

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
CLIMATE, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE  
HELD ON TUESDAY, 21 MARCH 2023 AT MEETING ROOM 1  
WELLINGTON HOUSE, WELLINGTON STREET, LEEDS LS1 1DE**

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**Present:**

Councillor Tim Swift MBE (Chair)	Calderdale Council
Mark Roberts (Deputy Chair)	Private Sector (LEP Board)
Councillor Sarah Ferriby	Bradford Council
Councillor Scott Patient	Calderdale Council
Councillor Andrew Cooper	Kirklees Council
Councillor Katie Dye	Leeds City Council
Councillor Jack Hemingway	Wakefield Council
John Clark	Private Sector Representative
William Firth	Private Sector Representative
Richard Goodfellow	Private Sector Representative
Gideon Richards	Private Sector Representative
Leah Stuart	Private Sector Representative
Martyn Broadest	Advisory Representative (West Yorkshire Housing Partnership)
Jim Cardwell	Advisory Representative (Northern Powergrid)
Heather Sheffield	Advisory Representative (Northern Gas Networks)

**In attendance:**

Liz Hunter (Director)	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Sophie Collins (Officer)	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Noel Collings (Officer)	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Tamsin Constable (Officer)	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Owen Gilroy (Officer)	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Myles Larrington (Officer)	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Janette Woodcock (Officer)	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Paula Widdowson (City of York Council), private sector representative, Ben Tongue and advisory representative, Gregg Dodd (Northern Gas Networks).

**2. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

Richard Goodfellow declared an interest in Item 10, he advised the committee that he worked with Octopus Energy.

### **3. Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public**

There were no agenda items which required the exclusion of the public and press.

### **4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 January 2023**

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Climate, Energy and Environment Committee held on 10 January 2023 be approved.

### **5. Chair's Opening Remarks**

The Chair opened the meeting by observing that, since the last meeting in January, the committee had been notified of a successful funding bid from North East and Yorkshire Net Zero Hub of £100,000 to support the production of a hydrogen use case for West Yorkshire. This work would assist in delivering a clear policy position for future hydrogen developments in West Yorkshire.

The Chair also thanked Simon Pringle, as his term of office as a member of the Climate, Energy and Environment Committee and the LEP Board was coming to an end. The Chair acknowledged his contribution to the committee and its predecessor the Green Economy Panel and wished him all the best in the future.

### **6. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework**

The Committee considered a report about a monitoring and evaluation framework that was in development.

The Chair introduced the item, officers then presented the report to members and explained that the framework provided a flexible way for the Combined Authority to monitor progress towards the commitments in the Climate and Environment Plan. This framework sought to enhance the Combined Authority's ability to monitor the impact that projects and programmes had on the current climate ambitions, which included:

- A monitoring and evaluation framework which provided a detailed insight into how the impact of these policies would be understood.
- A bank of indicators and appropriate monitoring and evaluation approaches would be identified to ensure that the impact of actions could demonstrate collective impact against the Combined Authority's climate emergency ambitions.
- The framework's dashboard would demonstrate the factual, counterfactual, and achieved pathways.
- Updates on the outputs derived from the framework would be provided to future meetings of the Committee alongside regular programme development and delivery updates, as appropriate.

Members made the following observations:

- They expressed a desire to see the actual framework to better understand the modelling and assumptions within it. Officers indicated that a copy of the framework would be shared with members.
- Comment was made that the equality and diversity implications should capture the fact that there are some groups who are significant carbon emitters. The view was taken that these groups should not be treated equally and that carbon reduction plans should emphasise measures which are at the expense of such groups.
- Members expressed the opinion that this was not the collective view of the committee as others wished to see as many stakeholders involved in this process as possible and commented that different groups should all be engaged with equally.

**Resolved:** That the contents of the report and feedback provided from members on the detail presented to support the shaping of the monitoring and evaluation framework be noted.

## 7. Project Approvals

The Committee considered a report which summarised proposals for the progression of and funding for projects under Investment Priority 4 (Tackling the Climate Emergency and Environmental Sustainability Investment within the West Yorkshire Investment Strategy (WYIS)), that had been considered at stages 1, 2 and 3 of the Combined Authority's assurance process.

It was noted that the Climate, Energy and Environment Committee had been authorised as a delegated decision-making authority at the Combined Authority meeting held on 24 June 2021.

### The Better Neighbourhoods Programme

The Better Neighbourhoods programme forms part of the wider Climate and Environment Plan (CEP) Wave 1 portfolio. The programme would work with the five West Yorkshire local authority partners, to provide grants of £5,000 to £50,000, to local communities, with a particular focus on those communities considered disadvantaged, to fund projects that would support the transition to net zero carbon.

Members discussed the project and made the following observations:

- It was observed that no benefit cost ratio was outlined in the submitted report. Members enquired how the plan would demonstrate that this funding delivered value for money (VfM) when the projects were examined at the end. Officers indicated that VfM will involve aggregating what could be a really diverse set of outputs and that might hide some pockets of really low or really high VfM. VfM will be assessed as part of the programme evaluation, planned to be completed by March 2025. Officers also said that members would be updated as this

- project progressed.
- It was indicated that benchmarking was vital to ensure healthy competition between local authorities was positive and that unified communication between these partners and the Combined Authority was delivered. Officers indicated that processes were in place to ensure that this would be the case.
  - Members expressed a desire that the application process remained as straightforward as possible to ensure that funding was targeted at the groups who required it most and to ensure these projects benefitted as many people within West Yorkshire as possible.
  - It was noted that the report interchangeably used the phrases CO<sub>2</sub> and CO<sub>2</sub>e and, in future, it should be made clear which term was being applied and in what context.
  - Members expressed a desire that more external organisations should be involved with these projects.

**Resolved:** The Climate, Energy and Environment Committee, subject to the conditions set by the Programme Appraisal Team, approved the following.

- i. That the Better Neighbourhoods programme proceeded through to decision point 2 (strategic outline case) and decision point 4 (full business case) and that work commence on activity 5 (delivery).
- ii. Approval to the Combined Authority's contribution of £2,060,000. The total scheme value is £2,060,000.
- iii. That the Combined Authority enter into a Funding Agreement with each of the West Yorkshire local authorities for expenditure up to the amounts indicated in the submitted report, which was £397,324 for Bradford, £155,475 for Calderdale, £310,950 for Kirklees, £604,624 for Leeds and £259,125 for Wakefield.
- iv. That future approvals be made in accordance with the assurance pathway and approval route outlined in the submitted report. This would be subject to the scheme remaining within the tolerances outlined in the report.

### **The Combined Authority Assets Solar Project – Bus Stations**

The Combined Authority's Assets Solar Project – Bus Stations formed part of the wider Climate and Environment Plan (CEP) Wave 1 portfolio. The scheme would deliver 233 Kilowatt Peak (kWp) of solar panels to seven West Yorkshire bus stations, located in Batley, Bradford (Interchange), Brighouse, Castleford, Cleckheaton, Keighley and Ossett. The scheme's objectives aimed to reduce carbon emissions by a gross figure of 393 tonnes over a 25- year period and reduce energy consumption from the national grid, reducing energy costs by £1,700,000, based on current energy prices, over the same time period.

Members discussed the project and made the following observations.

- It was questioned whether implementing solar panels at bus stations represented the most optimal use of the funding available, while acknowledging the beneficial visual impact this policy would have on the public. Officers confirmed that it was good practice to utilise the assets available to the Combined Authority, as the savings yielded could be directly spent in ways beneficial to the people of West Yorkshire.
- Members enquired if energy efficiency was being considered as part of the proposals. Officers responded that they were examining the possibility of savings being made on public holidays and less travel intensive days. It was indicated that some bus stations could generate more power than they consume if additional solar panels were installed where the appropriate load bearing capacity was available.
- A query was made about how the initiative would impact Wakefield Bus Station which was owned by the bus operator, Arriva. Similar enquires were made about Huddersfield Bus Station and officers indicated that they would investigate and provide feedback in due course.
- Members expressed a desire for the project to have strong ambitions given the Combined Authority's scale and influence in relation to partner councils.
- It was questioned whether this project could be delivered in the timescales provided in view of the ongoing impact of price inflation. Officers indicated that, due to extensive discussions with the project consultants, they had strong confidence the project would be completed within the expected timeframe. It was noted that the solar panels would also be subject to a 25 year warranty in case future maintenance was required.
- Members enquired whether rain harvesting measures had been considered which could be useful in relation to roof installation. Officers reported that rain harvesting would definitely be suggested for other schemes.

**Resolved:** The Climate, Energy and Environment Committee, subject to the conditions set by the Programme Appraisal Team, approved that:

- i. That the Combined Authority Assets Solar Project – Bus Stations scheme proceed through to decision point 2 to 4 (business justification) and that work commence on activity 5 (delivery)
- ii. Approval to the Combined Authority's contribution of £366,310. The total scheme value is £476,203.

## 8. Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The Committee considered an update report on the forthcoming Local Nature Recovery Strategy and sought feedback from members. The report outlined the following.

- The Environment Act 2021 enacted a commitment to a Nature Recovery Network made in the Government's 2018 25 year Environment Plan to create a national network of nature-rich places.

- Key to this was the Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRSs) – a new mandatory system of spatial strategies for nature. This initiative would map where local habitat improvement and restoration could enhance ecological networks on the ground, establish priorities and map proposals for specific actions to drive nature’s recovery.
- This would also identify opportunities for wider environmental benefits. LNRSs would have no status in planning or delivery but would instead be ‘opportunity maps’ that would help identify what action would be most likely to help nature to recover and deliver wider environment benefits in specific places.

Members made the following observations.

- It was observed that it would be better if the strategy had an enhanced status in design and delivery, as members took the view that developments should be linked with the design strategy.
- It was vital that the strategy made use of local knowledge and that the main focus was on long-term investments in relation to project management. Local communities should also be widely consulted before the strategy was implemented.
- Further clarification was sought on how the expert panel would interact with the proposed steering group.

**Resolved:**

- i. That the Committee noted the work done to prepare for the launch of the LNRS.
- ii. That the Committee advised on the governance proposal and its own role.
- iii. That the Committee suggested experts and stakeholders from their own areas of expertise.
- iv. That the Committee was asked whether they wished to suggest a representative to join the LNRS ‘Expert Panel’ and members decided to consult further before making any nominations.

**9. Flooding Update**

Members of the Committee considered an update report on the Combined Authority’s Flood Risk Management (FRM) Programme, which sought endorsement of the proposed programme prior to progression into the Combined Authority’s Assurance Process. The report outlined the following:

- In West Yorkshire approximately 39,000 residential properties and 13,000 commercial properties fell within a flood zone.
- The Combined Authority had declared a climate emergency and committed the region to be net zero carbon by 2038 at the latest, with significant progress by 2030.
- The West Yorkshire Climate and Environment Plan (CEP), which had

been approved by the Combined Authority in October 2021, was the Mayor and Combined Authority's response to tackling the climate emergency, protecting the environment and achieving a net zero West Yorkshire.

- The Committee on 19 July 2022 received an update on the Combined Authority's Capital Flood Infrastructure Programme. The Committee endorsed the programme prior to progression into the Combined Authority's assurance process. The programme comprised of 24 flood schemes with a total capital value of £245m and a funding gap of £51m, with over 3,700 residential properties and 2,700 business premises benefitting from enhanced protection.
- The Programme was granted approval to proceed through to Decision Point 1 (Strategic Assessment) of the Assurance Process by the Combined Authority at its Meeting on 2 February 2023, this included approval of £113,735 development costs to commence work on the development of individual business cases.
- Additional approvals by the Combined Authority in relation to the Programme included the principal that £10,000,000 of Combined Authority funding would be utilised as 'match funding' in order to engage and leverage funding from other funding sources and that work commenced on the development of individual business cases, which would seek approval through the assurance process.
- The Combined Authority would work with partners to refresh the Capital Flood Infrastructure Programme leading to a Strategic Outline Case later in the year.

Members expressed the importance of ensuring that flooding activities were linked with water companies to ensure that co-ordinated risk management was taking place. They also discussed the matter of households receiving retrofitting measures and suggested that efforts should be made to increase capacity in terms of advancing the pace of the roll outs.

**Resolved:**

- i. The Committee noted the work undertaken with partners to drive delivery of the Combined Authority's flood risk management programme.
- ii. The Committee considered the proposed methods of engagement with government to address the remaining funding gap in the programme.

**10. Better Homes Hub Update**

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the emerging programme of work for the Better Homes Hub. The report outlined the following.

- The Combined Authority declared a climate emergency in 2019 and had set an ambitious target to be net zero carbon by 2038. Officers had commissioned research to understand the different pathways and interventions that would enable this target to be reached.

- The research suggested that to meet net zero carbon 680,000 of West Yorkshire's homes would need to be upgraded to a good level of thermal efficiency (EPC C level or higher) with a similar number requiring some form of low carbon heating system eg air source heat pump to be installed.
- The results of this research underpinned the Combined Authority's Climate and Environment Plan (CEP). A key area of delivery reflecting the scale of the challenge in decarbonising the regions homes related to the Better Homes Hub (BHH). This was an umbrella programme which encompasses all activity on domestic energy efficiency, both on existing properties and new builds.
- The submitted report followed on from the update provided to the Committee at their last meeting. Whilst that report focussed on summarising the retrofit activity that had taken place in the region to date and provided a high-level overview of the BHH, the submitted report provided more detail on the activities that would be progressed through the programme over the next three years and beyond.

Members made the following observations.

- It was observed that much of the research on which the report was based originated from 2020. As a significant amount of thought evolution had occurred in this area since that time, it was considered necessary to revisit some of the research to ensure that it was up to date.
- There was a collective desire from members to see the scheme move faster where possible. It was also noted that Energy Performance Certificates (ECPs) were not an optimal way to measure energy performance and that the Combined Authority should use more appropriate measures to evaluate the outcome of the scheme.
- It was pointed out that a new home standard was due to be published in the near future, alongside a consultation on ECPs which could have an impact on this and other proposed schemes.
- Members also expressed a desire to see more partnerships with the private sector, where this was possible, to expand the opportunity range of these schemes, especially where new potential innovations were concerned.

**Resolved:**

- i. That the Committee noted the contents of the submitted report and its associated appendix, including the intention to bring several funding approvals to the Committee's July 2023 meeting.
- ii. The Committee endorsed the overarching approach to the delivery of the programme and its vision and objectives.

**11. Pledge Delivery Update**

The Committee considered a report which provided an overview of selected activity to deliver against the Mayoral pledge to tackle the climate emergency.



Members were presented with the progress on the 8 delivery areas, including Net Zero Regional Accelerator, Resource Efficient Business, Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy, Zero Emission Buses, Local Transport Plan, Solar PV and Storage Programme, Hydrogen Strategy and Green Skills. Officers advised the Committee on how these programmes would continue to be developed.

Members made the following observations.

- Regional charging infrastructure should be further explored in the future as part of the carbon strategy, with a focus on where resources could be maximised.
- The levy funding that had been introduced was welcomed, but members observed that it should be mirrored strategically at district level where possible. Furthermore, the focus should not only be on domestic charging of electric cars, but also where councils were considering upgrading their fleet.

**Resolved:** That the Committee noted the contents of the report.

## 12. Monitoring Indicators

The Committee considered a report which set out the latest position on the State of the Region monitoring indicators relating to Climate and Environment. The report outlined that:

- The Committee had previously agreed seven core indicators which had been updated since the last meeting of the Committee on 10 January 2023. Members were presented with the latest data on the outline of these indicators in the submitted report.
- For building energy efficiency, the proportion of all Energy Performance Certificates (ECPs) for dwellings in West Yorkshire with a rating of C or higher had increased and was now 35%, a small increase on the 34% that had been recorded in the most recent State of the Region report.
- For households in fuel poverty, the proportion of households affected in West Yorkshire was projected to increase to 33% in April 2023. This assumed that the level of the Energy Price Guarantee increased to £3,000 in April, as was currently expected.

**Resolved:** That the Committee noted the headline analysis of the indicators.

## 13. Chair's Closing Remarks

The Chair closed the meeting with a note of thanks on behalf of the committee to Janette Woodcock, Governance Services Officer, who was shortly to retire after 4 years working with the Combined Authority. The Chair thanked Janette for her tireless work in supporting the committee over the years and wished her well in her forthcoming retirement.

## 14. Date of the Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Climate, Energy and Environment Committee was scheduled to be held on 11 July 2023. This was subject to the approval of the proposed Calendar of Meetings 2023-24 at the Combined Authority's Annual Meeting in June.