

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CLIMATE, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY, 22 MARCH 2022 AT**

Present:

Councillor Andrew Cooper	Kirklees Council
Councillor Sarah Ferriby	Bradford Council
Adrian Gill (Advisory Representative)	Environment Agency
Mark Roberts (Deputy Chair)	Beer Hawk Ltd
Leah Stuart	Civic Engineers
Melanie Taylor (Advisory Representative)	Northern Gas Networks
Councillor Neil Walshaw	Leeds City Council

In attendance:

Sophie Collins	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Alison Gillespie	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Peter Glover	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Liz Hunter	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Dominic Martin	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Mathew Page	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Ian Parr	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Alan Reiss	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Justin Wilson	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

22. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence received from Councillor Tim Swift, Councillor Jack Hemingway, Councillor Scott Patient, Councillor Andrew Waller, Jim Cardwell, Gaynor Craigie, William Firth, Richard Goodfellow, Natasha Luther-Jones, Ben Tongue.

The meeting was chaired by the deputy chair Mark Roberts.

23. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

24. Exempt information possible exclusion of the press and public

There was no exempt information requiring the exclusion of the press and public.

25. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2021

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2021 be approved.

26. Notes of the informal consultative meeting held on 11 January 2021

That the notes of the informal meeting held on 11 January 2022 be noted.

27. Chair's Update

The Deputy Chair gave an update to members and said that the agreed plan for the Committee was approved by the Combined Authority at the October meeting. At the Climate, Energy and Environment Committee meeting in January the Forward Agenda was discussed which has shaped the meeting agenda today. At the February Combined Authority meeting we were told of an indicative announcement of £40 million gainshare funds which is revenue for this plan and an excellent start, and we are looking forward to discussing further.

There is no specific allocated funding for climate policies as it is crosscutting everything and gives the flexibility to start implementing the plan. The theme today is 'are we focussing on the right things first, and how can we accelerate our plans to reach delivery more quickly.

The indicatively allocated £40 million over the next few years. This will help the delivery now and help us build up lists of future schemes for future use of the gainshare and other funding. Capital borrowing is still part of the mix once we have a set of deliverable schemes.

The Chair also wanted to note that members of the Committee have received some information from Friends of the Earth and other organisations and welcomed the offers of information and support from private groups saying that we all had to work together in partnership to achieve our goal.

28. West Yorkshire Climate and Environment Plan - Prioritisation

The Committee was provided with a report and presentation to update on the West Yorkshire Climate and Environment Plan and was asked for views on the work to prioritise delivery of the Plan's proposals based on the indicative allocation of £40m Gainshare funding identified to deliver against Investment Priority 4: Tackling the Climate Emergency and Environmental Sustainability.

Following the presentation, the Committee was asked to discuss and comment on what should we do first with the £40 million of Gainshare funding, the approach for prioritisation, the emerging outcomes and also to ask do we believe these are the right things and what is missing.

Members agreed the following proposals would be prioritised for Gainshare funding and advised on their relative importance to assist with sequencing which will be undertaken in three waves:

- **Wave 1**

- Better Homes Hub
- Solar PV and storage
- Flood risk and drainage
- Business sustainability, energy efficiency, renewables and circular economy
- Better neighbourhoods
- Green skills and training
- Communications, engagement and marketing campaigns
- **Waves 2/3**
 - Local area energy planning and delivery
 - Community energy
 - Heat decarbonisation
 - Shared mobility
 - Green infrastructure and access for health and regenerative nature recovery

Members discussed at length and comments and feedback have been noted.

In summary, the Committee agreed to focus on retrofitting houses.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That members discussed the proposed prioritisation approach and emerging outcomes and that the views of the Committee be noted.

29. Transport Decarbonisation

The Committee considered an update on selected transport carbonisation activity and was asked to note the contents of the report.

The Combined Authority declared a climate emergency and committed to strengthen the West Yorkshire emission reduction target in June 2019. The Combined Authority's target is 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.

At the October and January meetings members discussed that Transport is a significant component of our CO2 emissions, and the Climate, Energy and Environment Committee wanted to have sufficient oversight of the approach being taken to decarbonise transport.

The presentation to the Committee summarised what the plan is doing in terms of transport. There are outstanding funding bids, if successful this would support 110-120 buses across the five districts. There is also funding identified within the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement and the Transport Cities Fund

The Rail Strategy is looking at how the rail fleet can be decarbonised (including the potential role of hydrogen). In terms of local cycling and walking plans this is a mix of infrastructure and other measures to encourage people to walk and cycle more. Also summarised in the presentation was Transport for North's (TfN) plans for its decarbonisation strategy. The next steps will be to scale up activity and make sure that resource meets the challenge identified and can deliver what is needed.

Members discussed and provided comments which have been noted.

Resolved: That the contents of the report be noted.

30. Carbon Impact Assessment,

The Committee considered a report and verbal presentation to provide an update on the progress on the carbon impact assessment project.

To develop programmes and schemes that will support the journey towards becoming a net zero carbon economy by 2038, it was identified that an improved methodology to assess the carbon impact of schemes is required, given the shortfalls in current methodologies. The aims of the carbon impact assessment project were therefore to:

- Develop methodologies for assessing the carbon impact of proposals at the different stages of the assurance process
- Incorporate these methodologies onto the assurance process so that decision makers are informed about the carbon impact of proposals.
- Use these methodologies to carry out an assessment of the carbon impact of a selection of existing projects which are currently going through the assurance process

It was noted how important this work is. If we can't measure, we cannot be certain we are doing the right things. As this is complicated, a follow up meeting was offered to members to ask specific questions, or to go through the methodologies.

The presentation focussed on the aim of the project to develop methodologies for developing the carbon impact of schemes as they progress through the assurance process. These methodologies have been incorporated into the process. As a third strand schemes currently going through the assurance process are also being assessed

The paper focussed on the first two parts of that – these methodologies and incorporating them. It described the methodologies (Appendices) and described the work being undertaken now to incorporate those. It provided technical guidance for promoters to ensure they are assisted; also, some more prescriptive guidance will be provided that bridges the gap between what's done at the moment and what would like to be done.

Assessment has also been carried out on a range of different schemes which are going through the assurance process currently. A lot has been learned from these and it has informed the development of the methodologies and the guidance.

Resolved: That the contents of the report be noted.

31. Green Skills and Jobs

The Committee considered a report and was asked to note the establishment of the West Yorkshire Green Jobs Taskforce in support of the delivery of the mayor's pledge to create 1,000 well paid, skilled green jobs, and asked to comment on the progress made so far.

In summary there is a need to accelerate the transition to greener skills and jobs. Only 2% of job postings in West Yorkshire in 2021 link to Green Skills.

Employers have been encouraged to pledge new roles that are well paid and skilled for young people. Employers pledge through the portal on the Combined Authority website and have follow up conversations to help them fill the roles. The task force may consider the further development of this gateway if it is found that employers would like more support in getting young people into those jobs.

Members discussed and their comments have been noted.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That members comments on the progress so far be noted.

32. Better Homes Hub

The Committee considered a report to update on the Better Homes Hub, a key workstream of the Climate and Environment Plan and was asked to note and approve the progress of the Better Homes Hub

The Combined Authority declared a climate emergency in June 2019 and set a net zero ambition by 2038. The modelling undertaken to understand how to achieve this showed how 1.8MTCO₂ per year can be removed from the CO₂ emissions of the region's homes by 2030. To help support the reduction of carbon required in housing stock the Scaling Up Better Homes report was produced in October 2020.

A verbal update was provided. At the last committee meeting approval was given to 1300 homes to be retrofit but is a fraction of the amount of housing stock in the region. The paper touched on some of the structural issues affecting that scaling up activity. Research shows some of the barriers – the funding skills shortage and the lack of trusted information and advice.

The following principles were discussed. First is a trusted offer to ensure the retrofit's done to a high standard. Second is building the market. Third is that it's fit for purpose. Fourth is that there's ways of paying for it that makes it affordable and availability of finance and delivery of an effective supply chain, including skills and training that's so important. The better homes hub will focus on these themes and will put in place a programme of delivery and ensure we can coordinate and deliver it together, across each district. It is also planned to develop a one-stop shop for residents to raise awareness and provide trusted information and advice.

Since the last Climate, Energy and Environment Committee meeting a further £5 million has been secured bringing the estimated total investment in retrofit programmes across the next financial year to £22-23 million, of which the £5 million is matched by contributions from Leeds (£9.6 million) and other sources.

The Committee was also provided with a presentation from Martyn Broadest from Connect Housing – West Yorkshire Housing Association a founding member of the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership.

Members discussed the presentation and thanked Martyn.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That the progress of the Better Homes Hub be approved.

33. Climate and Environment Monitoring Indicators

The Committee considered a report and verbal update to set out the plans for future monitoring indicators and reporting arrangements to the Committee and was asked to review the proposed indicators with a view to approving them and / or amending them or suggesting additional indicators.

The paper set out proposals for monitoring arrangements and indicators and approval was sought for the approach. The approach proposed was agreed at the December Combined Authority meeting in that there is a regular item on the agenda around these monitoring indicators. Also, the indicator relating to the green economy/employment, is being looked at as part of the green jobs task force programme.

The Committee discussed and was asked to review the proposed indicators with a view to approving and provided comments which have been noted.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That the views and suggestions of the Committee with a view to approving the proposed indicators be noted.

34. Climate Adaption and Resilience

Adrian Gill of the Environment Agency gave a presentation to the Committee and updated on the Environment Agency's response to the Climate Emergency.

The presentation consisted of three key themes, Enabling UK Net Zero, Preparing for Climate Impacts, and being seen to be an exemplar/walking the walk

Adrian was thanked for his presentation.