

**Report to:** Climate, Energy and Environment Committee

**Date:** 10 January 2023

**Subject:** **Green Jobs Taskforce Update**

**Director:** Phil Witcherley, Interim Director of Inclusive Economy, Skills & Culture

**Author:** Michelle Hunter, Programme Development Lead Employment & Skills

Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input 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 To provide the Committee with an overview and update on the work and findings of the Mayor's Green Jobs Taskforce to date, including the Taskforce's emerging recommendations to develop a pipeline of skills required for the workforce to support the Combined Authority achieve its climate ambitions and the Mayoral pledge of 1,000 jobs for young people.
- 1.2 The Committee is invited to comment and support the shaping of the emerging recommendations proposed by the Taskforce, ahead of the Taskforce's final meeting in January 2023.

## 2. Information

### Background

- 2.1 The Mayor of West Yorkshire and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority have declared a climate emergency and pledged to make West Yorkshire a net zero carbon economy by 2038.
- 2.2 In line with the national Green Jobs Taskforce, West Yorkshire Combined Authority uses the governments definition of green employment: 'employment in an activity that directly contributes to - or indirectly supports - the achievement of the UK's net zero emissions target and other environmental goals, such as nature restoration and mitigation against climate risks'.

- 2.3 The region has an important role to play in driving the structural changes needed to transition to a net zero carbon economy and deliver inclusive, sustainable growth.
- 2.4 Whilst skills are integral to the delivery of this strategic aim, there are currently a wide range of forecasts predicting the current and future demand for green skills and jobs. Although varied, each forecast shares the view that there will be tens of thousands of opportunities in West Yorkshire in the next decade with the right policy interventions and support in place.
- 2.5 In line with the priorities and net zero carbon cross cutting theme of the Combined Authority's Employment and Skills Framework, and its overarching ambition to create a diverse, inclusive and highly skilled workforce with good jobs, there is an opportunity to address the skills needs now so that young people have the pathways to secure skilled green jobs in the future and so that the existing workforce, in those sectors most at risk from the transition towards a net zero economy, have the ability to upskill or retrain.
- 2.6 In August 2021, Mayor Tracy Brabin announced early action to ensure West Yorkshire is well placed to capitalise on the opportunity with the creation of a Green Jobs Taskforce, convening key partners from business, education and training and the third and public sectors to work together to overcome barriers to progress in West Yorkshire. The aim of the Taskforce is to position West Yorkshire as a leader and set out recommendations, underpinned by evidence, to deliver the skills and jobs needed to address the climate emergency and achieve the mayoral pledge to create 1,000 well-paid (real living wage), green jobs for young people (aged 18-30).
- 2.7 The Green Jobs Taskforce is convened for 12 months and has met in January, March and October 2022 with the last meeting scheduled for late January 2023. In addition, a number of online task and finish group meetings were held to deep dive into key themes and refine emerging recommendations.

### Research Findings

- 2.8 The Taskforce has also commissioned research with employers and young people. WPI Economics undertook research with employers and Ahead Partnership were commissioned to develop a 'Green Skills Youth Programme' to engage young people.
- 2.9 **WPI Economics**, are an economics, data insight and public policy consultancy and were commissioned to undertake research to gain a clear picture of West Yorkshire's green economy, including its jobs, skills requirements and relevant supply chains, with a forward look to future needs in these areas.

## 2.10 The headline research findings are:

- In 2020, 2% of online job postings were green, in 2022, that has increased to 6.9% and estimated jobs in West Yorkshire are expected to grow by 9,270 by 2030.
- Currently, the largest green policy areas are climate adaptation, green and professional research services and homes and buildings.
- West Yorkshire has 98,275 jobs in carbon intensive sectors (9.2% of WY employment) that will need to change substantially due to the transition.
- Equality, diversity and inclusion:
  - 13% of people in employment in West Yorkshire in the sectors highly exposed to transition are non-White versus 11% nationally.
  - National data suggests that the carbon intensive industries have relatively more male employees, with female workers accounting for only 23% of the employees and the ratio is similar for West Yorkshire.
- Under a central scenario, total employment in the green economy is expected to double between 2020 and 2030, with net growth across all the sectoral categories.

2.11 **Ahead Partnership**, who specialise in social value projects that overcome inequality, led a 'Green Skills Youth Programme' engaging with young people on green skills to gain insight into their understanding and inspire them about the opportunities within the green economy.

## 2.12 The key findings are:

- West Yorkshire Green Skills Youth Programme engaged with 174 young people from across Leeds, Bradford, Wakefield, Kirklees and Calderdale, aged 4-17 years old.
- Overall, the young people participating in this programme improved their understanding of the range of green jobs available across the region. The number of students that rated their understanding as excellent increased more than ten times between the start and end of the programme.
- The young participants also showed an increase in interest of pursuing a green job after the events with 82% more students stating they are interested in a green job.

- The students involved in this programme perceived green jobs as low paying, hard jobs. As well as this perception, the young people participating also acknowledged that a lack of knowledge around the range of green jobs available would be a barrier for applying to one.
- The most popular methods of getting this information out to young people are via lessons, events, and talks within schools, as well as advertisements across a range of platforms including websites, social media and TV.
- According to the participating students, the positive environmental and social impact they could have in these roles would be key aspects to focus on to inspire and attract young people to green jobs, other than monetary incentives.

2.13 The Taskforce considered the research findings at their meeting in October. They also heard from a range of projects including two Community Renewal Fund projects; 'Go Green Curriculum' in Wakefield and Retrofit Hub as well as others that are taking place across the Region.

2.14 The Taskforce's discussion based on the evidence, learnings and findings from the research and projects informed emerging areas for recommendations for West Yorkshire which has in turn been used to inform the next stage of wider consultation with key stakeholders through focus group sessions held during November and December.

#### Emerging Areas of Recommendations across both areas of research

2.15 The Taskforce's work gives West Yorkshire the opportunity to position itself as a leader in green skills and employment, enabling stakeholders to identify their role, helping to fulfil the Mayoral pledge to support green employment in the region.

2.16 The position created will allow West Yorkshire to capitalise in areas of growth and demand, stimulating opportunities in different areas and industries.

2.17 The findings of the commissioned research, as well as discussions at the Green Jobs Taskforce have been used to define emerging areas of recommendations, and are summarised below:

#### Individuals:

- There is a requirement around career inspiration and information around opportunities in and pathways for the green economy.
- There is also a requirement for the existing workforce to learn about upskilling / reskilling opportunities while businesses transition towards net-zero.

#### Educators:

- Education and training providers require support to review and update their course offer and curricula to respond to the needs of the growing green economy, especially where demand is slow to build up.
- Support recruitment and retention of expert staff.

#### Businesses:

- Businesses require support to develop and upskill their workforce to support decarbonisation of the business, mitigate risk from a transitioning economy and maximise future opportunities.
- Some sectors, such as retrofit, manufacturing and green finance may require / warrant specific support to realise opportunities, reflect strengths or counter risk.

#### Draft Recommendations

2.18 These emerging areas of recommendations have been widely consulted on including via two online stakeholder workshops, attended by Local Authority representatives, private businesses, educators and training providers and union representatives to develop a set of draft recommendations that will be considered by the Taskforce at its last meeting in late January. They are:

- Inspire and inform young people as the next generation of talent (from key stage 1 & 2 onwards) about opportunities and career pathways within the green economy.
- Facilitate easy access to green skills and job information, career pathways and job opportunities for young people and adults to make informed decisions.
- Embed engagement of the target group when designing initiatives (e.g. young people for development of CEIAG, workforce for reskilling/upskilling initiatives to support decarbonisation).
- Support education and training providers to build a curriculum that responds effectively to the needs of businesses in, and transitioning to a net-zero carbon economy; including building capacity to attract, develop and retain expert staff.
- Enable businesses to access support to decarbonise and attract, develop and retain talent to enable a just transition.

- Strengthen current and potential West Yorkshire specialisms to stimulate demand and create green jobs, exploring opportunities in manufacturing, green finance and retrofit in the first instance.
- Any interventions put forward must have ambitious targets addressing concerns around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; in particular around attracting more women and people from BAME backgrounds towards careers within the green economy and the workforce most exposed by a transition to net-zero.

2.19 Additional key feedback from the workshops included:

- As well as having a standalone recommendation around the specific EDI challenges highlighted by the research, it should be a key feature across all recommendations and activities derived from them.
- The need for an ambitious delivery plan, taking account of existing or planned activity, needs to sit underneath the high-level recommendations.
- Further research, as required, to develop understanding of cluster of green jobs activities and demand for skills.

2.20 The Committee is asked to comment on the emerging recommendations:

- The Committee is invited to share their views on the proposed recommendations.
- Does the Committee think the recommendations are reflective of West Yorkshires commitment to green jobs and skills?
- Are there any gaps or opportunities that we could capture in the recommendations or delivery plan?

Next Steps

- 2.21 A further workshop with a diverse range of young people to test emerging recommendations will take place in January to enable them to test and comment on the recommendations.
- 2.22 A report will be submitted to Skills & Employment Committee on 23 January. The committee will be asked to endorse the recommendations and agree to take ownership of any follow-on activity.
- 2.23 The emerging recommendations will be discussed with Taskforce members at the final Green Jobs Taskforce meeting on 31 January, ahead of the launch of the Taskforce's final report and its recommendations for action in West Yorkshire. Details for the launch are to be confirmed.

### **3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications**

- 3.1 The report outlines proposed interventions that will develop the skills and employment needs of individuals and businesses in West Yorkshire to tackle the climate emergency.
- 3.2 Recommendations will support the mayoral pledge to create 1,000 well paid, green jobs in West Yorkshire that will support the ambition to achieve net zero by 2038.

### **4. Inclusive Growth Implications**

- 4.1 The work of the Green Jobs Taskforce and the recommendations are directly linked to inclusive growth in that they contribute to readying West Yorkshire's business base and workforce for a transition towards a net zero economy and delivering on the Mayor's pledge to create 1,000 good, green jobs. Prioritising future ready skills and supporting businesses to decarbonise and benefit from the opportunities the green economy brings are vital to achieving a fair and just transition for the region.
- 4.2 Any specific activity considered in response to the high-level recommendations will take inclusive growth implications into account.
- 4.3 The Green Skills Youth Programme worked with a diverse range of over 170 young people. Participating schools were chosen to form a representative sample from across West Yorkshire and to provide insight from students from different backgrounds, both socio-economic and ethnic, and age groups.
- 4.4 A further workshop to engage young people on the final recommendations will engage young people from communities representative of the population of West Yorkshire.

### **5. Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 5.1 Generally, the skills and workforce pipeline work will consider the impacts of people in everything it does. By its nature, we are seeking to ensure that the skills offer the region has will enable everyone in the region, regardless of their background to have a thriving future. As we develop programmes for delivery, we will work to be explicit in targeting equality and diversity.
- 5.2 For green skills and jobs there is not currently a definite demographic picture for West Yorkshire. However, the research conducted by WPI Economics did find that green jobs are much more male dominated than the economy as a whole. The six occupations that have the greatest demand for green skills (construction project manager, civil engineer, electrician, electrical engineer, mechanical engineer & maintenance technician), 10% are female and 8% are ethnic minorities (compared to 13% of employment across all occupations).
- 5.3 In addition, 98,275 jobs in West Yorkshire are in sectors at risk of decarbonisation, that's 9.2% of total employment in 2020 (compared to 10.5% nationally). 13% of people in employment in those sectors highly exposed to

transition are non-White versus 11% nationally. The ratio is the highest in Bradford (19%) and lowest in Wakefield (6%). While the green economy presents significant economic opportunities, some sectors and jobs will undergo significant change and may be at risk due to the transition towards net zero.

- 5.4 The final report by the Green Jobs Task Force will have a specific recommendation and actions addressing specific challenges around EDI.

## **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

## **7. Legal Implications**

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

## **8. Staffing Implications**

- 8.1 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

## **9. External Consultees**

- 9.1 Small, medium and large business organisations, Local Authority senior officers, independent training providers, colleges and universities and young people.

## **10. Recommendations**

- 10.1 That the Committee note the update on the work of the Green Jobs Taskforce.
- 10.2 That the Committee provides a steer on the emerging recommendations.

## **11. Background Documents**

There are no background documents referenced in this report.

## **12. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – WPI Economics Research Findings

Appendix 2 – West Yorkshires Green Skills Youth Programme

Please note, the research findings are not necessarily reflective of the Combined Authority's position.