

# AGM

## 29th June 2023

**ZERO  
CARBON  
HARROGATE**

### Zero Carbon Harrogate

Charity Number: 1192634

## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Thursday 29th June 2023, 7pm

Held in the Rose Room, St Mark's Church, Harrogate, HG2 8AY

### 1. Welcome (*Jemima Parker*)

Chair, Jemima Parker welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### *Attendees:*

Members of the Management Committee (Trustees):

Jemima Parker (JP), Ian Fraser (IF), Ian N Stalker (INS), Tim Lerner, Karen Kelsey-Wilson, (KKW), Jessica Eaton (JE)

ZCH Employees present: John Kerr (JK), Kath Clark (KC)

The meeting was quorate (>5% of the membership in attendance)

### 2. Apologies

Chris Arnott

Viv White

Dr Sue Atkin

Nick Anderson

Ian Hallett

Mike Kaye

John Rowe

Tarry Depledge

Danny Wild

Bianca Hall

Sian Oakes

J Philip Crawshaw

Sarah Jones

### 3. Approval of the minutes from the previous AGM held on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2022 (JP)

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as an accurate record. Proposed: Tim Lerner; Seconded: Ian Stalker

### 4. Matters arising from the previous meeting (JP)

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

### 5. Trustees' Report (JP)

JP provided an overview of progress and **key achievements during 2022** and outlined ZCH's **priorities for 2023** as detailed in the Trustees' Report:

ZCH's ambition is to act as a catalyst for urgent and rapid transition to a local zero carbon economy, focussing on four priority areas:

- i. Retrofit
- ii. School Engagement
- iii. Planning Advocacy
- iv. Our People

**JP highlighted the key achievements of 2022:**

ZCH became an employer, moving the charity to another level and enabling a significant uptick in our ability to deliver on our goals. John Kerr joined as Retrofit Programme Manager in June, working to reach local building professionals and tradespeople to meet the retrofit skills deficit in the industry.

We secured a total of £135,000 from the Industry Energy Redress Fund and National Lottery Together for our Planet to fund the Retrofit Programme, which includes training costs for retrofit assessors, coordinators, heat pump engineers and a general retrofit awareness course. We have been pleased to work in partnership with Harrogate College. The project will run to February 2024.

We secured £25,000 from the Players of People's Postcode Lottery to enable us to employ a part-time Operations Manager from January 2023. Having consistent administrative and organisational support provides a firm foundation from which to grow our effectiveness.

Whilst we have been frustrated with the stagnation of local political action and leadership on climate matters as the eight local authorities transition towards a unitary authority, after the May 2022 County Council elections we have worked to establish ZCH as a respected voice within the newly emerging local political landscape.

We have met with local MP Andrew Jones to seek his intervention where national policy prevents local transition.

The ZCH Planning Group has had a significant input in local property developments through engagement with Harrogate Borough Council Planning department and other organisations.

We have adjusted to post pandemic challenges, shifting to hybrid and home working which will help to cut emissions locally.

JP noted that ZCH continues to be challenged by the breadth of issues that need addressing to reach net zero locally.

**Local collaboration**

JP reinforced the need to work collaboratively to support the transition to net zero, highlighting positive working relationships with Harrogate Town Football Club, Harrogate College, Harrogate District Climate Change Coalition, members of North Yorkshire Climate Coalition, Harlow and Pannal Residents Association, Harrogate District Chamber of Commerce and more recently, Harrogate Civic Society.

Harrogate Town Football Club and their team mascot, Harry Gator have become regular supporters of our half-termly Walk to School Days, involving over 50 schools across the district.

Harrogate College has provided some of the training for our Retrofit Programme, also hosting a Retrofit event for landlords which was run by Harrogate District Climate Change Coalition.

In recognition of the changing regional political landscape, we have worked alongside 22 community climate action groups to establish a North Yorkshire Climate Coalition (NYCC) which aims to play an influential role across the region. We participated in a number of meetings with senior councillors this year.

We worked closely with Harlow & Pannal Ash Residents Association relating to planning matters pertaining to the Western Arc of Harrogate.

### Strategic priorities for 2023

JP outlined ZCH's focus for 2023, providing an update of the areas of work to support the following three priorities:

- **Educate** our community on the need for urgent climate action and decarbonisation.
  - **Engage** collaboratively with organisations and political decision makers around climate action; encourage commitment and hold each other to account for delivery.
  - **Support** individuals, groups, and organisations in taking effective climate action by sharing knowledge and information; run 'proof of concept' projects to build confidence, capacity and momentum.
- a. Continue growth of the **Retrofit Programme**. JP advised that progress is being made in developing a professional network which brings building professionals together with a view to establishing a One Stop Shop. This will help to create a smoother retrofit process. In partnership with Harrogate College, ZCH organised a well-attended Homeowner Retrofit event earlier this year. Three Retrofit Coordinators were now fully trained. JP acknowledged the challenge of upskilling the building profession and advised that ZCH has responded to this by creating innovative and accessible online training resources in partnership with People Powered Retrofit. Additional funding is being sought to extend the project beyond March 2024.
- b. **Business Engagement**. JP advised that ZCH continues to work on the development of this programme with additional volunteer resources with the aim of supporting organisations in their decarbonisation journeys.
- c. Widening local **Political Engagement**. JP advised that ZCH is delivering this through the following areas:
- As a member of North Yorkshire Climate Coalition (NYCC) which represents 22 community groups.
  - Proactive in North Yorkshire Council's Climate Change Strategy consultation.
  - Proactive in meeting with Climate Change Champions such as Cllr Paul Haslam
  - Proactive in engaging with Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Committee.
- d. JP advised that ZCH's emerging **communications and stakeholder engagement strategy** aims to reach a wider audience, including with Parish Councils, resident, and community groups.
- e. Working Group volunteers continue to explore opportunities to influence and support behavioural change towards a sustainable, carbon-neutral district. Following the success of the Walk to School initiative, JP commented that ZCH is looking forward to further developing links with the schools via a Schools Leaders network, along with leveraging the momentum from the Walk to School Day to promote weekly car free days.
- f. **Building capacity**. JP advised that a new Volunteer Growth & Engagement Strategy developed by the Operations Manager will enable ZCH to extend the charity's reach, creating a stronger and better equipped team.
- g. **Merger with Harrogate District Climate Change Coalition (HDCCC)**. JP announced that, after careful consideration, ZCH and HDCCC have agreed to merge on the basis that combining forces would create a stronger, more effective team. JP stated that if elected, HDCCC trustees would join the ZCH Board and that the new organisation, still known as Zero Carbon Harrogate, will be publicly announced in the following week.

Following the Chair's update, JP asked for any questions from the floor. The following matters were raised:

Why river pollution was not mentioned in the Report, particularly the River Nidd. JP acknowledged that whilst this was an extremely worrying concern, the priority for ZCH was carbon reduction, and due to limited resources, is currently unable to include this environmental issue within the work programmes. Follow up comment that the sewage works generates slurry which in turn creates methane and carbon.

- The possibility of whether there would be a Harrogate Town Council was raised, and if so, now that HDCCC and ZCH have merged, what would this relationship look like. JP advised that ZCH remain district focussed but acknowledged that the boundaries were fluid. Could other environmental groups cover other areas of the Harrogate district, for example, Ripon environmental group could do the northern part of the area. JP welcomed the idea of more volunteers and commented that ZCH would keep a watching brief as more information becomes available regarding local government.
- Comment that there was little action in the northern and western side of the district and queried why ZCH weren't active here. JP advised that as a predominantly volunteer-led organisation, resources were limited.
- The issue of geographical scope of ZCH was raised and suggested formalising the identification of local advocates in other areas of the district, e.g., local advocate for Knaresborough etc.
- A query was raised about the links ZCH has with Knaresborough Town Council.
- John Kerr was thanked by Simon Hewitt from Ripon Together for attending Ripon's Green Fair on 25<sup>th</sup> June. Simon commented that they are hoping to encourage local schools to install solar panels and queried how best to approach schools.

## 6. Treasurer's Report (KKW)

KKW provided an overview of the accounts for 2022, explaining how 'restricted' and 'unrestricted' funds can be allocated. Total restricted and unrestricted funds received for 2022 were £50,755, with payments for the year of £25,397. A total of £31,563 is carried forward to 2023. KKW acknowledged and thanked Garic Taylor as the appointed independent examiner for the 2022 accounts.

KKW explained that because the Energy Redress Fund of £125k is paid in arrears, ZCH had benefitted from interest free loans from members to assist with cash flow. At the end of 2022, ZCH owed £3000 to one of its members.

Restricted monies from People's Postcode Lottery are used to fund the Operations Manager's post.

KKW advised that the focus for the future is to explore securing more funds to expand the work of ZCH, develop the infrastructure, governance and recruit more volunteers and staff. It is likely that this will require an upgrade to the financial processes to a more robust accounting system.

Simon (??) queried why ZCH's laptop was not included in Assets. KKW advised that this had been funded through the Energy Redress Fund as a programme expense.

## 7. Membership Report (KKW)

KKW confirmed that membership fees had been kept flat for the last couple of years although additional donations were much appreciated. KKW advised that we had approximately 60 members in June 2022, but this

had dropped to 36 as at June 2023. KKW couldn't fully explain the reasons behind this drop, apart from a possibility that reminder emails to existing members had gone into Junk mail.

KKW and KC agreed to review the membership list and encouraged anyone who hadn't received the reminder to get in touch. KKW also acknowledged that ZCH needed to review how members' payments were followed up and ensure everyone had access to the renewal process.

### **8. Election of Trustees (JP and Trustee introductions)**

- i. Jessica Eaton
- ii. Chris Arnott
- iii. Louise McManus
- iv. Danny Wild

JP welcomed and invited new prospective Trustees to give a brief introduction of themselves. New Trustees were unanimously elected.

### **9. Retiring Trustees (JP)**

- i. Ian Stalker
- ii. Catriona Hawkin
- iii. Jane Gaukroger

JP thanked retiring trustees for all their efforts, noting Ian Stalker's role as Buildings Lead for the past four years, Catriona Hawkin's role as Secretary and Jane Gaukroger's role as Vice Chair.

### **10. Election of Office Holders (JP)**

- i. Chair: Jemima Parker
- ii. Vice-Chair: Tim Larnar
- iii. Treasurer: Karen Kelsey-Wilson
- iv. Secretary: Chris Arnott

Office holders were unanimously elected. JP noted thanks to JG, KKW and TL for their contributions in their roles so far.

### **11. AOB (JP)**

No issues were raised.

The AGM was closed. Refreshments were served.

### **ZCH Presentations (TL, JP, JE)**

- The role of ZCH in politics – How we seek to influence public policy.
- Making a 'hot' issue out of net zero – how to use social media to share our story and drive positive action.

The above presentations were very well received, followed by interesting comments and suggestions.

**The meeting closed at 9.20pm.**