

Report to: Climate, Energy & Environment Committee

Date: 21 March 2023

Subject: **Pledge Delivery Update**

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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 To provide the Committee with an overview of selected activity to deliver against the mayoral pledge to tackle the climate emergency¹.

2. Information

Background

- 2.1 The Mayor has several pledges which she would like to see delivered against during her term in office. One of these pledges is related to tackling the climate emergency.
- 2.2 This report summarises selected activity that is currently taking place to deliver against the pledge. It represents activity from across the eight themes on which the West Yorkshire Climate and Environment Plan is framed.

Net Zero Region Accelerator

Overview

- 2.3 The Net Zero Region Accelerator (NZRA) programme addresses an identified barrier to the progression of net-zero projects, principally the ability for project

¹ Where updates have been provided as part of other agenda items this information has not been duplicated.

sponsors to create robust business cases and investment models that address issues of scale, longevity and confidence that can attract private finance. It also aims to address the issue that there are insufficient investment-ready projects in a single coordinated pipeline.

Progress to date

- 2.4 A key deliverable of the NZRA programme is the design and development of an online prospectus that showcases the net zero investment opportunities in the region. A procurement exercise has recently been completed to appoint a contractor to design the prospectus with the aim of launching the prospectus with a limited number of investment opportunities at UKREiIF in May 2023.
- 2.5 In addition to the prospectus four projects have recently come forward with requests for funding from the NZRA. The projects are:
- Calderdale Garden Communities Smart Local Energy System Feasibility Study (Calderdale and Kirklees Districts)
 - Victoria Theatre, Heath Campus and Halifax Borough Market Decarbonisation Feasibility Study (Calderdale District)
 - Blanket Bog Restoration Project (Calderdale District)
 - Kirklees Renewable Energy Feasibility Study and Options Appraisal (Kirklees District)
- 2.6 In total funding of £236,200 has been granted to the above projects.

Resource Efficient Business

Overview

- 2.7 REBiz provides energy and resource efficiency audit and grant funding support to Small & Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) across the Leeds City Region footprint. It also provides consultancy support to SMEs investigating circular economy business opportunities. It is funded in part through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and runs from January 2020 to June 2023.
- 2.8 REBiz originally included the non-overlap areas of North Yorkshire, but support in these areas ceased in mid-2021 due to lack of engagement.

Progress to date

- 2.9 In terms of resource efficiency, REBiz has engaged with 557 SMEs and commissioned 319 audits as of 31 January 2023. In the same time period, 89 businesses have engaged on the circular economy and 47 businesses have received at least the first stage of support.
- 2.10 The key ERDF targets for the programme are businesses receiving a minimum of 12 hours non-financial support or a grant of at least £1,000 (237), and annual greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction (2,064 tCO₂e).

- 2.11 At 31 January, the project had met or exceeded these targets with 237 businesses assisted and 2,823 tCO₂e saved.
- 2.12 The programme has just successfully completed an external Article 125 audit with no issues or recommendations.
- 2.13 The business sustainability package was approved in October 2022 and is in development for launch in April 2023. This programme replaces ReBiz.
- 2.14 The Energy Price Emergency Grant fund, which was approved as part of this, has had 575 expressions of interest, resulting in 229 applications as of 21 February 2023. The fund is on track to meet the £1 million grant spend target with 22 projects currently approved and a current project spend pipeline of over £1.2 million in submitted applications.

Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy

Overview

- 2.15 The UK Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy, published in March 2022, sets out a requirement for combined authorities to develop local charge point strategies, setting out policies to remove charging infrastructure barriers and accelerate the pace of adoption.
- 2.16 West Yorkshire has made great progress in recent years to increase the number of publicly accessible charge points and has more rapid chargers than of any city region outside of London. There are currently 792 publicly accessible charge points in West Yorkshire, with 268 of these rapid chargers. However, government figures predict over 10,000 may be needed by 2030 to meet demand.
- 2.17 A West Yorkshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy is planned, developed in collaboration with District Partners to establish the objectives for public electric vehicle infrastructure roll out as well as principles for investment and action plan for accelerating deployment. The purpose of the document is to guide investment decisions for future funding opportunities as well as provide design guidance for charge points to ensure provision meets the needs of those who live and work in West Yorkshire and ensure equity of access across region.

Progress to date

- 2.18 A draft strategy has been developed in collaboration with District Partners. These include draft strategic principles have been development to guide the future expansion of publicly accessible electric vehicle charge points in West Yorkshire. These are designed to support investment decision making on the development of a public funded network, as well as set out our requirements for private investment into the network. Work is ongoing to review and finalise this draft strategy ready for publication later in 2023.
- 2.19 In June 2022, a West Yorkshire bid was submitted to the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Pilot fund to accelerate the rollout of electric vehicle

charging for residents without access to off-street parking. Although not successful for the first round of funding, on the 21st February Department for Transport announced an expansion of the funding and the West Yorkshire bid was the successful areas for the second round of funding with grant funding of £1.5m awarded for West Yorkshire.

- 2.20 The West Yorkshire LEVI Pilot Scheme will see between £1.5m of government funding alongside private investment to significantly accelerate charging infrastructure in West Yorkshire. The scheme will look to leverage between £1.5m and £4.5m of private investment to deliver 150 - 520 charge points across West Yorkshire. The aims of the West Yorkshire pilot scheme are to:
The aims of the scheme:

- Accelerate and maximise delivery of 'close to home' charging through partnerships with charge point providers;
- Strive for equality of access in EV charging, levelling up coverage across West Yorkshire and supporting a good customer experience for all; and
- Ensure EV charging infrastructure meets the needs of local communities that continues to contribute positively to our local areas and streets.

Zero Emission Buses

Overview

- 2.21 The Zero Emission Bus Programme currently in delivery will help to increase this to closer to between 14% and 19%. This programme includes:
- Phase 1: £56.2million project to introduce 111 zero emission buses and charging on routes in Bradford, Leeds, and Wakefield districts funded through Department for Transport's Zero Emission Bus Regional Area (ZEBRA) funding.
 - Phase 2: £4 million project to introduce 8 zero emission buses and charging to routes in Calderdale and Kirklees funded through Gain Share, with a focus on exploring the impact of hilly landscape on the running of electric buses, and how the Combined Authority can work with smaller operators running tendered services to encourage a switch to zero emission buses.
 - Phase 3: £21million project to introduce between 60 and 126 zero emission buses and charging (number of vehicles subject to delivery model). This will be funded through City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS).

Progress to date

- 2.22 Delivery of Phase 1, the ZEBRA scheme, is now underway with bus operators, planned for completion in 2024. Phases 2 and 3 are currently being explored and work to plans for the transition of the remaining bus fleet is underway.

Local Transport Plan

Overview

- 2.23 A Local Transport Plan (LTP) is a transport strategy for an area, setting out a vision, policies, a delivery programme as well as metrics to gauge success and overall performance in the delivery of its objectives. The West Yorkshire Transport Strategy 2040 is our current LTP adopted by the Combined Authority in August 2017.
- 2.24 The Transport Act 2000, as amended by the Local Transport Act 2008, introduced a statutory requirement for local transport authorities to produce a LTP every five years and to keep it under review. As the Local Transport Authority for West Yorkshire, the Combined Authority has a statutory duty to produce and keep under review a LTP on behalf of West Yorkshire.
- 2.25 In addition to discharging the Combined Authority's statutory duties, an updated LTP is also required to deliver on the objectives of our Corporate Plan and facilitate the scale of change needed to decarbonise the transport sector and deliver the ambition contained within the West Yorkshire Climate and Environment Plan, the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), and our Mass Transit Vision.
- 2.26 LTPs are also used to bid for, prioritise and allocate funds, and provide the strategic narrative and rationale for specific schemes and interventions. The Mayor's WYLTP will form the basis for future delivery programmes including future City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements (CRSTS) plus other funding bids.

Progress to date

- 2.27 In February 2023 Transport Committee approved development of a new West Yorkshire LTP (WYLTP) in line with the West Yorkshire Climate and Environment Plan target of net zero by 2038, noting delay to anticipated government update to LTP Guidance and the implications this has on delivering an updated Plan by early 2024 in line with the expectations that Department for Transport's previously indicated.
- 2.28 An emerging overarching narrative, vision, modal priorities and place-based approach is being developed, working closely with district partners to ensure the Mayor's new WYLTP will match our partners vision and ambition for transport locally and reflect the challenges and opportunities of our diverse geography. Th emerging overarching narrative, vision and ambitions were presented to Transport Committee as part of the report in February 2023.

Solar PV & Storage Programme

Overview

- 2.29 This programme forms part of the Wave 1 Actions to tackle the Climate and Environment Plan. The Combined Authority is working with District partners and the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership to develop several solar PV and storage initiatives including the installation of solar panels on schools, community buildings and homes and the Combined Authority's own assets.

Progress to date

- 2.30 The Solar on Combined Authority assets projects is presented to this Committee for approval under the agenda item on project approvals. Funding is being sought to install solar panels on several Combined Authority assets such as bus stations.
- 2.31 Project development activities continue to be progressed for the other elements of the programme e.g. Solar on Schools and Community Buildings; Collective Solar Purchasing; and working with the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership to install solar and battery storage in their properties.

Hydrogen Strategy

Overview

- 2.32 All pathways in the West Yorkshire Carbon Emissions Reduction Pathways study indicate a role for hydrogen in contributing to the West Yorkshire's decarbonisation aims and reducing emission in several high emitting sectors like transport, domestic heating, industry, and power. Nevertheless, there is a little understanding on the value proposition and strategy for the deployment of hydrogen technologies within West Yorkshire.
- 2.33 A clear strategy, action plan and policy position on hydrogen is planned with the view of understanding the use case and projected demand of hydrogen in West Yorkshire as well as examining the key drivers and constraints for hydrogen deployment and hydrogen infrastructure development. The strategy will also help in relevant stakeholder engagement for hydrogen deployment as well as understanding where the relevant supply chain assets and infrastructure currently exists and could potentially be developed in the future, allowing new site opportunities to be identified.

Progress to date

- 2.34 Proposals for a use case proposition study for hydrogen for west Yorkshire is currently being developed; the study will give the evidence of the use case and value proposition of hydrogen in West Yorkshire. The study will produce a high-level, credible and region-specific pathway which can serve as the basis of future project development and delivery activities. It will also help inform as well as engage a rich mix of crucial stakeholders in the region to develop collaborative thinking and support around the hydrogen opportunity.

Green Skills

Overview

- 2.35 The Green Jobs Taskforce was established 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).

Progress to date

- 2.36 The final meeting of the Green Jobs Taskforce took place in February 2023, where taskforce members provided feedback on a set of recommendations (Appendix 1). Recommendations provide high level regional ambitions to support the creation of the jobs and skills needed to become net zero.
- 2.37 The Employment and Skills Committee will be invited to adopt the recommendations in March 2023, following this an action plan will be developed and a formal launch of the report and recommendations will take place in Summer 2023.
- 2.38 The emerging recommendations have been informed by multiple stakeholders, including employers, public sector colleagues, educators and young people and a range of evidence and research including:
- Task and finish groups with stakeholders from across the region
 - Commissioned research from WPI Economics
 - A commissioned West Yorkshire Green Skills Youth Programme delivered by Ahead Partnership
 - Community Renewal Funded projects, including 'Go Green Curriculum' in Wakefield and Retrofit Hub in Bradford.
- 2.39 Recommendations have been mapped across different strategies and policies across the organisation, such as the Employment and Skills Framework and the Climate and Environment Action Plan
- 2.40 Recommendations are split into key priorities and themes:
- Individuals - easy access to 'green' career advice, training options and jobs
 - Educators - support for the education sector to respond to the green skills demand
 - Businesses - support for businesses to decarbonise via upskilling and retraining
- 2.41 Recommendations support the mayoral pledge to create 1000 well paid green jobs for young people. To date 1009 jobs have been pledged by businesses and 256 green jobs have been created.
- 2.42 Interventions are being worked up as part of the Combined Authority's assurance process and will aid the progress of the recommendations and actions. They will prepare the local economy, education and labour market to become net-zero by 2038. Interventions include support for employers, curriculum development and careers and inspiration. Delivery of projects will take place from September 2023.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 The activity outlined in this report is directly linked to the West Yorkshire Climate and Environment Plan and will assist in addressing the climate emergency and meeting net-zero carbon in the region.

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. Furthermore, opportunities for better jobs and quality of life need to be embedded within the transition to net-zero carbon and sustainable economy.
- 4.2 Inclusive growth goals and outcomes are considered within the items that are included in this paper.

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. Indicators which support the monitoring and evaluation of equity, participation and inclusiveness of programmes and policies resulting from Climate and Environment Plan will be included in the final framework.

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 No external consultations have been undertaken.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1 That the Committee note the contents of this report.

11. Background Documents

There are no background documents referenced in this report.

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Taskforce recommendations