
Report to: West Yorkshire and York Investment Committee

Date: 1 September 2020

Subject: Strengthen decision making in light of the Climate Emergency

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Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This paper outlines work to strengthen the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's decision-making processes in light of the Climate Emergency.

2. Information

Background

- 2.1 There is scientific consensus that observed global warming is overwhelmingly as a result of human influence, being significantly over and above the warming caused by natural factors alone¹.
- 2.4 There is a clear and compelling rationale to mitigate and adapt to a changing climate and that is why addressing the climate emergency is one of the Combined Authority's and West Yorkshire councils' key priorities.
- 2.5 The Leeds City Region's [Energy Strategy and Delivery Plan and the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy and Delivery Plan](#) outline the current actions

¹ IPCC (2014) Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

being delivered to tackle climate change across the region. A range of projects are being delivered including the Resource Efficiency Programme, Energy Accelerator, Better Homes Yorkshire, The Clean Bus Technology Fund, Stourton low energy park and ride and the Ultra-Low Emission Capital Grant Scheme.

- 2.6 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 be 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.
- 2.7 A recent paper to the Combined Authority on 27 July 2020 outlines the Emission Reduction Pathways work being undertaken to identify how the City Region can meet this target by 2038. The full papers (item 11), next steps and engagement plans are outlined [here](#).
- 2.8 To play our part in tackling the Climate Emergency the Combined Authority approved on 10 October 2019 a new corporate approach to embedding clean growth, including reducing carbon emissions to tackle the Climate Emergency². It includes a policy containing a set of principles for all staff to use and a detailed action plan outlining what the Combined Authority will do as an organisation over the next two years to tackle the Climate Emergency. It covers the organisation's plans to reduce the direct environmental impact of how it works and behaves, as well as ensuring clean growth is embedded in proposals for projects and policies / strategies to be delivered across the region in pursuit of tackling the Climate Emergency.
- 2.9 The Combined Authority has taken action to ensure all decisions we make include Climate Emergency considerations. The Combined Authority:
- has strengthened how clean growth and climate change impacts are considered as part of all schemes that come through the Combined Authority's Assurance Framework (Decision point 1 and 2),
 - requires LEP and the Combined Authority reports to include clean growth / tackling the Climate Emergency implications, including qualitative impact assessments.
- 2.10 To fully strengthen decision making across the whole of the Combined Authority's Assurance Framework a robust, quantifiable methodology for assessing all new schemes predicted carbon emissions/wider clean growth impacts is being developed. **Appendix 1** outlines the commission and key tasks. The objectives are:
- Review and identify best practice for calculating carbon emissions in project development and appraisals processes and building on the latest government guidance and developments in modelling
 - Review decision making practices within the Assurance Framework and identify where carbon impacts have been calculated well and where they

² Updated in the new Corporate Plan as Tackling the Climate Emergency

have not been and what could be improved to ensure carbon is fully integrated and consistently calculated.

- Recommendations for what should be included in a new carbon assessment or a wider set of environmental impact assessments.
- Develop a new robust carbon assessment methodology for transport and non-transport schemes and make recommendations for how to embed it successfully across the Combined Authority – including the Assurance Framework.
- Review and calculate the carbon impacts of all existing funded programmes within the Combined Authority's Local Growth Deal, West Yorkshire Transport Fund and LPTIP Funds and make recommendations for how schemes at DP 2 – 4 could be developed to be net zero carbon (and with estimated costs).
- Once the new robust carbon assessment methodology has been devised, recommend how to implement it across the Organisation and once new methodologies have been devised, increase capacity and capability across all organisations supporting delivery of WYTF and Local Growth Deal and the Combined Authority to ensure a consistent use of the new methodology and metrics to shape the design of all future projects and decisions.

2.11 Through a competitive procurement process the Combined Authority has recently appointed Mott McDonald to deliver the commission.

Next Steps

2.12 The project is about to commence, with the Inception Meeting planned for 20 August at which time the project programme will be finalised. It is anticipated that the Phase 1 Project Report (context, scoping and recommendation of approach to Phase 2 detailed technical works) will be available in late October with Phase 2 commencing quickly thereafter. A report on Phase 2, including the proposed new methodologies and carbon assessment tool should be completed by the end of this year. Implementation of the new robust carbon assessment and the development of training materials to allow the approach to be adopted by officers and potential project sponsors should be complete by the end of June 2021.

2.13 A steering group, including representatives from all five West Yorkshire local authorities and York, has been established to develop this work and oversee the commission.

3. Financial Implications

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

4. Legal Implications

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

5. Staffing Implications

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

6. External Consultees

6.1 A steering group, including representatives from all five West Yorkshire local authorities has been established to develop this work and oversee the commission

7. Recommendations

7.1 Notes the contents of this report.

8. Background Documents

None.

9. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Statement of Requirement