standards for newly built housing – ideally Passivhaus or net-zero building standards. We are therefore in that ridiculous situation that new houses are currently being built with Calderdale Council’s approval that will need to be retrofitted before 2038 to achieve net-zero. This problem is identified in the CAP on page 22! However, on page 10 the CAP states ‘the climate emergency is a key part of the local plan to influence new development.’ Obviously, not a key part in the Local Plan to make new development ready for net-zero in 2038! By setting the highest building standards for new housing we would also build up the skills and the supply chain to do proper retrofitting. And it is not just homes that needs retrofitting. Libraries, hospitals, GP surgeries, businesses, etc. need retrofitting too. To measure the retrofitting, we should not use the EPC-rating. There are better measurements.
11. On page 31 the CAP states ‘We will also model and measure the impact that ongoing road building has on our CO2 targets.’ This should obviously have been done a long time ago. The results of any roadbuilding impact monitoring should be made public.
12. On page 56 there is a graph on various options for pathways of Calderdale’s CO2 emission (so not all Greenhouse Gases, GHG). It does not say which option the CAP or the Working Party/partnership recommends. This illustrates a weakness in the CAP: there are a lot of general goals but very few concrete targets and policies to achieve the targets. So, there ar a lot more work to make it a plan for how we achieve net-zero by 2038.

For Calderdale Green Party,

Finn Jensen (chair)