
Report to: Place Panel

Date: 30 January 2020

Subject: **Tackling the Climate Emergency**

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1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To provide an update on the Combined Authority's work to tackle the climate emergency, in pursuit of the Leeds City Region becoming net-zero carbon.

2. Information

- 2.1 The Combined Authority approved the Leeds City Region Energy Strategy and Delivery Plan (ESDP) in December 2018. This work was led by the Green Economy Panel of the Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). It aims to dramatically reduce the City Region's carbon emissions. It prioritises 5 key areas that the Combined Authority, LEP and partners will work towards:

Our priorities

To achieve our ambitions we will focus on five priority action areas:

-  1. **Resource-efficient businesses and industry** – we will increase support to help companies reduce their energy costs and carbon emissions
-  2. **New energy generation** – we will develop an energy network that provides locally generated low-cost, low carbon energy to homes and businesses, including district heat networks and the landmark H21 hydrogen energy project in Leeds
-  3. **Energy efficiency and empowering consumers** – we will help households become more energy-efficient, lower their energy bills and reduce fuel poverty
-  4. **Smart grid systems integration** – we will develop the technology and infrastructure that enables people and businesses to use energy more intelligently
-  5. **Efficient and integrated transport** – we will target investment and influence transport operators to develop a sustainable transport network, including a greater proportion of electric and hydrogen-powered vehicles and increased opportunities for cycling and walking

It will not be easy and will require coordinated action by local government, industry, business and people of all ages. This is a programme of work that will be delivered in a phased approach, with short term projects and longer term, whole system actions. Further details and all proposed actions to be explored are available [here](#). Current work underway is outlined below and in **Appendix 1**.

Initial phases

- 2.2 In line with most of the region’s local authorities, the Combined Authority and LEP 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 ESDP will be updated to reflect this new target and will act as the delivery mechanism to address the City Region’s climate emergency.
- 2.3 The scale of the challenge ahead is enormous. A 14.5 percent reduction in emissions is required year-on-year, with regional emissions halving every five years (Tyndall Centre 2019). Meeting this challenge now requires collective action from across all sectors and will require us all to change the way we live. There is a need for immediate action coupled with the need for long term strategic planning and delivery. This work must be supported by a robust evidence base to ensure we can make significant progress to achieve net-zero carbon by 2038, and with significant progress by 2030.
- 2.4 Work is underway to identify carbon emission reduction pathways that will set out what needs to happen across the City Region in order to meet its net-zero carbon target by 2038. This will highlight the contributions different sectors need to make and interventions that need to be implemented if the target is to be achieved. This work will bridge the gap between the CO₂ emission savings identified in the Energy Strategy and Delivery Plan and achieving the new strengthened regional target. The Energy Strategy and Delivery Plan calculated that the projects it identified would achieve approximately 38 percent of the savings required to meet the ESDP target if implemented in full. Coupled with the emission reductions anticipated through business as usual (circa 25 percent) this leaves a gap of approximately 37 percent. The Combined Authority expects to receive the full pathways report around May 2020. **Appendix 1** and Table 1 outlines some of the recent work carried out by the Combined Authority.

Activity	Description
Engagement activity:	
Sector-specific low-carbon workshops	Four workshops were held in late June / early July and identified over 50 interventions that could enable the City Region to meet its net-zero carbon ambition. The workshops were attended by over 150

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	<p>individuals from across the public, private and third sector.</p> <p>Of relevance to the Place Panel, the following proposed actions to explore were identified, and included accelerating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • energy efficiency and renewable energy generation across the domestic, non-domestic and public sector estate. • Large scale low/ zero carbon energy generation including district heating. • community energy schemes. • higher sustainable design and construction requirements for all new developments via changes to the planning system / local plans • range of efficient and integrated transport projects including accelerating the roll out of electric and Hydrogen vehicle charging infrastructure across the City-Region.
Leeds City Region Climate Coalition and Pledge	Launch of the Coalition and Pledge. The Coalition will act as a combined, powerful collective voice working together to create a net-zero carbon City Region.
Media call	Launch (10 July) of the strengthened City Region target and Coalition and Pledge.
Net zero carbon communications strategy	A comprehensive external and internal communications strategy covering stakeholders, the media and our colleagues to ensure all activity is supported and promoted.
Recent project development support:	
Energy Accelerator	15 low / zero carbon projects are receiving free project development support through the programme. This includes several district heat network projects and a range of energy projects on the public and NHS estate. Projects are expected to be implemented by September 2021.
Resource Efficiency Fund & REBiz	<p>REF offers SMEs free hands-on business support and up to 50 percent capital grant funding of up to £10,000 to help them save money and resources. The scheme ends in December 2019.</p> <p>Given the impending end to the REF the Combined Authority has applied for ERDF funding to create a second REF (REBiz). Subject to funding, this new programme will also include circular economy principles and practices.</p>

Activity	Description
H21	Continued support for the development and delivery of the H21 project, led by Northern Gas Networks.
Hydrogen	Supported a £32 million University of Leeds Strength in Places Hydrogen Corridor proposal.
Net-zero carbon target evidence base development:	
North & West Yorkshire Emission Reduction Pathways	Building on the actions in ESDP and the recent proposed actions from the workshops, the Combined Authority has commissioned consultancy support to identify carbon emission reduction pathways that will identify how the City Region can meet its net-zero carbon target by 2038. See para 2.4.
Domestic Energy Efficiency Financing Models	Through the North East, Yorkshire and Humber Energy Hub consultant support will be commissioned to identify the financial models that will enable domestic energy efficiency activity to be scaled up and delivered at pace (City Region scale). This work has been developed with the Better Homes Yorkshire Board (made up of all local authorities in the City Region). Support is likely to be commissioned in February 2020.
Clean Growth Audit	Identified the carbon and energy intensive industries in the City Region.

Additional opportunities for local authorities

- 2.5 There is an immediate opportunity for all local authorities to align with and work more closely with the Combined Authority to address their local climate emergencies. For information on these opportunities see **Appendix 1 and Appendix 2**.
- 2.6 Officers working on climate change and energy issues from within the City Region's local authorities have attended two meetings to explore how they can all begin to work more closely with the Combined Authority to address the climate emergency.
- 2.7 Some of the areas where collaboration is commencing, and of direct relevance to the Place Panel, includes:

Activity	Description
North & West Yorkshire Emission Reduction Pathways	See above table and paragraph 2.3 - including power and building sectors and Land use, land-use change, and forestry

Regional housing related energy efficiency and fuel poverty programmes	See above table - Domestic Energy Efficiency Financing Models
Zero-carbon planning policy	Review of all current planning requirements within Core Strategies (and others) with the aim to bring back a paper to Heads of Planning on the role of planning in tackling the climate emergency in February 2020
Zero-carbon decision making	Developing a robust carbon assessment for strengthened decision making in the CA, LEP and local authorities (optional) – major programmes, projects and policies.
Public sector as market makers with a focus on public sector procurement	Reviewing zero carbon best practice in procurement, understanding joint frameworks and joint procurement opportunities, development of a regional procurement toolkit + training for procurement staff.
Large-scale solar / public sector renewables / energy storage feasibility work	Review large scale publicly owned assets across the City Region's public estate and carry out initial feasibility and viability work for a range of zero carbon projects including large scale solar.

2.8 The Combined Authority has recently secured £100,000 from the North and West Yorkshire Business Rates Pool to support collaborative work to tackle the climate emergency. It is likely that the public sector as market makers and large-scale solar / public sector renewables / energy storage feasibility work will be funded through this work.

Next steps

2.9 The Combined Authority will now build on the work outlined above and will undertake the following activity over the next year:

- **Evidence base development:** including the North and West Yorkshire Emission Reduction Pathways which will report in May 2020.
- **Project development and delivery** including:
 - Developing the Leeds City Region Climate Coalition
 - Deliver ten or more projects identified in the ESDP
 - Secure new resources to deliver prioritised actions from the sector-specific low-carbon workshops
 - Incorporate the outcomes of the North and West Yorkshire Emission Reduction Pathways into a revised ESDP

- Develop a programme of work for the newly established Zero Emission Transport Working Group that will enable the transport sector to fully contribute to the delivery of the City Region target.
- **Communications and engagement** including:
 - A refreshed Communications Strategy to ensure stakeholders and wider City Region partners are aware of activity, including Combined Authority/LEP staff and members
 - Developing an influencing strategy to position the Leeds City Region as a national and global leader in decarbonisation
 - Working with partners on a programme of engagement with harder to reach audiences to promote the environmental, financial and societal benefits of becoming a net zero carbon city region
 - Exploring holding a net zero carbon energy summit in 2020 with city region partners

2.10 A more detailed summary of the work to be undertaken over the next year is set out in **Appendix 3**.

2.11 Given the scale of the projects identified in the ESDP there are likely to be financial implications for the Combined Authority and partners. Each project as it develops will be subject to a robust business case. Exploring and securing funding will also form a large part of this work.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 Given the scale of the projects identified in the ESDP there are likely to be financial implications for the Combined Authority and partners. Each project as it develops will be subject to a robust business case. Exploring and securing funding will also form a large part of this work. Currently, insufficient funding is available to tackle the climate emergency fully; more investment is required from Government.

4. Legal Implications

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

5. Staffing Implications

5.1 None.

6. External Consultees

6.1 City Region stakeholders, the Green Economy Officer Group and Green Economy Panel have been closely involved in the development of the ESDP and recent City Region Workshops.

7. Recommendations

7.1 That the Panel notes and comments on the information provided and identifies any areas where they would like to get more involved in tackling the climate emergency.

8. Background Documents

Links to relevant background documents are included in the report.

9. Appendices

Appendix 1 Climate change action in the Leeds City Region

Appendix 2 Current support available through the Combined Authority to help
with the Climate Emergency

Appendix 3 Summary of next steps to deliver the ESDP