
Report to: Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership Board (LEP Board)

Date: 25 September 2019

Subject: **Green Economy Panel**

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1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To give an update on the Green Economy Panel's (GEP) major projects and programmes.

2 Information

Tackling the Climate Emergency: Energy Strategy and Delivery Plan

- 2.1 The Combined Authority approved the Leeds City Region Energy Strategy and Delivery Plan (ESDP) in December 2018. More recently, in line with most of the City Region's local authorities, the Combined Authority formally declared a climate emergency (27 June 2019) and, in consultation with partners, strengthened the city region's ambition to become net zero-carbon by 2038, with significant progress made by 2030. The strengthened regional target was launched at a Media Call on 10 July and also launched the Leeds City Region Climate Coalition which will act as a combined, powerful collective working together to create a net zero-carbon City Region.
- 2.2 As part of Combined Authority's planned communications on creating a net zero-carbon City Region, four sector-specific low-carbon workshops were run with stakeholders at the end of June / beginning of July. These workshops covered the power, buildings, industry, and transport sectors. Over 150 businesses and civic organisations attended the workshops.
- 2.3 Initial key findings from the workshops were:
- There is wide and strong support for the need to act on climate change.
 - Over 100 project ideas were developed across the power, buildings, industry, and transport sectors.
 - Some interested partners have come forward to help deliver some of the identified actions.

- The scale of the task ahead must not be underestimated with a 14.5 percent reduction in emissions required year-on-year in line with advice from the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change and emissions to half every five years to remain within a proposed carbon budget of 118 MtCO₂ between 2018 – 2100.
- Political leaders and senior officials need to understand the full scale and pace of what is now required and be prepared to commit the necessary resources.
- More information / intelligence / research is needed to ensure projects are developed and delivered.
- Consistent call for lobbying, especially around the need for central Government to provide policy certainty.
- Momentum must be maintained, and stakeholders must be regularly engaged.

Appendix 1 illustrates the current projects being delivered through the ESDP and the emerging high-level projects from the workshops above.

Next steps

- 2.4 There is a need to now build on these recent developments and keep momentum going to galvanise support and commence delivery against the ambitious regional target.
- 2.5 A summary of the work planned by the Combined Authority to assist the City Region meet its carbon targets. Including
- **Communications & Engagement with key stakeholders**
 - **Building a robust evidence base** including further work to understand how the City Region's net zero-carbon target can be met.
 - **Delivery of existing projects within the ESDP**, Energy Accelerator and Energy Hub and update of ESDP to reflect the outcomes (new actions) from the workshops above and commence development of a prioritised list of these actions to deliver with Leeds City Region Climate Coalition partners.
 - **Zero Emissions Transport Group:** This is a group with member from both the Transport Committee and Green Economy Panel. This group will meet on 30 September.
 - **Local Authorities Support:** Including the identification of joint opportunities to collaborate and work together in response to the climate emergency declarations.

West Yorkshire Combined Authority Corporate Approach to Clean Growth

- 2.6 In addition to this city-regional work, the Combined Authority has been developing its corporate approach to embedding clean growth, including reducing carbon emissions and tackling climate change. It will include a new clean growth policy and set of principles for all staff to use and a detailed action plan which outlines what the Combined Authority will do as an organisation to embed clean growth into its practices and decision-making

processes. This will be finalised by October 2019. One immediate quick win made is the strengthening of clean growth and carbon reduction considerations within all new schemes that come through the Combined Authority's Assurance Framework, and future Combined Authority papers.

Energy Accelerator

- 2.7 The Energy Accelerator (Accelerator) is a key initiative under priority three of the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and is 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 for energy efficiency and renewable energy (new and retrofitted), district heat networks, and street lighting. 13 projects are currently progressing through the Accelerator.

Better Homes Yorkshire

- 2.8 This is a City Region wide programme delivering energy efficiency and heating improvements across the City Region's homes. During 2018/19 1,566 homes received 1,645 measures against the target of 1,320 as the partners and provider were able to respond to a funding opportunity arising through the Energy Company Obligation. This brings the total number of homes improved through the programme to 4,670.
- 2.9 The final projects within the Growth Deal funded Tackling Fuel Poverty programme have now completed and the programme is now in evaluation and close down. In total 1,446¹ homes across the city region received measures.
- 2.10 Several councils have secured funding through local bids to National Grid's Warm Homes Fund. This includes an area based scheme in Swarcliffe, Leeds to connect the estate to the gas main and install efficient heating systems, and also area wide schemes within Barnsley, Calderdale and the four North Yorkshire councils.

Resource Efficiency Fund

- 2.11 The Resource Efficiency Fund (REF) offers free expert advice and business support to small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) to help them to implement energy and water efficiency and waste reduction measures.
- 2.12 The fund continues to deliver support across the Region. Table 1 summarises the most up to date key progress indicators for the Resource Efficiency Fund.

Table 1: Progress as at 31 July 2019			
	Last Update (31/05/19)	Current	Programme Target (31/10/19)

¹ This number is included within the total Better Homes figures noted in 2.3.

Total Business Contacts	642	672	501
Assessments Commissioned	342	350	321
Businesses Supported	240	252	303
Businesses receiving non-financial support	208	217	200
Businesses receiving information, diagnostic and brokerage support	83	83	75
Grants Completed	123	133	133

REF2

- 2.13 The Combined Authority is currently seeking support from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) to continue delivery of the REF across the Leeds City Region and four new areas of North Yorkshire – Hambleton, Richmondshire, Ryedale, and Scarborough.
- 2.14 The Combined Authority is now awaiting a decision from the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government on the outcome of its full application for REF2.
- 2.15 REF2 builds on and enhances the current Resource Efficiency Fund delivered by the Combined Authority. This project will increase energy efficiency and environmental resource efficiency (ERE), covering energy, energy efficiency water and waste, in SMEs through:
- Providing advice and support to deliver best practice in ERE in SMEs
 - Over 170 Grants (including small grants <£8000 and new large grants £8000 – £40,000) to support SMEs to implement tailored action plans
 - Investment in ERE and low carbon technologies.
 - Piloting a range of bespoke circular economy ²support packages.

District Heat Network (DHN) Programme

- 2.16 The Programme continues to support the development of a number of active heat network projects in the City Region.

Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Strategy and Delivery Plan GBISDP

- 2.17 The Strategy and Delivery Plan identified 12 key projects and actions. A full progress update will be presented as part of the major projects update at the next Panel meeting.

² A circular economy is an alternative to a traditional linear economy (make, use, dispose) in which we keep resources in use for as long as possible, extract the maximum value from them whilst in use, then recover and regenerate products and materials at the end of each service life. In practical terms this means reducing use of finite virgin materials, designing products to last longer.

- 2.18 A key dependency of the GBISDP is the recruitment of a City Regional GBI Delivery Officer. The role would act as the central coordination point for the 12 key projects and actions identified.
- 2.19 It is proposed that the post will be funded through contributions from partner organisations. Members of the Local Nature Partnership are being asked to provide an indication of whether they would be open to providing a contribution to the funding of the post.

North East, Yorkshire and Humber Energy Hub projects

- 2.20 There are a number of projects identified in the ESDP which are suitable for development through the Hub³.
- 2.21 Two project proposals⁴ have so far been developed. They are:
- Leeds City Region Transport Emissions Reduction Pathways study
 - Financing mechanisms for upscaling domestic energy efficiency measures across the region.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no implications associated with this paper.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 There are no implications associated with this paper.

5. Staffing Implications

- 5.1 There are no implications associated with this paper.

6. External Consultees

- 6.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 That the LEP Board note the contents of this report.

8. Background Documents

- 8.1 None.

³ The Hub provides capacity to LEPs and local authorities to undertake the initial stages of development for priority local and regional energy projects and programmes up to a point where investment can be secured. A collaborative and coordinated approach across multiple LEP areas is encouraged through the Hub.

⁴ These projects are subject to Combined Authority and the Chair of the GEP's approval.

9. Appendices

Appendix 1 – West Yorkshire Combined Authority / LEP Climate related activity