West Yorkshire Combined Authority | Tracy Brabin Mayor of West Yorkshire

Report to:	Climate, Energy and Environment Committee
Date:	24 October 2023
Subject:	**Monitoring Indicators**
Director:	Alan Reiss, Chief Operating Officer
Author:	Peter Glover, Economic Evidence Manager

Is this a key decision?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	☐ Yes ☒ No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	☒ Yes ☐ No

1. Purpose of this Report

1.1. To present the latest position on the State of the Region monitoring indicators relating to climate, energy and the environment

2. Information

Monitoring arrangements

2.1. As part of agreed monitoring arrangements, the Climate, energy and environment Committee receives regular reports against a set of State of the Region indicators relevant to its remit. These are presented as a standing item on the Committee's agenda. These indicators reflect the outcomes that the work of the committee is seeking to improve. Indicators are reported on by exception i.e. when fresh data becomes available for each indicator, allowing the analysis to be updated.

2.2 The indicators will be reported on in detail in the State of the Region 2023 report, the Combined Authority's annual stock-take of West Yorkshire's socio-economic performance. The State of the Region indicators are intended to provide a high level, strategic picture of performance against this priority rather than a detailed examination of operational performance of specific projects.

The indicators

2.4. The core indicators agreed by the Committee are as follows:

- Greenhouse gas emissions (ktCO2 equivalent)
- Greenhouse gas emissions (ktCO2 equivalent) by sector
- Greenhouse gas emissions intensity ratio
- Building energy efficiency
- Premises at risk of flooding
- Households in fuel poverty
- Access to greenspace.

2.5 A number of additional indicators relevant to the work of the Committee were identified as part of the development of the West Yorkshire Plan, which was presented in draft to the Committee at its January 2023 meeting. These indicators are as follows:

- Deployment of electric buses
- Deployment of electric charging infrastructure
- Electric buses.

Key messages

2.6 The latest key messages are summarised below and are also visualised in appendix 1 to this paper.

2.7 Analysis of the emissions-related indicators was provided in the indicator paper presented to the July Committee meeting and can be found here. In summary, it was noted that total greenhouse gas emissions in West Yorkshire increased by 6% in 2021 as the economy re-opened, although they were still 5% below their pre-pandemic 2019 level. Analysis against the carbon emissions reduction pathways shows that in 2021, the region's emissions were between the business-as-usual scenario and the three modelled reduction pathways. As it is very early in the series, it is hard to distinguish between the three pathways to confirm which pathway we are on track with.

2.8 It is likely that, once published, data for 2022 will show a reduction in emissions in West Yorkshire compared with 2021, reflecting the UK position. But this may well prove to be consistent with a reversion to the pre-pandemic baseline trend. It is evident that a significant challenge lies ahead, and great efforts must be made, at an accelerated pace, in order to fulfil our net-zero commitments.

Building energy efficiency

2.9 Improving the energy efficiency of properties is an important lever for reducing emissions but also for helping households to manage their living costs. Energy Performance Certificates are needed any time a property is sold, built or rented. They contain information about a property's energy use and typical energy cost. Normally they have a rating between A (Most efficient) to G (Least efficient).

2.10 West Yorkshire dwellings with an Energy Performance Certificate are less likely to have an energy efficiency rating of C or better compared to the national average (35% versus 42%). There are also wide variations against this measure at local authority level. Kirklees (35%), Leeds (38%), and Wakefield (39%) have the highest proportions of dwellings that meet this threshold, but the figures are much lower for Bradford (29%) and Calderdale (30%). The picture is gradually improving over time. In the latest quarter, April to June 2023, 14,356 domestic EPCs were lodged on the Register in West Yorkshire; of these, 54% of properties in the region were given an energy efficiency rating of C or above, compared with 58% nationally.

Premises at risk of flooding

2.11 Flooding is becoming more frequent and more severe as a result of climate change. The ongoing flood risk reinforces the economic, social and environmental arguments for securing capital investment to allow our communities to be more resilient and avoid both the human suffering and economic cost that comes with these events. Over 17,400 West Yorkshire residential properties are located in Flood Zone 3 areas and at risk of flooding once every hundred years, with an additional 18,000 located in Flood Zone 2, which is at risk of flooding once every 100 to 1,000 years. Together this accounts for 3.4% of West Yorkshire residential properties. Around 15,000 commercial properties fall within flood zones in West Yorkshire, around 14% of total properties, with 6% falling into Flood Zone 3 and 8% into Flood Zone 2.

Access to greenspace

2.12 It is formally recognised that green environments are associated with reduced levels of depression, anxiety and fatigue and can enhance quality of life for both children and adults. People with better access to greenspace enjoy a wide range of health benefits from lower levels of cardiovascular disease through to maintaining a healthier weight. However, access to greenspace varies depending on where we live. Currently, 23% of the population of West Yorkshire have access to local greenspace; that is, they live within 300m of an area of accessible natural greenspace of at least 2 hectares in size. Within the region, there is some variation between local authorities, with Kirklees having the lowest proportion at 15% and Leeds having the highest at 28%.

Fuel poverty

2.13 Fuel poverty is the problem faced by households living on a low income in a home which cannot be kept warm at reasonable cost. As well as providing a measure of deprivation, the prevalence of fuel poverty points to an issue that can be alleviated through

investment in energy efficiency measures, leading to reduced emissions. According to the latest official statistics for 2021, 168,000 households in West Yorkshire were in fuel poverty, 17% of total households. Since these figures do not capture the impact of the surge in energy prices seen since late-2021 the Combined Authority has produced its own more up to date estimates. These indicate that 30% of households in West Yorkshire are currently in fuel poverty, down slightly from an estimate of 33% for spring 2023.

Electric vehicle charging infrastructure

2.14. Transport is the highest emitting sector in West Yorkshire accounting for 32% of all greenhouse gases emitted. These emissions are dominated by road transport which accounts for 97% of transport-related emissions. The West Yorkshire Climate and Environment Plan sets a commitment to accelerate the deployment of electric vehicle chargepoints across the region with a focus on ensuring equity. As of 1 July 2023, there were 981 publicly available electric vehicle (EV) charging devices installed in West Yorkshire. The number of devices in West Yorkshire is growing rapidly, expanding by 41% in the last year and by 140% in the last three years. Although, the ratio of charging devices to population is below the national average in West Yorkshire (42 versus 67) it outperforms the England average in terms of rapid charging devices per head of population (14 versus 12). Further information on the deployment of electric charging devices can be found in Item 10.

2.15 A shift to electric buses has the potential to make a substantial contribution to reducing West Yorkshire's greenhouse gas emissions, particularly when more polluting diesel vehicles are replaced. Based on figures supplied by the three main bus operators in the region, First, Arriva and Transdev, 2% of the bus fleet consists of battery powered electric buses.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

3.1. The State of the Region indicators provide a picture of the progress that is being made in addressing the Climate Emergency, most notably in terms of emissions reduction.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

4.1. The indicators feature several with direct implications for inclusive growth, including those relating to fuel poverty, energy efficiency and access to green space.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

5.1. The main State of the Region report brings out equality and diversity implications across indicators, where availability of data allows; for example the impact of fuel poverty on different communities.

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 notes the headline analysis of the indicators

11. Background Documents

There are no background documents referenced in this report.

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 –Analysis of climate, energy and environment monitoring indicators.