

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

**Date:** 11 July 2023

**Subject:** **Climate Pledge 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 delivering against the mayoral pledge to tackle the climate emergency<sup>1</sup>.

## 2. Information

### Background

- 2.1. This report summarises selected activity that is currently taking place to deliver against the pledge to be net zero by 2038. It represents activity from across the eight themes on which the West Yorkshire Climate and Environment Plan (CEP) is framed.

### **Net Zero Region Accelerator**

#### Overview

- 2.2. The Net Zero Region Accelerator (NZRA) programme addresses an identified barrier to the progression of net zero projects, principally the ability for project sponsors to create robust business cases and investment models that address issues of scale, longevity and confidence that can attract private finance. It

<sup>1</sup> Where information is not provided as part of a separate agenda item discussed at the meeting.

also aims to address the issue that there are insufficient investment ready projects in a single coordinated pipeline.

### Progress to date

- 2.3. The NZRA Investment Prospectus was published in May 2023 and launched at the UK Real Estate, Investment and Infrastructure Forum (UKREiIF). The purpose of the Prospectus is to showcase the net zero investment opportunities in West Yorkshire. The Prospectus will constantly evolve as schemes gain investment, with others taking their place as they are developed.
- 2.4. The Prospectus can be viewed online [here](#).
- 2.5. In addition to the prospectus four projects are being supported with 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)
  - Sphagnum Moss Blanket Bog Restoration Project (Calderdale District)
  - Kirklees Renewable Energy Feasibility Study and Options Appraisal (Kirklees District)

## **Business Sustainability**

### Overview

- 2.6. 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 ran from January 2020 to June 2023.
- 2.7. An interim Energy Price Emergency Grants (EPEG) scheme introduced as a response to the cost of doing business crisis to cover the gap in grant funding between REBiz and the successor support which was approved by the Combined Authority on 8 December 2022. EPEG will run to the end of June 2023.
- 2.8. The new business sustainability support service will expand the support for businesses to include business to consumer (e.g. retail, hospitality& leisure), and will support businesses to tackle a wider range of environmental impacts from net zero to climate readiness. Funding has been approved for this support until 31 March 2026.

### Progress to date

- 2.9. In terms of resource efficiency, REBiz has engaged with 557 SMEs and commissioned 319 audits as of 31 March 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 tCO<sub>2</sub>e).
- 2.11. At 31 March 2023, the project had met or exceeded these targets with 250 businesses assisted and 3,455 tCO<sub>2</sub>e saved. Activity has stopped on REBiz so these figures are close to the final figures.
- 2.12. The new business sustainability support service has commenced a soft launch and is experiencing strong demand with 4 – 6 enquiries a week. The full launch will take place in July 2023.
- 2.13. The interim EPEG scheme has received over 650 expressions of interest resulting in 328 applications for support. It is likely that more than £700,000 of grants will be provided to around 185 small businesses, 50% of which are in retail, hospitality and leisure sectors critically affected by the rising costs of energy.

## **Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy**

### Overview

- 2.14. 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.
- 2.15. 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 841 publicly accessible charge points in West Yorkshire, with 286 of these rapid chargers. However, government figures predict over 10,000 may be needed by 2030 to meet demand.
- 2.16. 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

- 2.17. The government announced the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund (LEVI) fund in Spring 2022, a £450 million fund to ‘accelerate commercialisation of local, close to home charging’. This funding is intended to be used by Local Authorities to leverage private investment in chargepoints locally to significantly advance and accelerate chargepoint delivery, targeted at residential areas without access to off-street parking.
- 2.18. From this fund, the following was awarded to West Yorkshire in February 2023:
- £1,500,000 Pilot Funding – capital funding to deliver EV infrastructure, focused on residential areas without access to off-street parking.
  - £236,880 Capability Funding – for resources to support EV infrastructure coordination and delivery.
- 2.19. In addition to this, the following was allocated to West Yorkshire in March 2023 (subject to Office for Zero Emission Vehicle approval of suitable proposal):
- £14,326,000 Capital Funding - to delivery EV chargepoint infrastructure, focused on residential areas without access to off-street parking.
  - £1,079,120 additional Capability Funding – to increase local authority capacity and capability for the planning and delivery of EV infrastructure.
- 2.20. The full value of the West Yorkshire LEVI programme could be £15,826,000 capital grant funding supported by £1,316,000 resource funding, taking the programme total to over £17,000,000. However, the project is also required to leverage private investment in EV chargepoints so the total value for West Yorkshire will be higher.
- 2.21. Outline proposals for the Capital and Capability Funding were submitted as an Expression of Interest submission on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2023. The Combined Authority will continue to work with District Partner officers to develop full proposals for the Capital Funding, with an expected submission deadline of November 2023.
- 2.22. Work is also progressing on a West Yorkshire electric vehicle chargepoint strategy. The West Yorkshire proposal for the LEVI Fund will be developed based on the emerging strategic principles set out in the draft strategy:
- **Enable & accelerate EV charging network:** Build charging network ahead of predicted EV uptake to facilitate transition, with an emphasis on strategic priorities and ‘close to home’ charging.
  - **Reduce inequalities and ensure good coverage of the West Yorkshire network:** Strive for equality of access in EV charging, levelling up coverage across West Yorkshire, reducing inequalities and ensuring no areas are left behind.
  - **Ensure right chargers in the right places:** Ensure EV charging infrastructure meets the needs of local communities that contribute positively to our local areas and streets, whether on-street chargers or via charging hubs.

- **Ensure easy to use, fair and accessible to all:** Promoting competition and proper regulation to ensure a healthy market with fair prices, good levels of service, high accessibility standards and supporting a good customer experience for all.
- **Ensure the West Yorkshire network is resilient, reliable, safe and well maintained:** Work to ensure chargepoints are well maintained, reliable, safe and secure to maximise the usable of the network and increase user confidents in electric vehicle charging.
- **Support wider transport decarbonisation goals:** Help to reduce the environmental impact of travel & transport by encouraging modal shift & enable alternatives to private car use, supporting electrification of buses and shared transport, and ensuring the use renewable energy is prioritised to supply chargepoints.

## Zero Emission Buses

### Overview

- 2.23. The Zero Emission Bus (ZEB) Programme currently in delivery will help to increase the number of ZEBs as a proportion of the total bus fleet 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 eight 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

- 2.24. Delivery of Phase 1, the ZEBRA scheme, is now underway working in partnership with three West Yorkshire bus operators. The first zero emission buses delivered under this scheme are expected to be operating on routes in Leeds by March 2024, with ambitions for more to follow on routes in Bradford and Wakefield.
- 2.25. Progress on Phase 2 has focussed on assessing the options of zero emission buses available on the market to meet the challenges of hilly, rural routes identified for electrification. Current information indicates that there are limited

options for smaller 'midi' sized, long range electric buses available to the UK bus market. However, the project team is continuing to investigate the market, which is ever evolving and whatever option is procured, future zero emission bus schemes on similar routes will be able to learn from this pioneering scheme.

- 2.26. Phase 3 is currently being explored and work to plans for the transition of the remaining bus fleet is underway.

## **Local Transport Plan**

### Overview

- 2.27. 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. 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.
- 2.28. 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.
- 2.29. 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

- 2.30. As outlined at February Transport Committee a new Local Transport Plan (LTP) for West Yorkshire is currently being developed. [Item 7 - The Mayors West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan Update.pdf \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#) In advance of the anticipated Government's new guidance and the need to update our LTP, building on the Combined Authority's extensive evidence base and the technical work undertaken as part of the development of the draft Connectivity Infrastructure Plan, BSIP, Mass Transit Vision, Rail Strategy, Climate and Environment Plan and other supporting work, an overarching transport strategy narrative has been developed as outlined below. This will continue to evolve as the detail of the Mayor's WYLTP is prepared:

- West Yorkshire is key to growing and re-balancing the national economy and enabling the north of England to contribute fully to, and benefit from, national economic growth and prosperity. Mass Transit is key to unlocking the productivity of our polycentric region.
- Almost all journeys begin and end on the local road network, local connectivity must be transformed through significant investment in an integrated, safe and sustainable transport system that connects all parts of our region. A focus on making space for buses and active travel on our roads will make journeys by public transport quicker, with less time spent stuck in traffic.
- Transport will play a crucial role in delivering a net-zero economy by 2038. The LTP must tackle the climate emergency through the fair and inclusive decarbonisation of our transport network, delivering the right choice of transport, in the right place, at the right time.
- Transport has an enabling role in addressing many of the challenges we face across West Yorkshire. Reflecting the rich diversity of our region, equality will be at the forefront of our LTP. We will invest in transport to create an environment where everyone can access opportunities for education, employment, and leisure, regardless of income, geography or background.
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2.31. This will require the Combined Authority and its partners to:

- Focus on transport integration; delivering bus reform, unlocking the benefits of mass transit, customer focussed rail, making active travel the natural choice for shorter journeys and shared transport solutions which empower local communities.
- Move at pace to decarbonise the transport sector to deliver the local sustainable transport infrastructure and services that will transform connectivity, and deliver affordable and competitive public transport options, particularly to meet the requirement to achieve net-zero carbon target of 2038.
- Explore the policy options that can make the space needed on our roads to prioritise low carbon sustainable transport modes, deliver on bus reform and make walking and cycling safer.
- Work to greater align investment in transport with future housing and employment growth across West Yorkshire through the local plan process with a focus on the role of transport in boosting productivity through high density, low carbon sustainable development.
- Secure an increase in the total investment made in West Yorkshire's Transport Infrastructure, with greater flexibility in funding from government.

- Continue to work with the private sector to maximise the leverage achievable through public sector investment, in addition to exploring options to raise revenue locally.

## **Solar Programme**

### Overview

- 2.32. 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

- 2.33. The Business Justification Case for the Solar on Schools and Community Buildings workstream is currently being developed in partnership with our five local authority partners. Work on the scheme of late has been focused on the development of an effective Equality Impact Assessment for the scheme, including the development of effective potential EDI targets.
- 2.34. The residential collective buying scheme project development is in progress. Supplier engagement events have been held to identify potential suppliers who will be able to deliver the project. Also under consideration is how to ensure that the scheme is equitable, and fairly takes into account the diverse communities we serve in the region.
- 2.35. The West Yorkshire Housing Partnership Solar Assets scheme is ongoing, with work recently focusing on mitigating the use of forced labour in the solar industry. In addition, work is ongoing to ascertain the best way to make the investment into the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership Solar Assets scheme, particularly in relation to how any income that is generated as a result of the scheme (mainly through selling generated electricity back to the grid) is managed and invested into the Combined Authority's priorities.
- 2.36. The Combined Authority Solar Assets project was approved at the 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023 Climate, Energy and Environment Committee. Work is to take place imminently upon the appointment of a sub-contractor to deliver the project. The scheme will deliver 233 Kilowatt Peak (kWp) of solar panels across seven West Yorkshire bus stations, located in Batley, Bradford (interchange), Brighouse, Castleford, Cleckheaton, Keighley and Ossett.

## **Better Neighbourhoods Programme**

### Overview

- 2.37. This programme forms part of the Wave 1 Actions to tackle the Climate and Environment Plan. The Combined Authority is working with the five West Yorkshire local authority partners, to provide grants of £5,000 to £50,000 to



local communities, with a particular focus on those communities considered disadvantaged, to fund projects that will support the transition to net zero carbon.

- 2.38. The programme will provide community level funding to educate and implement climate improvement projects. These projects will increase climate knowledge, accelerate behaviour changes, and deliver infrastructure to improve wellbeing and building efficiency, with a long-term aim of reducing carbon emissions.

#### Progress to date

- 2.39. The programme was given approval at the Climate, Energy and Environment meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023. Funding agreements have been issued to our five local authority partners, which will provide the basis for them to design and deliver the funding locally.
- 2.40. The Combined Authority and Local Authority partners are working towards a coordinated launch, in order to ensure that the scheme gains good publicity. The agreed launch date is to be on the week commencing the 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

### **Air Quality**

#### Overview

- 2.41. The West Yorkshire Low Emission Strategy (WYLES) was developed through a collaboration between the West Yorkshire District Partners, West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Public Health England. The strategy was adopted in 2016 by all District Partners and by the Combined Authority in 2017. The purpose of the strategy was to provide a regional framework to support policy and action for air quality improvements, improve cross-boundary cooperation at a local level, and enable the compliance of air quality legal targets at the shortest time possible.
- 2.42. Work is now underway through the WYLES Delivery Group on a new air quality strategy for the region. The new strategy will look to build on the foundations of the WYLES, updating the strategy to reflect the introduction of the Clean Air Zone in Bradford and the increased emphasis on particulate matter alongside nitrogen dioxide as a result of the Environment Act 2021. This work is being led by West Yorkshire Combined Authority in collaboration with air quality officers from all five partner councils, and representatives from public health. A new strategy is anticipated Autumn/Winter 2023.

#### Progress to date

- 2.43. The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) has announced that the West Yorkshire air quality scheme proposal was one of the 44 projects to be awarded air quality grants for delivery over the next two years. The Defra funding grant opportunity looked for proposals to improve understand and awareness of particulate matter.

- 2.44. The West Yorkshire Public Particulate Information Improvement (PIIP) Project was developed in partnership with the West Yorkshire Low Emission Strategy (WYLES) Delivery Group, which includes air quality representatives from each of the five partner councils alongside public health professionals. The project is also supported by partnerships with Leeds Beckett University and the University of Leeds.
- 2.45. The project comprises four work packages which include enhancing the West Yorkshire particulate matter monitoring network, a particulate dashboard and regional air quality public information page, and research projects by university partners.
- 2.46. The scheme will significantly improve knowledge and understanding of particulate matter, improving awareness and bridging the knowledge gap surrounding regional particulate matter data. This will provide a better understanding of which sources are having greatest impacts on our communities, enable interventions to be targeted most effectively, and support the development of a new air quality strategy for West Yorkshire.

### **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. 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**

None.