



<b>Report to:</b>	Climate, Energy and Environment Committee
<b>Date:</b>	24 October 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Climate Pledge Update</b>
<b>Director:</b>	Liz Hunter, Director Policing, Environment and Place
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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.

### **Climate and Environment Plan Refresh**

- 2.2 The CEP is the plan by which the Combined Authority, working with partners, aims to deliver the region's target of achieving net zero by 2038. It is therefore a key document for the Combined Authority, and ties into a number of related policies, strategies and

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

plans delivering a wide range of action, including the missions set out in the West Yorkshire Plan and the objectives in the Combined Authority's Corporate Plan 2023-24.

- 2.3 The current CEP spans the period 2021 to 2024, and sets out both the evidence base (in the form of the Carbon Emissions Reductions Pathways (the "**Pathways**") and accompanying roadmaps) and an associated action plan, focussing on delivering 'no regrets' activity over that period.
- 2.4 The Committee approved the current CEP on 19 October 2021<sup>2</sup> and has received a number of updates on the programmes and projects that have been delivered pursuant to the actions in the CEP since that time, including work in respect of the Better Homes Hub, Solar Programme, and Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy, amongst others.
- 2.5 As we are nearing the end of the period of the current CEP, the Combined Authority will need to update the CEP to reflect the progress that has been made to date, as well as to set out a new action plan for its next period, to continue progress towards the region's net zero target.

#### Updating the evidence base

- 2.6. The Combined Authority is currently in the process of commissioning consultancy support to update the Pathways that underpin the CEP.
- 2.7 As the CEP sets out, there are at present three Pathways setting out different emissions reductions trajectories, and with them different plans and strategies to achieve them, namely: 'max ambition', 'high hydrogen' and 'balanced'. Each of the Pathways modelled interventions to achieve significant emissions reductions by 2038, but acknowledged that, to reach net-zero, 'increased ambition around some measures, more speculative options or systems changes would be needed.'
- 2.8 Consequently, each Pathway sees an amount of emissions remaining in 2038; depending on the individual Pathway, the region will need to achieve an additional 17% to 25% reduction in emissions by 2038 on top of those measures currently identified.
- 2.9 Therefore, and as envisaged by the Pathways, the region is now at a juncture where a single, complete pathway needs to be developed (the "**Complete Pathway**"). Work is ongoing to produce a Complete Pathway that will demonstrate how net zero can be achieved by 2038, with no 'gaps' or requirements for additional measures to reach this objective. In addition, a roadmap to accompany the Complete Pathway (the "**Complete Roadmap**"), together with policy recommendations and an action plan to deliver the recommended activity, will be produced.

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<sup>2</sup> [WYCA - Modern Gov](#)



- 2.10 The Complete Pathway and Roadmap will therefore comprise the core of the evidence base for the updated CEP, from which an updated action plan will follow.
- 2.11 It is envisaged that a draft of the Complete Pathway will be brought to the Committee in May 2024, to allow the Committee to be sighted on its findings and recommendations.

#### Consultation and Engagement

- 2.12. In drafting the updated CEP, the Combined Authority will need to consult with relevant stakeholders to seek their views on the evidence and actions set out in the plan, prior to its finalisation. The Committee's views are therefore welcomed on the stakeholders it would like the Combined Authority to consult with during the update of the CEP, and on what form this consultation may take.

#### **Green Skills**

- 2.13. In January 2023, the Employment and Skills Committee endorsed and adopted the recommendations of the Mayor's Green Jobs Taskforce. Subsequently, at the March 2023 meeting, the Committee received a wider progress report from the Green Jobs Taskforce, including considering findings of the wider commissioned research and endorsing the six key ambitions:
- **Inspire:** inspire young people on green careers and opportunities.
  - **Facilitate:** easy access to green skills / jobs / careers information.
  - **Embed:** ensure engagement of target group is an essential element during programme design.
  - **Support:** for education / training providers to build a curriculum that meets the needs of a net zero economy.
  - **Enable:** access to decarbonisation / innovation support for businesses.
  - **Strengthen:** current and potential West Yorkshire specialisms to stimulate demand and create green jobs.
- 2.14. As a result of the Taskforce's work, the Employment and Skills Committee in July announced a new Digital Skills, Green Skills and Skills Support for Business Programme. This programme will support:
- **Individuals:** to access green careers advice and training options and job information and opportunities.
  - **Educators:** support for the further education sector to build capacity to respond to green skills demand.
  - **Businesses:** support for businesses to decarbonise via upskilling and reskilling.

- 2.15. To celebrate the success of the Taskforce, Baroness Blake and the Mayor, Tracy Brabin, hosted a Green Skills Revolution Dinner (sponsored by SSE) at the House of Lords on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2023.
- 2.16. Attendees included people from the third sector, education, and private sector. An apprentice from the Combined Authority also attended and spoke about her role and how it contributes to the mayor's green jobs pledge.
- 2.17. The work and expertise of the Taskforce members has been crucial to the development of the report recommendations, and strong relationships with this group will be maintained going forward and will explore further opportunities for engagement and delivery of the report's recommendations.
- 2.18. Alongside policy, the underpinning driver of this work is the mayors pledge to create 1,000, well-paid, green, skilled roles in which 1,007 roles have been pledged and 265 have been created. Programmes, all with a strong focus on achieving equality diversity and inclusion targets, will support the ongoing development of the green skills and jobs agenda, turning pledges into jobs.
- 2.19. The final Green Jobs Taskforce Report is available at Appendix 1.

### **Business Sustainability**

- 2.20. The new Business Sustainability programme is now operational and actively receiving enquiries from businesses. Since launch in July the service has had 200 active engagements with SMEs with more than 50 audits already completed.
- 2.21. In addition, eight capital grants have now been approved (which achieves the programme output on renewable energy generation for the year), four vouchers have been issued for activities such as net zero planning, and the circular economy element of the programme has received its first referrals.
- 2.22. And finally, the team delivering the service are now up to full strength coinciding with the flood resilience funding coming on stream.

### **Zero Emission Buses**

- 2.23. A zero-emission bus system is a core element of the Combined Authority's long-term vision for buses: the Bus Services Improvement Plan (BSIP) sets out our ambition to have a fully zero emission fleet by 2036. Although buses only account for 3% of carbon emissions from road transport, the scale of this ambition is significant as only 2% of the West Yorkshire bus fleet are zero emission currently.
- 2.24. The West Yorkshire Zero Emission Bus (ZEB) Programme will see the introduction of between 200 and 270 zero emission buses along with supporting infrastructure to West Yorkshire, which will take the proportion of buses that are zero emission in West Yorkshire from 2% up to potentially 19%. This programme includes:

- **Phase 1:** £70million project to introduce 136 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. This scheme is in delivery, with 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.
- **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. This scheme is in development and undertaking market testing.
- **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). This scheme is also in development.

2.25. Work is underway to develop a strategy for transitioning to remaining bus fleet to zero emission. A study is planned which will build on the 2019 Zero Emission Bus study and the learning from the ZEB Programme to assess, identify and evaluate routes to be prioritised for current and future funding streams, including exploring technology and alternative fuel options, feasibility and deliverability, and strategic need. This work will be supported by the Hydrogen Strategy work.

### **Retrofit: Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund**

- 2.26. The Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) is enabling retrofit work to be completed on a total of 1,811 properties, with more in the pipeline across three waves of funding.
- 2.27. Under SHDF Wave 1, 806 properties have been completed with a final target of 920 properties by end of December 2023. Seven of the nine consortium partners have completed their works and are submitting the final evidence required by DESNZ to close their projects. Despite the numerous challenges, the West Yorkshire consortium is still currently ranked second in England in terms of number of properties completed.
- 2.28. SHDF Wave 2.1 is a £30m programme targeting 2,411 properties in the region. Various stages of work have commenced across the consortium ranging from procurement, surveying, through to installation of some measures.
- 2.29. Work funded under the SHDF Booster programme has been completed on 834 properties to date with the aim to complete 1,786 properties by Spring 2024.



## Energy Efficiency Carbon Reduction Framework

- 2.30. The Energy Efficiency Carbon Reduction Framework (EECRF) has been approved and became operational from September 2023.
- 2.31. The Framework is a shortlist of energy efficiency suppliers that can be utilised by Local Authorities, the Combined Authority, and partners for the delivery of EECR Schemes; utilising, but not limited to, government funding, fuel poverty funding, Energy Company Obligations. Equans, YES Energy Solutions, and Cenergist are the three suppliers on the Framework.
- 2.32. The EECRF will operate within the Combined Authority Area for a 2-year period with the potential for a 2-year extension thereafter. The Framework will allow partners to easily contract through a competitive process for retrofit work, providing reliability and a level of quality assurance, making it easier to complete larger scale retrofit works.

## Solar PV and Battery Storage programme

- 2.33. The Solar PV and Battery Storage programme was identified as part of the Climate and Environment Plan prioritisation work that was undertaken with this Committee in February 2022, as part of the Wave 1 of work necessary to achieve our net zero target. The estimated cost for activities to be undertaken by the programme is c.£7.9m.
- 2.34. This is an umbrella programme which aims to increase the deployment of Solar PV and Battery storage across the region to ensure West Yorkshire's transition to a clean, sustainable form of renewable energy. The programme has three objectives:
- **Objective 1: Develop Long-term strategic solar photovoltaic installation programme.** Under this objective a project with the West Yorkshire Housing Partnership is in development to demonstrate the long-term viability of social housing providers investing in Solar PV and Battery Storage technology, through developing an innovative funding model which delivers savings on energy bills to tenants, and a sustainable income stream for the landlord. The project will install Solar PV and Battery Storage on 1500 social housing units and establish two key commercial relationships for each of the five Registered Provider's in the region (indicative contribution by the Combined Authority is 5 million pounds).
  - **Objective 2: Establish trusted delivery and finance mechanism for solar photovoltaics.** Under this objective there is a Solar Residential Collective Buying scheme in development which aims to reduce the upfront costs of Solar PV and Battery storage technology for the able-to-pay market<sup>3</sup>, through the development of an innovative delivery model. A delivery partner will be procured to deliver a project to demonstrate the viability of the model and who will be responsible for identifying and targeting residents in West Yorkshire who are able to afford the

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<sup>3</sup> By 'able-to-pay' we are meaning those more likely to be able to afford Solar PV and Battery Storage measures.

investment. The project aims to install at least 300 solar system installations / 1MW of solar systems on residential properties across West Yorkshire per round. Achieve reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions as a result of switching to solar energy, of up to 133t CO<sub>2</sub> per round (indicative programme value is ninety thousand pounds).

- **Objective 3: Directly deliver rooftop solar photovoltaic installations.** Under this objective there is a Solar on Schools and Community buildings project, which aims to install solar PVs on circa 50 schools and community buildings in four of West Yorkshire districts (Wakefield, Calderdale, Leeds, and Kirklees). This will be through provision of capital grants to the local authority partners for structural surveys and installations, the grants thereby plugging a viability gap currently preventing the delivery of these projects in the districts. The costs of the scheme are estimated at £500,000 for solar panel installations and £62,500 for structural surveys. The project heavily relies on attracting a substantial package of private sector match funding. The project seeks to enable the installation of up to 1.45MW of solar PV across the region and up to 240t of CO<sub>2</sub> emission savings per year, delivering educational packages and information on the benefits of using sustainable energy and sustainable living to up to 12,500 schoolchildren and adults and leveraging up to £950,000 of private sector investment. The project complements the existing and approved project enabling solar PV installation on Combined Authority assets and if successful has the potential to be scalable to other public sector assets.
- All projects are currently progressing through the Assurance Framework appraisal process.

2.35 The above projects are in addition to the [Bus Station Solar](#) project, which was previously approved by this committee on the 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

### 3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

3.1 Updating the CEP will be a core element of addressing the climate emergency and meeting net-zero carbon in the region, for the reasons discussed above.

### 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.

### 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 the Climate and Environment Plan will be included in the final framework.

## **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1. In respect of the CEP update, the cost of the refresh of the Pathways will depend on the precise scope of work that is commissioned. There are also likely to be cost implications associated with consultation in respect of the CEP update, depending on the activities undertaken. Officers are currently working to refine the cost estimates associated with this work.

## **7. Legal Implications**

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

## **8. Staffing Implications**

- 8.1. Updating the CEP, including assisting with consultation activities, will be a core responsibility of a Policy Officer in the Net Zero and Energy team, together with commissioning the delivery of the updated Pathways and related work. It is also anticipated that officers in the Consultation and Engagement team will provide support for the consultation associated with updating the CEP – officers are currently considering the consultation activities that might be needed, which will determine the level of support required.

## **9. External Consultees**

- 9.1. No external consultations have been undertaken.

## **10. Recommendations**

- 10.1. That the Committee notes the contents of this report.
- 10.2. In respect of the update of the CEP, that the Committee provides its views on possible consultees for the development of the refreshed CEP.

## **11. Background Documents**

- 11.1 The Combined Authority's Climate and Environment Plan 2021 to 2024.

## **12. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Green Jobs Taskforce Final Report.