

Report to: Climate, Energy and Environment Committee

Date: 19 October 2021

Subject: **West Yorkshire Climate & Environment Plan**

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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:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The Combined Authority has 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, presented today for approval, is the mayor's and Combined Authority response to tackling the climate emergency, protecting the environment and achieving a net zero West Yorkshire.

2. Information

Human Climate Change

- 2.1 There is scientific consensus that currently observed global warming is overwhelmingly because of human influence and action, being significantly over and above the warming caused by natural factors alone¹. Indeed, ice core records suggest concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere are at their highest for at least the last 800,000 years.

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.

- 2.2 Warming of approximately 1.0°C above pre-industrial levels is estimated to have been caused by human activities and is likely to reach 1.5°C between 2030 and 2052 if current rates of temperature increase continue².
- 2.3 Human and natural systems are already being impacted by climate change with flooding, droughts, heatwaves, and crop yield reductions all being experienced more frequently. West Yorkshire has suffered the impacts of climate change having experienced catastrophic flood events over the last 10 years, causing damage for residents, communities, and businesses. Further warming will make these types of events even more common.
- 2.4 There is a clear and compelling rationale to deliver comprehensive and ambitious plan to mitigate and adapt to a changing climate and that is why tackling the climate and environment emergency is one of the Mayor's, Combined Authority's, and West Yorkshire Council's top priorities.

Background

- 2.5 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.
- 2.6 The Carbon Emission Reduction Pathways (CERP) study was commissioned to demonstrate the different ways in which the climate and environment emergency could be addressed, and the net zero by 2038 target met. It also provides guidance to West Yorkshire councils and businesses on the ways they could address their own climate emergency declarations and targets.
- 2.7 The CERP focusses on the transport, buildings, power, industry, and land-use and agriculture sectors, and consists of three main tasks:
- A. Developing three emission reduction pathways.
 - B. Setting out the timescales for decision-making and deployment of measures identified in the pathways; and
 - C. Identifying the policies and actions that need to be implemented to ensure the measures identified in the pathways are deployed.
- 2.8 The Combined Authority was presented with an overview of the CERP and endorsed the findings of Task A at their [27 July 2020](#) meeting. The findings built on significant process already made by the Combined Authority and its partners in tackling the climate and environment emergency.
- 2.9 The scientific evidence that is the CERP study has been used to inform the development of the Climate and Environment Plan for West Yorkshire, in light

² IPCC (2018) Global Warming of 1.5°C. An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emissions pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty

of the Mayor of West Yorkshire's pledge to tackle the climate emergency and protect the environment production.

- 2.10 The final CERP report can be viewed at <https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/4268/emission-reduction-pathways-report.pdf>.
- 2.11 This paper and the Climate and Environment Plan is now being brought to the Committee for approval, prior to final approval by the Combined Authority.

West Yorkshire Climate and Environment Plan 2021 - 2024

- 2.12 The West Yorkshire Climate and Environment Plan 2021-2024 (the Plan – see Appendix 1) is the Mayor's and Combined Authority's response to addressing the climate and environment emergency and delivering mayoral pledges relating to climate, nature, and the green economy. It also demonstrates how the region can go further and faster than national government, reinforcing commitments to be net zero carbon by 2038 at the latest.
- 2.13 The Plan has been developed to deliver a net zero carbon region with thriving nature, people and places that are climate ready. This means:
- homes that are healthy and affordable;
 - workplaces that more energy efficient;
 - energy supply that is local, clean and flexible;
 - a sustainable, integrated, and low emission transport system;
 - a rich, diverse, and improved natural environment; and
 - places and people that are ready and resilient to a changing climate.
- 2.14 It sets out the critical actions for the next three years to cut emissions, put nature in the recovery position and be ready for the impacts of a changing climate. Action is focussed across eight priority themes:
- **Leadership:** what the Mayor and Combined Authority will do to reduce emissions from its operations and the pipeline of projects under its control.
 - **Cross-cutting:** what makes sense to be considered as a strategic, rather than the individual theme or sector level, for example skills, innovation, research, and development.
 - **Transport:** reduce private vehicle use, increase active travel and public transport use, and decarbonise transport.
 - **Homes:** reduce emissions and the improve the energy efficiency and affordability of the region's homes.
 - **Business and industry:** support and expertise that businesses need to decarbonise and flourish in the region.
 - **Energy generation, supply, and flexibility:** accelerate the deployment of low carbon energy technologies, for example heat pumps, solar, smart energy solutions, including flexibility technologies such as batteries.

- **Natural environment:** focussing on reducing emissions through land-based action and measures to reverse declines in nature.
- **Climate ready:** action to ensure preparedness for the impacts of a changing climate.

- 2.15 Delivery will happen through partnerships at a local, regional, and national level and developing and nurturing these relationships will be crucial if the ambition and scale of the Plan is to be achieved. Demonstrating the strength of these partnerships will be fundamental in securing the investment and funding that is needed to deliver the Plan.
- 2.16 In terms of impact the Plan, if delivered in full, has the potential to generate emission reductions that are consistent with the trajectory the region needs to take if it is to meet net zero carbon by 2038. It also paves the way for significant emissions reductions to be made in future years by undertaking the groundwork that enables these reductions to be realised, for example the 71,000 potential jobs in the regional low carbon and renewable energy sector by 2050.
- 2.17 Subject to adoption by the Combined Authority, the Mayor will lead a West Yorkshire climate and environment conversation and participation. The purpose is to bring partners, stakeholders, and the people of West Yorkshire together to participate and collaborate on the development and delivery of the actions outlined in Plan.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 The West Yorkshire Climate and Environment Plan is the primary document setting out the regional approach to addressing the climate and environment emergency and achieving a net zero region economy by 2038.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1 It is crucial that transitioning to a net zero carbon economy reduces inequality in West Yorkshire. It cannot be the cause of further inequality for our most excluded and deprived groups and communities. To that extent inclusive growth goals and outcomes will be included in the detailed design of the activities in the Action Plan.
- 4.2 All policies will be subject to Equality Impact Assessments, and there will be inclusive growth dimensions to all indicators to ensure progress is being made.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 Meeting net zero carbon and transitioning to a net zero carbon economy should be equitable and not be at the expense of any groups or communities. To that extent equality and diversity implications and solutions will be cross cutting and integrated into the detailed development of the actions in the Plan

to ensure no one is adversely affected by net zero, nature recovery and climate ready transition.

- 5.2 All policies will be subject to Equality Impact Assessments, and there will be equality and diversity dimensions to all indicators to ensure progress is being made and inequalities are not widened.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The actions identified in the Plan will need to be appropriately resourced with the right capital and revenue investment and investment in skills and capacity to lead these actions. Delivery will therefore require ongoing, targeted investment and an aligned financial policy and decision-making process.
- 6.2 The mayor is committing to bring forward a Climate and Environment Fund, for which the Combined Authority will work with partner local authorities to design the delivery mechanisms. So far, £800,000 has been committed by the mayor and Combined Authority to a Net Zero Region Accelerator programme to bring forward finance and funding for climate and environment projects that support delivery of the West Yorkshire Climate and Environment Plan.
- 6.3 Achieving net zero, nature recovery and climate ready resilience will deliver substantial financial savings to the region, both at an individual and organisational levels. For example, large savings are likely to be made through fuel cost reductions that occur because of efficiency improvements across buildings and industry and the transition from petrol and diesel to electric vehicles.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

8. Staffing Implications

- 8.1 Additional posts will be required across Combined Authority directorates and teams working on this agenda, alongside new capacity from our partners and stakeholders to deliver programmes resulting from the Plan and Net Zero Region Accelerator.

9. External Consultees

- 9.1 Extensive stakeholder consultation was undertaken in 2020 to inform the development of actions to include in the Plan.
- 9.3 West Yorkshire local authorities and the Combined Authorities Climate, Energy and Environment Committee have been consulted in developing the content of the Plan, including Leaders and Chief Executives.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1 This paper and the Climate and Environment Plan is now being brought to the Committee for approval, prior to final approval by the Combined Authority.

11. Background Documents

- 11.1 The final CERP report can be viewed [here](#).

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 – West Yorkshire Climate and Environment Plan