

North Yorkshire Council Election 5 May 2022

NY Climate Coalition survey of candidate views on key environmental issues

Candidate name	Party	Division
Michael Chaloner	Green Party	Aiskew & Leeming

Thanks for taking part in this survey. We hope you will see this as an opportunity to share your thoughts with voters on important climate and environmental issues. While we would ideally like candidates to answer the survey in full, we appreciate that some of the points are quite technical. Candidates come from many different backgrounds and may be drawn to local government because of a passion for other aspects of service delivery and community interest. Please feel free to focus on the questions you feel are most relevant to you. You can always add more information later if you wish.

1. The newly elected members of North Yorkshire Council (NYC) will be responsible for overseeing the county's net zero strategy. Would you support the provision of carbon literacy training (e.g. through the [Carbon Literacy Project](#)) as part of the induction programme for new councillors?

It makes sense to use the present Carbon Literacy Project to see how good it is if nothing else.

2. Transport, agriculture and domestic energy are the biggest sources of greenhouse gas emissions in North Yorkshire. In your view, how should the new NY Council tackle these most effectively?

The NYC can encourage changes to reduce these emissions by:

Converting its own transport to non-emitting technology and providing electric charging in its public car parks;

Supporting information sources to help the agricultural industry and domestic energy users to make changes to non-emitting technology;

Make it as easy as possible to apply for any financial support that is on offer to make these changes.

3. Many politicians support net zero commitments, but some argue that "green" measures to protect the environment and climate are too expensive, will cost jobs and need to be delayed. Where do you stand on this?

The longer that many zero commitments are put off the more will be the long-term cost to our environment. With the right support individuals will not consider it too expensive. Many jobs will be created and by getting on and leading the way our exports will be in demand.

4. As we seek more energy independence nationally, what role do you see in our region for onshore wind, solar farms and fracking?

We are neglecting the cheap onshore wind turbines which are often considered by their neighbours as valuable sources of renewable energy.

Solar farms should be taken up in the form of roofing on large south facing roofs. It is not necessary to cover large areas of farm land with solar panels. This could be linked to planning approval.

Fracking is hazardous; methane gas leaks into the atmosphere, polluting the water table with a mixture including biocides, generation of damaging earthquakes. It produces a fossil fuel which is burnt to pollute our atmosphere.

5. How could the future NYC use its powers under the planning system to promote sustainable development? Should there be a presumption against high-carbon development proposals in NYC's planning policies?

The planning rules need changing urgently to cut high-carbon developments. The present rules can actually get in the way of cutting carbon developments e.g. listed buildings cannot have solar panels fitted and heat pumps were possible should be out of public view.

6. There are plans (in the [NY Local Enterprise Partnership strategy](#)) to double the current area of woodland in the region. Would you actively support this target?

This should be fully supported; in fact, I would like to see more done. Many of the local dale sides are relatively empty with grass and rock only. Rather than having a few sheep on them they should be forested. In the past I often volunteered to plant trees.

7. Will you sign the UK Divest Pledge: "If elected, I pledge to support the council divesting its pension fund out of fossil fuels and redirecting those amounts into sustainable investments and the local economy over an appropriate time-scale. I promise to do everything in my power to make sure this happens within the first year of my term in office."

I agree to make this pledge to do during my first year of full office.

8. Would you support net zero measures as a spending priority for the new council?

Fully support this spending priority.

9. Most districts/boroughs in NY and around 75% across the UK have declared a climate emergency. In your view, should the new NYC adopt a similar motion to underpin its decarbonisation and planning policies?

Yes, it should be an early declaration.

10. Is there anything else you'd like to add on your environmental or climate views?

For example, what would your future priorities be in your division and more widely in North Yorkshire? Do you have any comments on more technical matters such as hydrogen as a fuel, Drax, grid capacity, energy-efficiency, retrofitting, peatland conservation, plastic pollution, waste, circular economy, nature recovery or the government's new energy security strategy?

Many actions are urgently awaited. They include:

Closing of the blot on North Yorkshire of dirty energy from the Drax power station and the stripping of forests.

Backing for the specialist use of hydrogen as an alternative fuel but not domestically as it so hazardous and unnecessary.

Providing information on retrofitting of insulation and financial support.

Reduction of the dangers from flooding including peatland conservation.

Removal of many sources of pollution in our environment.