

GREEN ECONOMY PANEL

**MEETING TO BE HELD AT 4.00 PM ON THURSDAY, 25 FEBRUARY
2021**

**IN DUE TO COVID-19, THIS MEETING WILL BE HELD REMOTELY AND
WILL BE LIVESTREAMED HERE**

**[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/CHANNEL/UCAZJNSGPQZZT41VIBN2
ZK9A/LIVE](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAZJNSGPQZZT41VIBN2ZK9A/LIVE) (COPY AND PASTE THE LINK IN YOUR BROWSER)**

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Signed:



**Managing Director
West Yorkshire Combined Authority**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
GREEN ECONOMY PANEL
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 18 NOVEMBER 2020
AS A REMOTE MEETING**

Present:

Professor Simon Pringle (Chair)	Project Rome
William Firth	European Metal Recycling (EMR) Ltd
Richard Goodfellow	Addleshaw Goddard
Natasha Luther-Jones	DLA Piper LLC
Dr Alice Owen	University of Leeds
Leah Stuart	Civic Engineers
Ben Tongue	NHS Digital
Councillor Andrew Cooper	Kirklees Council
Councillor Sarah Ferriby	Bradford Council
Councillor Jack Hemingway	Wakefield Council
Councillor Scott Patient	Calderdale Council
Councillor Andrew Waller	City of York Council
Councillor Neil Walshaw	Leeds City Council
Jim Cardwell (Advisory Representative)	Northern Powergrid
Nevil Muncaster (Advisory Representative)	Yorkshire Water
Melanie Taylor (Advisory Representative)	Northern Gas Networks

In attendance:

Mark Roberts	Beer Hawk Ltd
James Brass	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Noel Collings	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Alan Reiss	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Ian Smyth	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Jacqui Warren	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Janette Woodcock	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

10. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence was received from Rosa Foster

11. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no pecuniary interests declared by members at the meeting.

12. Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no items on the Agenda requiring exclusion of the press and public.

13. Minutes of the Meeting of the Green Economy Panel held on 7 July 2020

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Green Economy Panel held on 7 July 2020 be approved.

14. Chairs Update

The White Rose Forest item which was planned to be included at this meeting will now be brought to the next Panel Meeting in January 2021.

The Combined Authority Board, on the advice of this Panel, endorsed the findings of Task 1, detailed in Agenda Item 7, on 27 July 2020 and the Chair thanked Panel members for their input.

An Action from the last meeting of the Green Economy Panel was to engage with leaders and other panel members in terms of the Planet Emergency and an event was organised and attended by more than 50 people at which the Chair (Simon Pringle) gave a presentation which was very well received.

Engagement with members from other Panels has now taken place and will continue to be built upon.

The Chair announced changes in Panel Membership.

The Chair said that the biggest and most challenging change to the Green Economy Panel is that Jacqui Warren is leaving the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to take up a new role in Devon to move closer to family. The Chair wanted to thank Jacqui for her contribution, support, insight and leadership and on behalf of himself and the Panel again gave thanks and wished Jacqui good luck.

On a more positive note, the Combined Authority are recruiting new colleagues for the Technical Hub to provide technical support for projects and future funding.

There are a further two Panel Member changes.

Alice Owen will be tapering down her involvement and is taking up the appointment as vice chair in a new sustainable development role. Alice will, however, continue to engage with the Panel. The Chair thanked Alice for her involvement and contribution to the Panel.

Wallace Sampson is standing down following boundary changes. The Chair

thanked Wallace for being a superb advocate and adviser and for his involvement in green initiatives including a standard bearer for the Energy Accelerator.

On a congratulatory note the chair wanted to highlight the Achievement Award from the Municipal Journal for engagement in tabling the Climate Emergency. This is a reflection on Officers giving up their time freely and enthusiastically and a very well done. It is good to get noticed and have recognition.

15. Carbon Emission Reduction Pathways

The Panel considered an update on progress to develop the West Yorkshire Carbon Emission Reduction Pathways and the forthcoming engagement on the outputs of Tasks 2 and 3 of the Study.

The Combined Authority Board, on the advice of the Panel, endorsed the findings of Task 1 at their 27 July 2020 meeting.

A presentation was provided to the Panel to give an update on the carbon emission pathway. The Panel was advised that their input would help shape and steer engagement from now until February. Outputs had recently been received and conversations with stakeholders now needed to take place and initial thoughts on engagement from the Panel was welcomed. Additional sessions for Panel members will be arranged if required. Further information would be brought back in December / January 2021.

Further engagement with stakeholders on the outputs of Tasks 2 and 3 is planned over the next four months and includes one-on-one engagement with West Yorkshire councils, attendance at public meetings such as Transport Committee and LEP Board and a six-week period of public consultation.

The purpose of this engagement is threefold:

- To raise awareness of the outputs of the roadmap, policy recommendations and actions.
- To understand concerns, appetite and acceptance for the policies and actions put forward from a wide range of stakeholders.
- To inform the immediate priorities for delivery in West Yorkshire

Members said that this was a good presentation and that good progress had been made.

Members provided initial thoughts on how to virtually engage widely in the present circumstances when traditional methods cannot be undertaken at this time.

It was felt that how and what is done as a group was important and working collaboratively together in the future to embrace knowledge and learning already available would be a strongpoint.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That the emerging outputs of Task 2 and 3 be endorsed.
- (iii) That agreement to an extraordinary meeting of the Panel to review and discuss the findings of Tasks 2 and 3 of the CERP be endorsed.

17. Tackling the Climate Emergency - Major Project Updates

The Panel considered a report to update on the progress against the Green Economy Panel's major projects and programmes, all of which form part of the City Region's approach to tackling the Climate Emergency and was asked to note the progress.

This is an unprecedented time and the Combined Authority, staff, consultants, contractors and suppliers are all having to adapt to new ways of working. The impact of Covid-19 in programmes and projects are being seen and the report included a range of risks and mitigation actions

Members felt that the status update was extremely helpful and officers said that the Red, Amber, Green indicated either projects adversely affected or slowed down by the earlier and present lockdown, mainly due to not always being able to get site access.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted
- (ii) That the progress against the major projects and programmes helping to tackle the Climate Emergency be noted.

Report to: Green Economy Panel

Date: 25 February 2021

Subject: **West Yorkshire Carbon Emission Reduction Pathways**

Director(s): Alan Reiss, Director of Policy, Strategy and Communications

Author(s): Noel Collings

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To introduce a presentation from Element Energy setting out the measures, policy considerations and actions that are required for West Yorkshire to reach net-zero carbon by 2038.

2. Information

- 2.1 The Combined Authority declared a climate emergency and strengthened the West Yorkshire emission reduction target in July 2019. The strengthened target commits the region to be net zero carbon by 2038 at the latest, with significant progress by 2030. The task is extremely challenging and will require significant, swift and collaborative action to decarbonise all sectors.
- 2.2 The West Yorkshire Carbon Emission Reduction Pathways (CERP) study was commissioned to demonstrate the different ways in which the climate emergency could be addressed, and the strengthened target met. It will also provide guidance to West Yorkshire councils and businesses on the ways they could address their own climate emergency declarations and targets.
- 2.3 The CERP focusses on the transport, buildings, power, industry, and land-use and agriculture sectors, and consists of three main tasks:
1. Developing three emission reduction pathways,
 2. Setting out the timescales for decision-making and deployment,
 3. Identifying the policy considerations and actions that need to be implemented.
- 2.4 The Panel were presented with an overview of the key findings of Task 1 at their [7 July 2020](#) meeting, with the outputs endorsed by the Combined

Authority at their [27 July meeting](#). A further update on progress was provided at the Panel meeting on [18 November 2020](#).

- 2.5 The findings build on the significant progress already made by the Combined Authority and its partners in tackling the climate emergency.
- 2.6 Element Energy, the Combined Authority's consultants, will be attending the meeting to present the measures, policy considerations and actions required to enable West Yorkshire to reach net-zero carbon by 2038.

Engagement

- 2.7 Engagement on the findings of the CERP has been undertaken with West Yorkshire councils and the Combined Authority to gain an initial understanding of appetite and acceptance of the outputs, and potential concerns and gaps. Feedback has been positive and used to shape the final outputs of the CERP that will be used to engage with and gain feedback from wider stakeholders.
- 2.8 Subject to approval by the Combined Authority, engagement on the outputs with wider stakeholders, including seldom heard groups, will take place via the Your Voice platform. An animation illustrating the ambition and target for West Yorkshire will accompany the engagement process.
- 2.9 Initial engagement will take place over a seven-week period beginning on 15 March, as part of a longer-term conversation on tackling the climate emergency, including the development of the regional Climate Coalition.

Next Steps

- 2.10 A report will be taken to the 9th March Combined Authority meeting to acknowledge the advice of independent advisors in meeting the regional emission reduction target and to approve the use of the advice in engagement with wider stakeholders.
- 2.11 Feedback received from wider stakeholder along with the outputs of the CERP will be used to inform a new Tackling the Climate Emergency Action Plan for the region, including the development of a pipeline of low carbon projects.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 The CERP is central to ensuring that the region understands how it can decarbonise in line with its net-zero carbon by 2038 target.
- 3.2 Outputs of the CERP will be fed into a refreshed Tackling the Climate Emergency Action Plan and embedded across the work of the Combined Authority.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1 It is crucial that transitioning to a low carbon economy reduces inequality in West Yorkshire. It cannot be the cause of further inequality for our most

excluded and deprived groups and communities. To that extent inclusive growth goals and outcomes will be included in the design of policies, actions and the deployment of specific emission reduction measures that are implemented as a result of the CERP.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 The study is funded by the Combined Authority, the North East Yorkshire and Humber Energy Hub and York and North Yorkshire LEP.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 There are no implications associated with this paper.

7. Staffing Implications

7.1 There is a significant resource requirement to deliver against the findings of the CERP. While it is not the role of the Combined Authority to employ all the FTEs identified, there will be a need to build on the existing resources working on this agenda within the organisation.

8. External Consultees

8.1 A wide range of stakeholders have been engaged and provided input into Task 1 of the CERP. To date engagement on Tasks 2 and 3 has been limited to West Yorkshire Councils and the Combined Authority.

9. Recommendations

9.1 That the Panel notes the advice of independent advisors on the measures, policy considerations and actions that will be needed to ensure West Yorkshire achieves its target to be net-zero carbon by 2038.

9.2 That the Panel advise the Combined Authority to approve the use of the findings of the CERP in engagement with wider stakeholders.

10. Background Documents

None.

11. Appendices

None.

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Report to: Green Economy Panel

Date: 25 February 2021

Subject: **Carbon Impact Assessment**

Director: Alan Reiss, Director Policy, Strategy and Communications

Author: Matthew Page, Modelling Analyst

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This paper provides an update on the work commissioned by the Combined Authority to develop a carbon impact assessment tool and incorporate this into the Assurance Framework. This work will ensure that the impact of proposals on the Climate Emergency are more explicitly taken account in decision making.

2. Information

Background

- 2.1 Given the scientific consensus that human influence is overwhelmingly responsible for changes in the global climate, addressing the climate emergency is a key priority for the Combined Authority and the West Yorkshire councils.
- 2.2 The Combined Authority declared a climate emergency and strengthened the City Region's carbon emission reduction target in July 2019. The strengthened target commits the region to achieve net-zero carbon by 2038, with significant progress by 2030. The task is challenging and will require significant and swift action to decarbonise all sectors.
- 2.3 The Panel have received regular updates on work to develop a strengthened, robust, quantifiable methodology for assessing clean growth and climate change impacts of all schemes coming through the Assurance Framework. This report provides more detail on this work.

The carbon impact assessment project

- 2.4 A methodology and supporting toolkit for assessing carbon emissions and clean growth impacts of new schemes is being developed, and the Combined

Authority has appointed Mott Macdonald to carry out this work. A technical steering group, including officers from all West Yorkshire councils and York, has been established to develop the work and oversee the commission.

2.5 The work underway has five phases:

- Phase 1: Review of national and local examples of best practice in carbon assessment (September and October 2020)
- Phase 2: Development of the carbon impact assessment toolkit (October 2020 to March 2021)
- Phase 3: Applying the toolkit to existing capital schemes currently going through the Assurance Framework (February to April 2021)
- Phase 4: Carry out an in-depth assessment and recommend carbon mitigation measures for a shortlist of schemes in development (March to May 2021)
- Phase 5: Carry out training to partners and embed the toolkit in the Assurance Framework (February to August 2021)

2.6 Phase 1 has been completed and involved:

- An external review of best practice in calculating carbon emissions and some wider environmental impacts
- A Review of how internal decision-making practices in the Combined Authority take carbon impacts into account
- Recommendations for what should be included in a new carbon impact assessment toolkit for the Combined Authority

2.7 The Consultants have now developed more detailed proposals for the methodology that should be used at each stage of the assurance process (Phase 2). These include technical notes and firm guidance on:

- Strategic Assessment (Activity 1) - a check on the alignment of the proposal with Carbon Emission Reduction Pathways
- The development of the Strategic Outline Business Case (Activity 2) - a qualitative screening process which assesses the wider sustainability/environmental impacts.
- Additions to the Outline Business Case (Activity 3) and Full Business Case (Activity 4) - a quantitative assessment of the carbon impact of proposals, this includes:
 - The carbon included in the construction of any infrastructure (embodied carbon)
 - The impact of the normal operation of the proposal (without any behavioural response to the intervention)
 - The impact of any behavioural response to the intervention

2.8 The methodology will be refined as it is used to assess the existing projects in the assurance process (in Phase 3). Particular challenges include:

- How to present the carbon impact assessment so that it is prominent within the business case and that it includes as much context as possible to assist decision makers. The carbon impact assessment methodology will not be able to suggest definitively whether a scheme should proceed or not but it will provide an important piece of evidence (the carbon impact) which can be taken into account by decision makers.
- Careful consideration of the counterfactual (what would have happened without the intervention). This is important to ensure that the intervention is assessed compared to a realistic assessment of what would have happened in the absence of the CA investment.
- Robust methodologies for assessing the behavioural response to interventions so that this important source of carbon impact can be properly assessed.
- The background assumptions to be used in the assessment of carbon impact, for instance traffic and fleet composition forecasts. For the assessments of existing projects these will have to match those made in the existing economic assessments. For future assessments, the consultants have recommended the use of assumptions which are consistent with the Carbon Emissions Reduction Pathways work and this will require an extra sensitivity test to be carried out in the economic assessment.

2.9 At the same time as the methodology was being developed, CA officers have been briefing officers in partner councils about the proposals, as well as presenting to meetings of the Directors of Development and Chief Highway Officers. Some briefings of elected members have also been held.

2.10 An important aspect of the project is making sure carbon impact assessment is incorporated into the assurance process so that it is considered in future decision making. Liaison is taking place between the consultants developing the methodology, the CA team overseeing the commission and the officers taking forward the revisions to guidance and templates through which the assurance process is implemented. The timescale for including carbon impact assessment in the assurance process will be determined by when the guidelines and templates which include carbon impact assessment are completed and adopted.

Next Steps

2.11 Work on Phase 3 of the project (the assessments of existing schemes) is now underway. A list of projects which are in scope for assessment has been supplied to the consultants. These include all the transport schemes progressing through the assurance process (and not already into delivery) as well as a selection of non-transport schemes. As mentioned above, the methodology used is likely to develop as it is used to assess these existing

schemes. The selection of non-transport schemes was therefore made so as to include as wide a selection of different types of scheme as possible.

2.12 It is likely that several issues that will need to be considered when applying the tool (Phase 3). For non-transport schemes new techniques will need to be developed to assess carbon impact. For transport schemes, more detailed consideration will need to be given to the last two bullet points above and the assumptions made for the purposes of carbon assessment may have to be different from those used in the economic assessment. These assumptions include:

- Fleet composition and background traffic forecasts – these are highly uncertain over the appraisal period (typically 60 years), especially given COVID-19, but the assumptions used can make a significant difference to the carbon impact of a scheme, as well as to the economic appraisal.
- The impact of the scheme on traffic levels and trip making – It is often difficult to assess the specific impact of the scheme, but for the purposes of carbon assessment, this is likely to be important.
- Traffic associated with new developments and whether this should be included in the assessment of transport schemes which affect the viability or success of such developments.

2.13 Phase 4 (in depth assessment and recommendation of carbon mitigation measures) will provide scheme promoters with information about the carbon impacts and inform next steps. The outcomes of the assessments of existing schemes, including potential mitigation for shortlisted schemes, will be discussed with partners to consider recommendations to be reported to the Combined Authority in June 2021.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

3.1 The proposed carbon impact assessment tool will assist decision makers in taking the carbon impact of proposals into account and is considered an important tool in understanding how our investment can support the ambition to becoming a net zero carbon economy by 2038.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

4.1 Although the carbon emissions impact of investment is a key focus for the methodology under development through this work, the proposed toolkit includes qualitative screening process at Strategic Outline Case stage (Activity 2) which support assessment of schemes' contribution to wider environmental, sustainability and social impacts.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

7. Staffing Implications

7.1 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

8. External Consultees

8.1 A steering group, including officers from all West Yorkshire councils and York has been established to develop this work and oversee the commission. A representative from the Green Economy Panel also sits on the steering group, acting as a “critical friend”.

9. Recommendations

9.1 That the Green Economy Panel notes the contents of this report.

10. Background Documents

None.

11. Appendices

None.

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Report to: Green Economy Panel

Date: 25 February 2021

Subject: **Green Infrastructure Standards Trial**

Director(s): Alan Reiss, Director of Policy, Strategy and Communications

Author(s): Ambrose White

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To give an update on the national Green Infrastructure Standards Trial (GIST), led by Natural England. Leeds City Region is one of 10 trial areas, and participation was confirmed as part of the West Yorkshire Devolution Deal.

2. Information

- 2.1 Background information on the GIST was provided to the Panel at their meeting in November 2020, including the scope of the national trial; shape of the national Green Infrastructure (GI) Standards Framework; proposed scope of the West Yorkshire trial; and the support that is potentially available to the Combined Authority and local partners through participation in this trial.
- 2.2 The national trial project, which involves review and testing of a draft national GI Standards Framework in 10 trial areas in England, is planned to complete in mid-February 2021. The draft Framework will be updated based on feedback from the trial areas, for a soft launch later in 2021. The finalised national Standards Framework is due to be published in 2022.
- 2.3 A steering group has been set up for the West Yorkshire trial, including representatives identified by the Local Nature Partnership, City Region Heads of Planning and West Yorkshire Ecology Steering Group. The Steering Group will consider opportunities to test elements of the draft Standards Framework as part of work already underway, and to provide feedback to Natural England on the draft document. The steering group includes representatives from Bradford, Calderdale, Craven, Harrogate, Kirklees, Leeds, North Yorkshire (representing Selby) and Wakefield councils, along with Yorkshire Water, Environment Agency, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and Groundwork.
- 2.4 The draft Standards Framework is made up of a set of principles for Good Green Infrastructure and associated guidance; updated standards for

accessible natural greenspace (based on existing Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards); and a new national green infrastructure dataset and online mapping platform.

2.5 The West Yorkshire trial project has 3 key elements:

- **Leeds City Region Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy and Delivery Plan Review:** undertaken on the existing Plan using the draft national Principles for Good GI and self-assessment checklists included in the draft Framework. The review will identify areas of alignment and where the Strategy could be strengthened to reflect best practice in developing GI policy – for consideration in future development of the Strategy.
- **Embedding elements of the draft Standards Framework into the Leeds City Region Assurance Framework:** to support current and future reviews of the Assurance Framework and aligned to the Carbon Impact Assessment methodology work.
- Where relevant, **review and potential testing of elements of the Standards Framework by the Combined Authority and local partners** in development of local policy and future investment programmes. For example, use of the proposed national data set and mapping to identify areas of deficit in accessible natural greenspace, or opportunities to invest in green infrastructure investment.

2.6 A more detailed overview of the draft Standards Framework is at Appendix 1.

Feedback to Natural England

2.7 As part of the trial, local areas are expected to provide feedback to Natural England on the draft Standards Framework and associated products. The Combined Authority has submitted feedback as the lead partner for the West Yorkshire trial area, incorporating feedback from local partners.

2.8 The survey responses were developed through partners' review of the draft Standards Framework application or use of elements of the framework within the timescales available. Input was sought through the project Steering Group, the West Yorkshire Ecology Steering Group, Leeds City Region Heads of Planning and Duty to Cooperate Group, the White Rose Forest and Local Nature Partnerships. Partner organisations were also invited to submit feedback independently if they wished to do so.

2.9 To meet Natural England's deadline, the draft survey response was shared with Green Economy Panel members for comment via email. Place Panel were also invited to comment. The responses were submitted in line with the Combined Authority's consultation response process.

2.10 The key points raised in the survey responses on the draft Standards Framework submitted to Natural England are:

- The draft Framework offers significant potential at national and local levels to support local authorities and delivery organisations in increasing delivery of multi-functional green infrastructure and maximising the benefits of green infrastructure for the environment and human health.

- Further revision and expansion of the Framework will help fulfil its potential and provide the greatest amount of support to local partners possible, especially given new requirements on local authorities in development of nature recovery strategies and addressing net biodiversity gain requirements as part of the planning process.
- We support the recognition the Framework gives to the importance of creating networks of accessible natural greenspace (for example, incorporation of the updated Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard – ANGSt - as a core standard to be adopted) and that understanding the extent of accessible natural greenspace, and levels of access to it, is useful as a way of identifying deficiencies in terms of people’s ability experience nature and greenspace – which helps build wider understanding of the importance of nature and of conserving it.
- However, the Framework should also ensure focus on the full range of benefits of GI, and updated ANGSt should be accompanied by other core standards recognising the ecological benefits, including protecting/ enhancing biodiversity, carbon mitigation and reduction of flood risk.
- This approach would reflect the proposed fundamental principle of multi-functional GI proposed in the Framework. The updated ANGSt proposals in isolation may not be sufficiently balanced as a metric to assess the level of provision of multi-functional, high quality GI – and should be used in conjunction with others, potentially as a sub-set of an overarching measurement tool.
- The guidance provided in the draft framework – and the associated national data set and mapping – provides a useful basis for local authorities in developing GI policy and making use of the national data set. We would like to see this expanded to provide more detailed guidance on the principles and policy development, as well as on ways to make the most of the national data set and online mapping platform.
- Incorporation into the national planning framework, potentially providing statutory status for the Framework, would ensure the greatest possible impact in terms of multi-functional greenspace provision, local planning authorities must however retain the ability to develop and implement policy that suits individual circumstances and locally determined objectives. More information is needed on government/Natural England’s long-term ambitions for the Standards Framework.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 Participation in the GIST is one of the commitments in the West Yorkshire Devolution Deal that aims to tackle the climate emergency and support the ambition to become a net zero carbon economy by 2038.
- 3.2 The draft Standards Framework recognises the role that GI can play in reducing carbon emissions and supporting climate resilience and adaption, and use of the Standards Framework an associated national mapping data as part of future work to inform GI investment and delivery is expected to help

identify where GI delivery can offer greatest contribution to carbon mitigation and resilience against climate change.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1 The draft Green Infrastructure Standards Framework recognises the importance access to GI providing health benefits, and to ensure that provision of green infrastructure is targeted at those who need it most. This includes communities experiencing the greatest levels of deprivation or poor health, who often have poor access to existing greenspace. The emerging national GI dataset includes analyses of access to GI according to levels of deprivation, disability and long-term illness.
- 4.3 Use of the Framework and the national mapping dataset will help the Combined Authority and partners to target improvements and investment in GI to ensure those in greatest need can access the physical and mental health benefits GI can provide, and will contribute to the wellbeing goal in the draft Inclusive Growth Framework endorsed by LEP Board in January 2021.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

7. Staffing Implications

- 7.1 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

8. External Consultees

- 8.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1 That the Panel note the progress made on the GIST, and the submission of survey responses to Natural England providing feedback on the draft Standards Framework and the national green infrastructure mapping dataset.

10. Background Documents

[“A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment”](#), HM Government, 2018 – Chapter 3

11. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Green Infrastructure Standard Trial – overview of draft national Green Infrastructure Standards Framework

National Green Infrastructure Standards Trial

Development of a national Framework for GI Standards

Context - National project and LCR Strategy

- LCR Green and Blue Infra Strategy and Delivery Plan adopted - December 2018
- Gov. 25 year Environment Plan includes commitment to develop national framework of GI standards
- 10 trial areas incl. West Yorkshire (through Devo Deal) – to test and strengthen draft Framework
- This phase - 4 month trial area projects (**mid February 2021**)
- Soft launch planned for 2021 with further trialling
- Finalised national standards framework planned for final launch 2022
- Potential for incorporation into national planning guidance and policy



Source: Arup

Context - West Yorkshire project

1. Use national draft Standards Framework to test LCR GBI Strategy and Delivery Plan and embed into CA policy and strategy **[CA action]**
2. Test how the draft Standard Framework (or elements) can be embedded into LCR Assurance Framework **[CA action]**
3. Use benchmarking data and new standards/tools **[CA/partners action]**
 - 21 • *To produce new mapping for regional/local strategies e.g. GBI Strategy; Nature Recovery Strategies*
 - *To identify areas in greatest need of nature recovery – build into local planning policy*
 - *To align with Emissions Reduction Pathway work and develop nature recovery/climate emergency investment pipelines*

Provide feedback and evidence to Natural England on application and experience of using Standards Framework

Milestone for completion – February 2021

Summary of draft national Green Infrastructure Standards Framework

Draft National GI Standards Framework

Principles of Good GI

1. Multiple Benefits/Value
2. Partnership
3. Policy
4. Evidence
5. Planning and Design
6. Stewardship/ Governance

Benchmarking/Mapping

- Green and blue space land cover
 - Greenness Ratio
 - Accessible natural greenspace
 - Woodland
 - Public Rights of Way
 - Socio-economic data
- + *analyses based on above*

GI Standards

Could include:

- Updated Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards *e.g. Neighbourhood Greenspace standard - at least 10ha within 1km of a home*
- Urban Greening Factors
- Others TBC

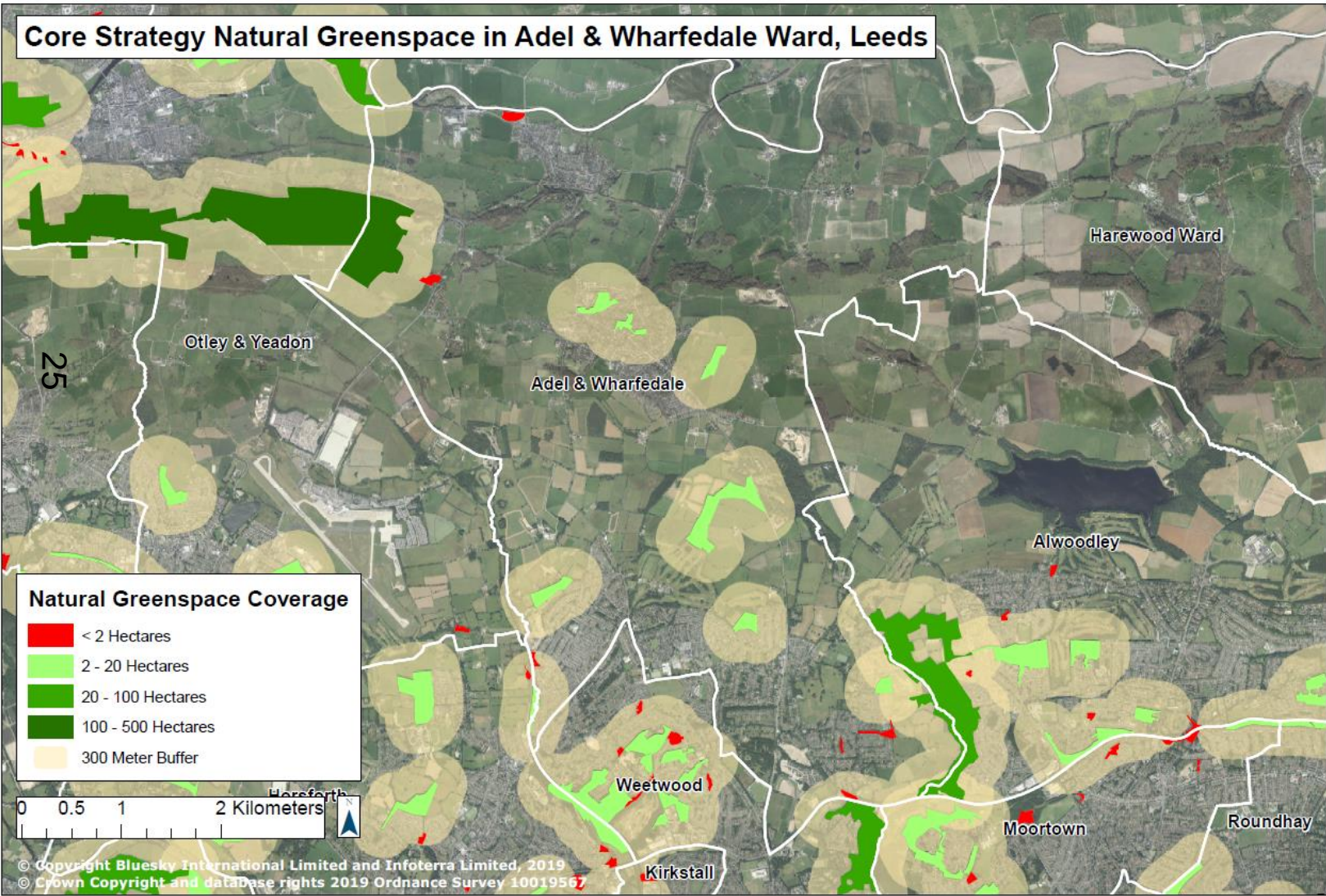
Guidance

- How to self assess against Principles of Good GI
- How to apply GI Standards Framework (incl. checklists, process maps for e.g. development managers)
- How to design GI

Support available through Framework

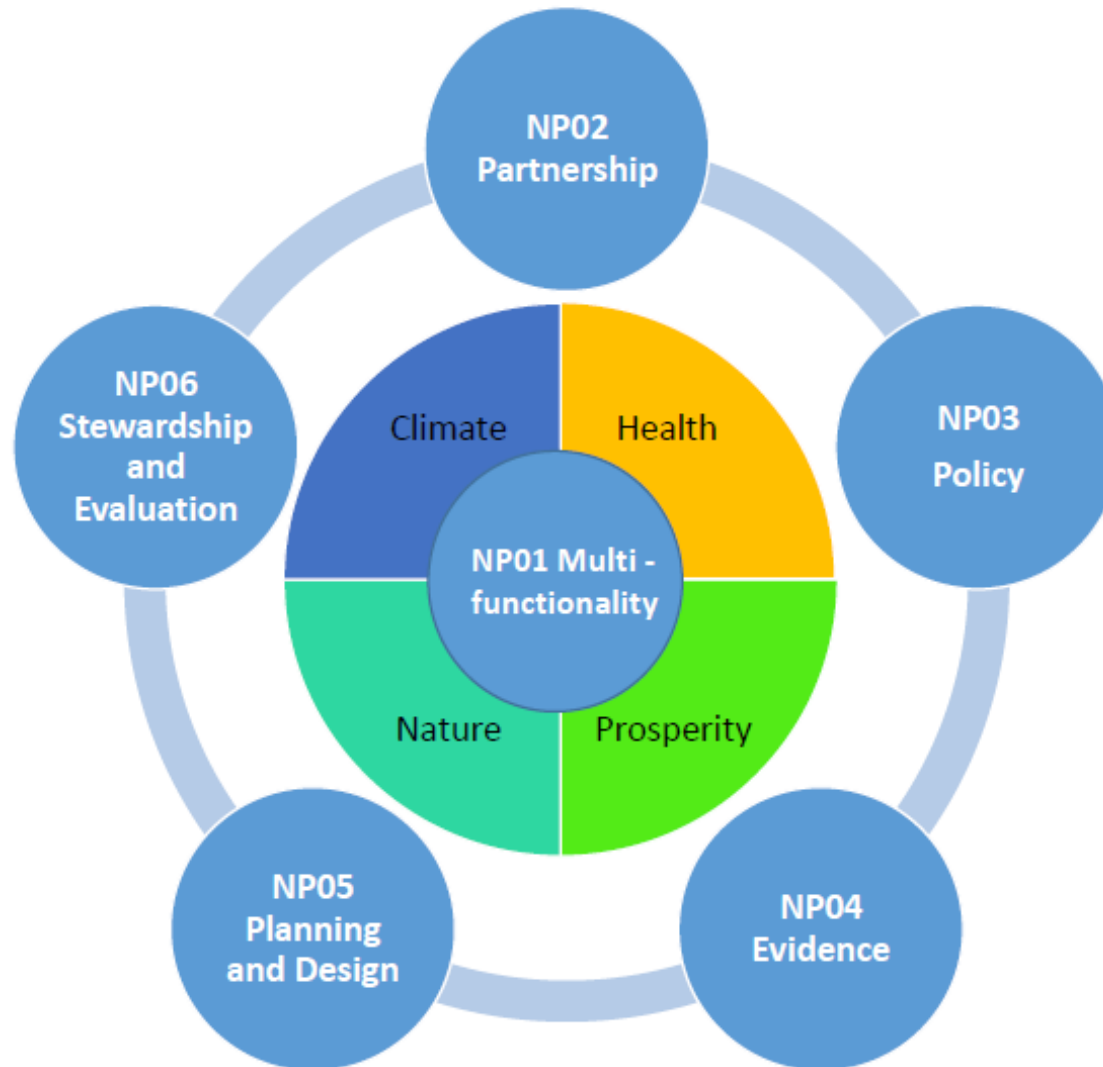
- Tools/guidance included in Standards Framework
 - Updated standards e.g. ANGSt; UGF
 - National mapping and analyses (e.g. greenness factor, green/blue land cover)
 - Process maps and checklists incl.
 - 24 • Developing Green Infrastructure Strategy (For Local Planning Authorities)
 - Incorporating Green Infrastructure Into Development (For Developers/Promoters)
 - Ensuring New Developments Deliver Good Green Infrastructure (For LPA Development Managers)
 - Incorporating Green Infrastructure into Neighbourhood Plans (for communities preparing a Neighbourhood Plan)
- Knowledge community of 10 trial areas across England

Example: use of ANGSt – Leeds City Council



Standards Framework - in detail

Principles of Good GI



Standards Framework - in detail

Principles of Good GI

Multiple Benefits and Value

NP01 **Develop, design and deliver multi-functional Green infrastructure** that delivers a range of benefits for people, places and nature. This includes:

- Health and wellbeing benefits;
- Thriving nature and biodiversity gains;
- Making places more resilient to climate change and helping to meet zero carbon targets;
- Adding value and supporting prosperous communities.

Partnership

NP02 **Facilitate partnership working, collaboration and stakeholder engagement.** Include local authorities, developers, communities, green space managers and others. These are critical for planning and delivering green infrastructure that meets local needs.

Policy

NP03 **Secure green infrastructure as essential infrastructure in local strategy and policy.** Deliver a range of environmental, social, health and economic policy objectives as part of place-making and place-keeping.

Evidence

NP04 **Plan green infrastructure to meet different people's needs.** Use evidence of quantity, quality and distribution of GI assets and data on environmental and health challenges to address inequalities in provision. (see Guidance section at end for guidance examples)

Planning and Design

NP05 **Plan and design green infrastructure strategically** to function and connect as a living network at a local and landscape scale, responding to and enhancing local character

Stewardship Governance Funding & Evaluation

NP06 **Plan good governance, management, monitoring, evaluation and funding** of green infrastructure from the outset and secure it for the long-term.

Standards Framework - in detail

Principles of Good GI

PROCESS MAP 1: DEVELOPING A GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE (GI) STRATEGY

Process for Local Planning Authorities (LPAs)

PROCESS MAP 2: INCORPORATING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE (GI) INTO DEVELOPMENT

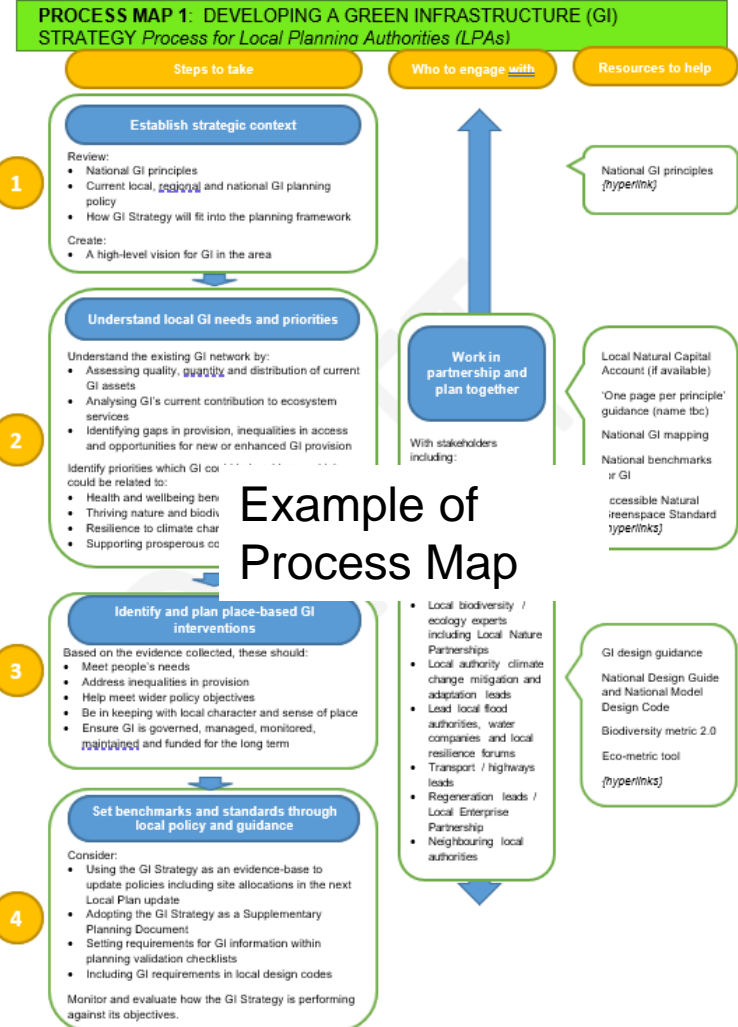
Process for Developers and Design Teams

PROCESS MAP 3: ENSURING NEW DEVELOPMENTS DELIVER GOOD GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE (GI)

Process for Development Managers within Local Planning Authorities (LPAs)

PROCESS MAP 4: INCORPORATING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE INTO NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

Process for communities developing Neighbourhood Plans



Example of Process Map

Standards Framework - in detail

GI Standards: updated Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt)

Doorstep Greenspace (new addition)	At least 0.5 ha within 200 metres or under 5 mins walk*	includes a wider range of greenspace especially important in existing built up areas where homes don't have gardens.
Local Greenspace 29	At least 2 ha within 300 m (straight line route) or 500 m (actual walking/cycling route) i.e. within 5- 10 mins walk* 2 mins cycle	especially relevant in new urban extensions and garden communities as part of accessible nature recovery and biodiversity / environmental net gain.
Neighbourhood (new addition)	10 ha within 1 km or a 15-20 mins walk* (straight line – or network distance to be determined) 4 mins cycle	Distance criteria to promote active travel to visit greenspace. We are testing the size criteria around this i.e. the size within a 15-20 min walk
Wider neighbourhood	At least 20ha within 2km	eg parks and gardens
District	100 ha within 5 km 20 mins cycle	eg country parks, access land, accessible woodland.
Sub-regional	500 ha within 10 km 40 mins cycle	e.g. access land, accessible woodland, and the largest nature reserves.
Local and National Nature Reserves	LNRs and NNRs of at least 1 ha per 1000 population	measured at district/borough level (original ANGSt criterion only included LNRs)

Standards Framework - in detail

GI Standards – Urban Greening Factors

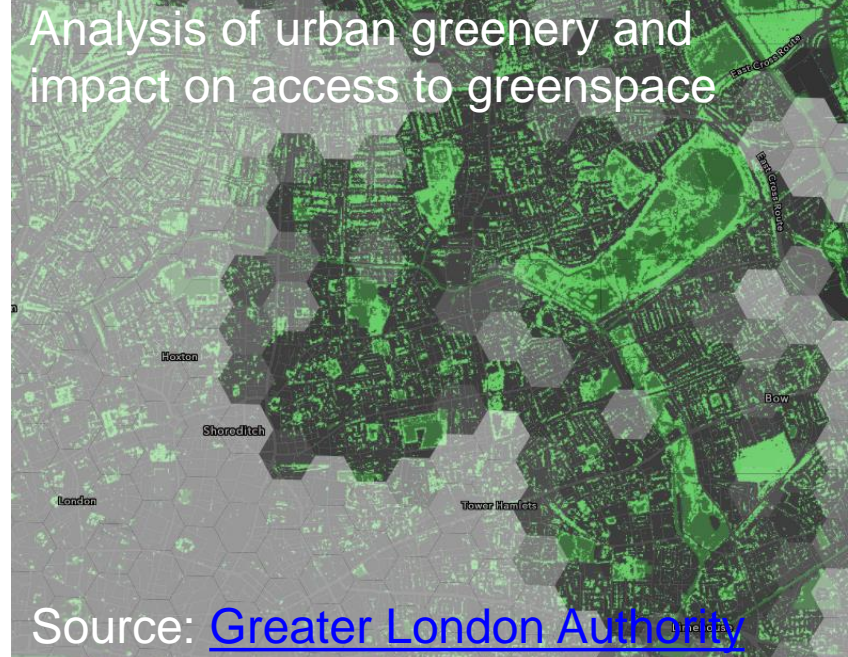
A tool that evaluates and quantifies the amount and quality of **urban greening** that a scheme provides to inform decisions about appropriate levels of **greening** in new developments

UGF works well in higher density urban districts that generally struggle to significantly increase the quantum of green space but can benefit incrementally from the addition of greenery within development

Developed in London and incorporated into London Plan

Calculated by multiplying:

- the area of each type of land cover with the relevant weighting factor in the table (see table 1 as an example of a scoring table)
- summing the weighted scores
- dividing the result by the total land area of the site



London Plan sets a standard for an UGF of 0.3 for commercial development and 0.4 for residential development. It is important to note that UGF **does not consider losses**, so a UGF of 0.4 could represent a loss if the starting baseline is over 0.4 (e.g. in greenfield development)

Standards Framework - in detail

GI Standards: Urban Greening Factors

No	Surface Cover Type	Factor
01	Semi-natural vegetation (e.g. trees, woodland, species-rich grassland) maintained or established on site.	1.0
02	Wetland or open water (semi-natural; not chlorinated) maintained or established on site.	1.0
03	Intensive green roof or vegetation over structure. Substrate minimum settled depth of 150mm [see livingroofs.org for descriptions].	0.8
04	Standard trees planted in connected tree pits with a minimum soil volume equivalent to at least two thirds of the projected canopy area of the mature tree	0.8
05	Extensive green roof with substrate of minimum settled depth of 80mm (or 60mm beneath vegetation blanket) [meets the requirements of GRO Code 2014].	0.7
06	Flower-rich perennial planting [see RHS perennial plants for guidance].	0.7
07	Rain gardens and other vegetated sustainable drainage elements [see CIRIA for case-studies]	0.7
08	Hedges (line of mature shrubs one or two shrubs wide) [see RHS for guidance].	0.6
09	Standard trees planted in pits with soil volumes less than two thirds of the projected canopy area of the mature tree.	0.6
10	Green wall - modular system or climbers rooted in soil [see NBS Guide to Façade Greening].	0.6
11	Groundcover planting [see RHS Groundcover Plants for overview].	0.5
12	Amenity grassland (species-poor, regularly mown lawn).	0.4
13	Extensive green roof of sedum mat / other lightweight systems not meeting GRO Code 2014.	0.3
14	Water features (chlorinated) or unplanted detention basins.	0.2
15	Permeable paving [see CIRIA for overview].	0.1
16	Sealed surfaces (e.g. concrete, asphalt, waterproofing, stone).	0.0

For example, an office development with a 600 sqm footprint on a site of 1,000 sqm including a green roof, 250 sqm car parking, 100 sqm open water and 50 sqm of amenity grassland would score the following:

$$(0.7 \times 600) + (0.0 \times 250) + (1 \times 100) + (0.4 \times 50) / 1000 = 0.54$$

So, in this example, the proposed office development exceeds the interim target score of 0.3 for a predominately commercial development

Standards Framework - in detail

Comparison of standards


	Biodiversity Net Gain (minimum 10%)	Eco-metric*	Urban Greening Factor (0.3 for commercial and 0.4 for residential)
Greenfield development	Biodiversity net gain (min 10%) can be delivered on and/or off site.	Used help to maximise gains and minimise losses from development across 18 different ecosystem services. Helps to support multi-functionality of GI	UGF could be designed to set min on-site greening based on specific service (eg permeability or other services)
Urban Development	Biodiversity net gain (min 10%) can be delivered on and/or off site. Where baseline biodiversity is zero, there is potential to set minimum standard for biodiversity.	Used help to maximise gains and minimise losses from development across 18 different ecosystem services. Helps to support multi-functionality of GI.	UGF could be designed to set min on-site greening based on specific service (eg permeability or other services)
Area-wide	BNG is not normally applied at an area-wide level to determine quantum of biodiversity.	The eco-metric scoring matrix is being tested at an area-wide level as a baseline against which to test development scenarios.	A simpler version of UGF, greenness ratio (ratio of soil/vegetation to man-made surfaces eg 50%) -use as a measure of the greenness of an area.

* [eco-metric](#) is a tool to assess how to maximise gains and minimise losses across 18 different ecosystem services, being tested by Birmingham and Cumbria as part of national Standards Trial


Standards Framework - in detail

Benchmarking/Mapping

- Green and blue space land cover
- Greenness Ratio
33
- Accessible natural greenspace
- Woodland
- Public Rights of Way
- Socio-economic data



soil/vegetation land cover versus manmade surface (50/250m grid)



% of population with access
Hectares per head of accessible natural greenspace; (+ Hectares of LNR/NNR per 1,000 population)
Analysis of population density and population growth in relation to access to accessible natural greenspace;
access to greenspace by level of deprivation (using the Index of Multiple Deprivation), ethnicity, disability and long-term illness

Standards Framework - in detail

Guidance

- *How to self-assess* against the principles of good green infrastructure using **checklists**
- *How to apply* the Framework of GI Standards - **Process maps** for planners, developers, local communities, and greenspace managers);
34
- *How to design GI* – an evidence-based GI design guide (subject to resources)
- Other guidance document references (relating to 6 principles)
- Access to Green Infra Resource Library (<https://brillianto.co.uk/GIRL/>) – searchable database of 1,500 resources

Report to: Green Economy Panel

Date: 25 February 2021

Subject: **Flooding and Natural Flood Management Update**

Director(s): Alan Reiss, Director of Policy, Strategy and Communications

Author(s): Justin Wilson, Rosa Foster (EA) & Neville Muncaster (YW)

1.0 Purpose of this report

1.1 To summarise the work of partners to address flood risk issues and deliver Natural Flood Management (NFM).

2.0 Information

2.1 In collaboration with partners, the Combined Authority developed the Leeds City Region Flood Review following the 2015 Boxing Day flood events. The Review sits within Strategic Economic Framework and outlines the Combined Authority's approach to Flood Risk Management (FRM).

2.2 In collaboration with key stakeholders such as partner Councils, the Environment Agency (EA) and Yorkshire Water the Combined Authority has supported the delivery of ambitious and innovative FRM and Natural Flood Management (NFM) schemes.

2.3 The resilience of the City Region to flood risk is vitally important to tackling the climate emergency. Our communities need to be helped to become more resilient to current and future weather events, which will only increase as our climate continues to change. The work undertaken to improve FRM provides an important contribution to the City Region's work to address the Climate Emergency, supporting the commitment made by the City Region and all its council partners to become net zero carbon by 2038 at the latest with significant progress by 2030.

Current Capital Programme (up to March 2021)

2.4 The Combined Authority is investing £20 million from the Leeds City Region Growth Deal Three, alongside over £200 million of partner match, into flood alleviation schemes across the region. To date, over £19.833 million (£16.262

million spend) has been awarded to eight projects. Projects include Skipton, Mytholmroyd and Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme (FAS) 1, alongside the Wyke Beck Flood Alleviation Scheme, and NFM projects in the Colne, Calder and Upper Aire catchment areas. Approvals have recently been granted for Leeds FAS2 and Hebden Bridge. When complete, the programme will protect up to 1,385 businesses and at least 11,100 jobs from the risk of flood.

- 2.5 The NFM programme includes £1.7 million interventions led by the National Trust and Yorkshire Wildlife Trust in the Upper Aire and Colne/Calder catchments, designed to slow the flow of water and help protect 1,075 businesses and 2,936 homes. This innovative programme, which will be monitored by the University of Leeds, will support the City Region's ambition to become a trailblazer in NFM techniques.

Environment Agency

- 2.6 The Environment Agency are committed to working with partners on rising to the challenge of the nature and climate emergencies. This requires extensive collaboration and agile programme development, as we learn at pace whilst delivering at scale. Critically, this also involves building capacity in our partner organisations, supporting development and sharing learning, to make best use of everyone's skills and experience.
- 2.7 The Environment Agency are working with the Combined Authority and local authorities, as part of the West Yorkshire Flood Risk Partnership, to develop and deliver the current (2015-21) and next (2021-27) six year programmes of priority schemes. This includes the proposed £15m NFM programme included in the Combined Authority's bid to government. Further funding has been identified for Calderdale to scale up existing catchment wide schemes and for Leeds to deliver its ambitious FAS2 NFM programme.

An overview of progress to date in the Aire Catchment:

- 2.8 The Leeds FAS's NFM programme continues to scale up delivery of its ambitious programme of works to reduce flood risk to Leeds and is the largest NFM programme in the UK to date. By April 2021, the Environment Agency will have planted 50,000 trees and facilitated a further 300,000, all of which contribute to reducing flood risk. The Environment Agency has awarded a contract to the White Rose Forest, the City Region's community forest joint venture & of which all the West Yorkshire local authorities are members, to find, engage and support landowners to participate in the programme.
- 2.9 The programme has completed its series of pilot projects, having delivered sites in partnership with Bradford Council, Leeds University, the National Trust, Yorkshire Dales National Park and others.
- 2.10 The programme team are developing a number of digital geo-spatial tools on a single platform that can be used live on site, that will automate the process of site design and delivery. Functions include land bank data management, site concept design, pre-construction information, carbon calculation and monitoring. The platform will facilitate site visits with all the data relating to that

site in hand, working with the landowner to develop solutions in real-time, which will then be pass for further development through the platform, including developing planning applications, preparing contracts and estimating budgets.

- 2.11 Once these tools have been tried and tested on the River Aire catchment, the Environment Agency and Leeds City Council hope that they can be used in other areas as part of the response to the climate emergency.
- 2.12 The programme is now, subject to COVID-19 impacts, moving into the delivery phase. Developing the programme has included significant stakeholder engagement including; engaging landowners, working with local environmental organisations and community groups, sharing & learning best practices from across the world, developing research and monitoring proposals. In 2021 the Environment Agency will collaborate with partners to deliver works at:
- Broughton Hall (a 3,000 acre estate with significant NFM opportunity)
 - the Brownlee Triathlon Site in Leeds, which will showcase different methods and enable detailed academic research at Leeds University
 - East Riddlesden Hall estate with the National Trust
 - Various sites in Keighley, as part of the Town Council's 'People's Trees' initiative.

An overview of progress to date in the Upper Calder Catchment:

- 2.13 Following the 2015 Boxing Day floods, £1million (£800k of DEFRA booster) was made available for NFM across Calderdale to support the delivery of the Calderdale Flood Action Plan, managed by the NFM Group and led by Yorkshire Water as part of the Calderdale Flood Partnership. Nearly £900,000 of this is delivering practical work on the ground, £500,000 of which has been allocated to the Calderdale landowner grant scheme (co-produced with third sector and statutory organisations) and Calderdale Council are managing grants to landowners who introduce NFM measures on their land. As of October 2020, 12 out of 30 private landowner schemes had been completed.
- 2.14 The original £1 million allocated for NFM across Calderdale has enabled wider investment, through match funding and project startup costs, of more than £3.7 million in the development and delivery of several partnership projects, including:
- 1) **Calder Greening** – a European and Environment Agency funded programme led by Calderdale Council. This scheme includes nature-based solutions on Brearley Fields a floodplain, piloting sustainable approaches to invasive species and other nature based work on the mid-Calder.
 - 2) **Landscape for Water** – a National Trust and Yorkshire Water initiative, as part of the White Rose Forest - focused on large upland landowners, including large scale targets for woodland planting and peatland restoration.
 - 3) **Moors for the Future** – leading on strategy for moorland climate change resilience especially in relation to fire risk and baselining the current moorland status in Calderdale.
 - 4) **Community and volunteer led initiatives** including work led by Treesponsibility, Slow the Flow, Calder Future and the Yorkshire Wildlife

Trust. For example: promoting the use of SUDs in schools and across communities, a virtual campaign on controlling invasive species and developing pipelines of potential NFM projects.

- 5) **Brighouse FAS** - European funded work to incorporate nature based solutions to develop an integrated, multi benefit scheme.

Yorkshire Water

- 2.15 Yorkshire Water's most significant NFM project to date is the 'Growing Resilience' project, which was delivered in partnership with National Trust, Woodlands Trust and local community partners.
- 2.16 Over a three-year period, up to winter 2019/20, this project delivered some 151 hectares of new woodland at Gorpley Reservoir (upper Calder) and in the Wessenden Valley (upper Colne), the restoration of 85 hectares of peat bogs, heath and Molinia (moor grass) and the construction of over 650 'leaky dams'. In addition, over 3,000 metres of fascines (bundles of brushwood) were dug in to help stabilise stream banks and slopes, and new areas of land were fenced for sustainable grazing by sheep and cattle.
- 2.17 The overall project, which also included NFM activity on the National Trust's estate at Hardcastle Crag, had a total value of £2.6m, of which £1.3m came from the Combined Authority, with the remainder as either funds or in-kind support from a wide range of partners, including the Forestry Commission, Moors For The Future Partnership, Environment Agency, Woodland Trust, Yorkshire Water, National Trust Calderdale Council and community groups. The work will help to slow the flow of water along the Colne and Calder river catchments.
- 2.18 In addition, as part of its commitment to planting 1 million trees by 2028, YW has been working closely with its tenant farmers and other stakeholders to deliver further tree planting across its estate, where this is in keeping with the local landscape and farming activity. Including the trees planted at Gorpley, over 213,000 trees have been planted to date, some 200,000 of these are within West Yorkshire.

Future Funding (2021/22-2026/27)

- 2.19 Partners have identified £240m of flood risk management investment across West Yorkshire over the period 2021/22-2026/27 covering 125 projects of varying degrees of scale & complexity. The Environment Agency have an indicative allocation of £146m from DEFRA against the 125 projects, leaving £94m to be found from other sources.

Combined Authority

- 2.20 Building on the success of the Growth Deal Three funded programme, the Combined Authority has worked with partners to develop a programme of priority schemes for the 6-year programme for 2021/22-2026/27 delivery. The programme requires £120m of additional funding from government, including:

- £103.9m to unlock local contributions and private funding to deliver 28 FRM schemes with a total capital value of £176.4m.
 - £15m Natural Flood Management programme to deliver the Leeds and Upper Calder schemes and support a £8.3m pipeline of other projects.
- 2.21 The Combined Authority is engaging with government departments to address this funding gap to enable the programme to be delivered.
- 2.23 The Combined Authority is developing its approach to operating the Single Investment Fund (SIF) established under the devolution deal that will be applied across all the Authority's pipelines of schemes.

Yorkshire Water

- 2.24 Following the success of the 'Growing Resilience' project, the Yorkshire Water and National Trust 'Common Cause' partnership is now planning a further significant landscape scale programme of NFM activity across the upper Calder and Colne valleys – the 'Landscapes for Water' project. Following initial consultation with tenants and other local stakeholders, and preliminary design work, this has identified the potential opportunity for a further 581 hectare woodland creation on National Trust and Yorkshire Water land from Holmbridge, through the Marsden Estate and north as far as Hebden Bridge.
- 2.25 Further significant NFM activity is planned in this same area. An application for development funding for the woodland component of this was made to the White Rose Forest in late 2020, under the Community Forests Nature for Climate programme. If successful, then it is hoped that woodland planting will commence in late 2021. The partnership is also exploring other sources of funding to deliver other parts of the project including NFM. This could include aligning with the Combined Authority's proposed City Region NFM programme which is currently seeking Government support in order for it to proceed.
- 2.26 As with 'Growing Resilience', 'Landscapes for Water' has a strong emphasis on partnership funding and collaboration, with notable support from the Woodlands Trust, White Rose Forest and Calderdale and Kirklees Councils, as well as Yorkshire Water and National Trust.
- 2.27 Yorkshire Water will also continue to deliver other projects across its estate as part of the 1 million trees commitment, and also through its Asset Management Plan (AMP) 7 regulatory programme for upland catchment restoration (blanket bog & peat).
- 2.28 Alongside NFM activity, Yorkshire Water continues to work collaboratively with the EA and Local Authorities across West Yorkshire on other measures that will reduce flood risk to our communities. Of particular note is the partnership work with EA on schemes in Calderdale, including Hebden Bridge and Brighouse, and also close working with Leeds City Council on a SuDS project to reduce flood risk in Pudsey.

3.0 Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 Climate change drives extreme weather events such as storms and prolonged periods of wet weather which cause floods. The programmes of work outlined in this paper seek to adapt our communities so that they become more resilient to future flood events.
- 3.2 Delivery of Natural Flood Management also supports wider adaptation and mitigation measures by supporting tree planting, peat restoration and wider green infrastructure activities. These measures offer a mix of benefits including carbon sequestration, biodiversity enhancements and urban cooling.

4.0 Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1 Climate change drives adverse weather events such as floods and heatwaves, both of which significantly affect people's health. Climate change risks are likely to worsen health inequalities.
- 4.2 The flood risk management work by partners recognises the importance of the health and wellbeing benefits provided by enhanced flood protection. This is particularly important when considering NFM measures, which can offer wider health benefits when integrated with green infrastructure.
- 4.3 The flood pipeline developed with partners will include stages of community engagement and co-development of schemes as they develop.
- 4.4 NFM projects present an excellent opportunity to collaborate across public, private and third sector. As delivery increases and COVID-19 restrictions reduce, there is scope for more focus on where volunteers come from and how these projects can develop skills and experience in an emerging sector. For example, the NFM Upper Aire project will support local volunteers, corporate volunteer days and trainees through 78 practical volunteering days (giving a total of 562 individual volunteer days in total).

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 Many of the FRM schemes in the Environment Agency's pipeline of schemes have significant funding gaps. The Combined Authority is working with partners to engage with government to address this issue.

6.0 Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are no implications associated with this paper.

7.0 Staffing Implications

- 7.1 Capacity to deliver this work programme is constrained. The Combined Authority and partners are likely to have the resources to deliver but timescales can often become pressured e.g. after a major flooding event with resource being directed to crisis management.

8.0 External Consultees

8.1 The work outlined in this update has used an extensive partnership approach. This includes industry, public sector, business and academia.

9.0 Recommendations

9.1 The Panel to note the work undertaken in relation to Flood Risk Management activities.

10.0 Background Documents

10.1 None.

11.0 Appendices

11.1 None.

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Report to: Green Economy Panel

Date: 25 February 2021

Subject: **Tackling the Climate Emergency - Major Projects Update**

Director(s): Alan Reiss, Director of Policy, Strategy and Communications

Author(s): Ambrose White, Policy Officer

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To give an update on the progress against the Green Economy Panel's major projects and programmes, all of which form part of the City Region's approach to tackling the Climate Emergency.

2. Information

- 2.1 The officers, consultants, contractors, and suppliers working across the projects continue to adapt to new ways of working. The impacts of Covid-19 on our programmes and projects and a range of risks and mitigation actions are outlined below as part of project updates.

Operational programmes

Energy Accelerator (including District Heat Network (DHN) Programme)

- 2.2 The Energy Accelerator is a key initiative under priority three of the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP). It is a new innovative programme involving a team of expert advisors that are supporting the development of low carbon projects. The Accelerator offers free support to the commercial and public sector in the following areas:
- Energy efficiency and renewable energy (new and retrofitted)
 - District heat networks
 - Street lighting
- 2.3 The Accelerator is entering the last 6 months of operation and while COVID-19 and EU Exit have impacted on the numbers of projects progressing through the programme, it is on track to achieve major contractual obligations set by the European Investment Bank (EIB), funders of the programme. 13 low carbon

projects are receiving support at various stages of the development.

- 2.4 Out of 13 projects that are in various stages of progress through the Accelerator, 3 have reached the point of delivery and successfully progressed to the investment stage. The project is current rated Amber (see 2.18).

Better Homes Yorkshire

- 2.5 Local authority partners are delivering energy efficiency upgrades to homes in the region under a range of schemes through the Better Homes Yorkshire (BHY) partnership. Under the Local Authority Development fund (LAD) of the Government's Green Homes Grant, West Yorkshire Councils, Barnsley, Harrogate, and York have made funding bids to the value of £12 million. Under LAD Phase 2, a further £16.1 million has been allocated to West Yorkshire subject to approval from the Energy Hub, to be delivered in 2021.
- 2.6 An implementation plan for the Scaling up Better Homes Yorkshire project, is being written to identify the resources needed to deliver the 'building blocks' identified at the November 2020 Panel meeting. This will be developed with partners and presented at a future meeting.

Resource Efficient Business programme (RE-Biz)

- 2.7 RE-Biz is a successor programme to the Resource Efficiency Fund, with the aim of increasing energy efficiency and environmental resource efficiency (ERE) in SMEs in West and North Yorkshire through:
- Providing advice and support to deliver best practice, including over 170 grants to support SMEs to implement tailored action plans.
 - Investment in ERE and low carbon technologies.
 - A Circular Economy (CE) pilot to explore business model innovation to support more resource efficient business.
- 2.8 The project continues to be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, with recovery challenges for many businesses impacting priorities, and limited marketing opportunities and reduced capacity in the team of SME Growth Managers, who provide a key referral route into the project, have suppressed client engagement, particularly with businesses in North Yorkshire.
- 2.9 Having briefly resumed, site visits have again been put on hold, impacting progress as Resource Efficiency Managers are unable to carry out the necessary diagnostics that underpin the support and grants offered. Capacity is also likely to be affected by difficulties recruiting to a vacant Resource Efficiency Manager role (one of three).
- 2.10 Despite these issues, the Resource Efficiency Managers continue to reach out to businesses resulting in 210 client contacts. 85 assessments have been commissioned and 43 completed individual business assists achieved, ten of which have resulted in grant payments. The annual carbon savings associated

with the completed grant projects so far is 88 tonnes, with a total pipeline exceeding 550 tonnes.

- 2.11 On the CE side of the programme, 11 businesses have received initial diagnostic reports and three have completed a further three days introductory support. The first client receiving in-depth CE support completed in December.
- 2.12 To help ensure the project regains traction, a marketing strategy and rollout timeline has been developed, including the use of wider regional business support networks and promotion through paid advertising and social media platforms. A telemarketing campaign will commence towards the end of the third lockdown period, and the Resource Efficiency Managers have developed individual action plans to increase engagement.
- 2.13 The project is currently rated as Amber (see 2.18).

North East, Yorkshire and Humber Energy Hub

- 2.14 The Leeds City Region is a member of the North East, Yorkshire and Humber Energy Hub, whose main aims are to:
- Identify and prioritise local energy projects
 - Undertake the initial stages of development for priority projects
 - Take a collaborative and coordinated approach across multiple LEP areas
- 2.15 The Energy Hub has agreed to take a role in the governance of the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery funds to deliver energy efficiency in fuel poor homes across the North. It has taken administrative and programme management responsibility for £51.95 million allocated for local authorities for delivery by December 2021.

Strategic Programmes

Energy Strategy and Delivery Plan (ESDP)

- 2.16 In 2018 the Leeds City Region adopted the ESDP. In 2019 it declared a climate emergency and strengthened its target to be net zero carbon by 2038, with significant progress by 2030. Within the ESDP, twenty projects are underway or completed. The remaining 19 projects are pending the results of the Emission Reduction Pathways work (see agenda item 6 for a full update).

Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Strategy and Delivery Plan

- 2.17 As part of the new Green Infrastructure Standards Trial project, a review is underway of the GBI Strategy and Delivery Plan, to carry out a self-assessment against the national Principles for Good Green Infrastructure. Details of the Trial are provided in agenda item 8.

COVID-19

- 2.18 In light of COVID-19 a high-level delivery risk assessment has been carried on the major operational schemes and the Emission Reduction Pathways work. All schemes are being regularly monitored for delivery impacts.

Scheme	Description	RAG
Emission Reduction Pathways	Task 2 and 3 were delayed due to COVID-19 but revised plans are in place to engage stakeholders and the public.	On track after initial delays
ESDP and GBISDP	This is to be refreshed in 2021 – potentially to be combined into a single Tackling the Climate Emergency Plan	On track after initial delays
Energy Accelerator	Project Sponsors have indicated the risk of delays due to restrictions on site visits. At the same time, potential Sponsors are exhibiting caution on committing budget to capital investments.	Delayed
RE-BIZ	Access to sites is still restricted although auditors have recommenced visits from 1 June where allowed by lockdown rules.	Delayed
Flood Alleviation for Growth Programme	Projects delivering engineered solutions are largely on track, however natural flood management projects are heavily reliant on volunteers, and delivery is being impacted by COVID-19 restrictions.	Delayed

Other Committees / Panel updates

- 2.19 Updates on the Carbon Impact Assessment work have been provided to the Combined Authority at its meeting on 10 December¹. The Transport Committee were also provided an update on 15 January.

Combined Authority corporate approach to tackling the climate emergency

- 2.20 In addition to the city-regional work, the Combined Authority approved a new corporate approach to embedding clean growth and tackling the climate emergency in October 2019. An update on progress is due to be provided to the Combined Authority in April 2021.
- 2.21 The Combined Authority continues to work on developing a strengthened, robust, quantifiable methodology to inform how it takes the Climate Emergency into account in its decision making. A detailed update is provided under agenda item 7.

¹ See report at <https://westyorkshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&MId=965>

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 All the projects reported on in this report are all part of the Combined Authority's approach to tackling the climate emergency and are focussed on reducing carbon emissions in the region across a range of sectors.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1 A number of projects target domestic energy efficiency, such as the Better Homes Yorkshire and the Energy Hub, which will help address fuel poverty. The Energy Hub is overseeing the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery funds which are focussed on addressing energy efficiency in fuel poor homes across the North.
- 4.2 The REBiz project requires large grant recipients to sign up to at least one of the commitments included in our Inclusive Growth Commitments Framework, in common with all the Combined Authority's business support programmes.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no implications associated with this paper.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are no implications associated with this paper.

7. Staffing Implications

- 7.1 There are no implications associated with this paper.

8. External Consultees

- 8.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1 That the Panel note the progress against the major projects and programmes helping to tackle the Climate Emergency.

10. Background Documents

- 10.1 None.

11. Appendices

- 11.1 None.