



Report to:	Place, Regeneration and Housing Committee
Date:	26 October 2023
Subject:	Monitoring Indicators
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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 an update on relevant monitoring indicators to support the work of the Committee.

2. Information

Monitoring arrangements

- 2.1. As part of agreed monitoring arrangements, the 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. The indicators reflect the outcomes that the work of the committee is seeking to improve and are intended to provide a high level, strategic picture of performance rather than a detailed examination of operational performance of specific projects. 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.
- 2.2 The core indicators agreed by the Committee are as follows:

- Health life expectancy
- Net additional dwellings
- Housing affordability
- Private rents
- Household energy efficiency
- Households in fuel poverty
- Gigabit capable internet coverage
- Mobile coverage (4G).

2.3 Indicators are reported on by exception i.e. when fresh data becomes available for each indicator, allowing the analysis to be updated. There is one indicator for which new data is available currently - households in fuel poverty - an analysis of this is provided below. Previous monitoring papers submitted to the Committee have provided detailed analysis of the latest available data for all other indicators. However, for the Committee's ease of reference, the appendix to this paper contains visualisations of the latest position for all the monitoring indicators, including those that have been reported on in detail at previous meetings.

Fuel poverty

- 2.4 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. Therefore, a household's fuel poverty status depends on the interaction of three drivers:
- Energy efficiency - as households become more energy efficient, they have lower required energy costs (see section on building energy efficiency)
 - Energy prices
 - Incomes.
- 2.5 Fuel poverty has become a much more pressing issue since late-2021. A key determinant of the extent of fuel poverty is the level of fuel prices and these have increased in an unprecedented manner since the economy re-opened following the pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine.
- 2.6 The most recent official statistics currently available are for 2021 – these do not capture the current situation in terms of fuel prices. However, they do show that West Yorkshire already faced a significant fuel poverty challenge prior to recent developments in energy markets. Around 168,000 households in West Yorkshire were in fuel poverty in 2021, equivalent to 17% of total households in the region. The prevalence of fuel poverty in West Yorkshire was higher than the national average of 13% and also higher than in Greater Manchester (15%) but slightly lower than in South Yorkshire (18%) and West Midlands CA (19%).

- 2.7 Bradford had the highest prevalence of fuel poverty in West Yorkshire based on official statistics, with 19% of its households classed as fuel poor. Across the remaining local authorities in the region, the proportion occupies a fairly narrow range from 15% in Wakefield to 17% in Calderdale and Kirklees.
- 2.8 In order to take account of the impact of the unprecedented increases in energy prices seen in the period since late-2021 and the resultant government response, the Combined Authority has produced its own indicative estimates of fuel poverty. The current prevalence of fuel poverty in West Yorkshire is estimated to be almost double that recorded in the most recent official statistics for 2021, at 30%. This is around 8 percentage points higher than the national average. The prevalence of fuel poverty is down slightly on its peak level following the April 2023 budget.
- 2.9 The current estimates reflect the influence of the current Ofgem energy price cap on average household energy bills. The switch from the Energy Price Guarantee (which implied a £2,500 annual bill equivalent for typical levels of consumption) to the price cap of £2,074 for July to September 2023 has had an alleviating effect on fuel poverty¹. This development reflects further falls in wholesale energy prices, as the market stabilises and energy suppliers return to a healthier financial position after four years of loss making.
- 2.10 National figures provide an insight into the household types most affected by fuel poverty.
- Households in the private rented sector are most likely to be in fuel poverty, mainly due to low median incomes. The prevalence of fuel poverty among households in social housing is lower due to the better energy efficiency of dwellings in this sector.
 - Single parent households have the highest prevalence of fuel poverty of any household type.
 - Ethnic minority households have a greater risk of being in fuel poverty due to low incomes but their fuel poverty gap (the reduction in fuel costs needed for a household to not be in fuel poverty) tends to be lower due to a greater likelihood of living in fuel efficient social housing.
 - Fuel poverty rates in England are typically higher amongst households containing disabled people. The impairment or condition of a disabled person can often affect their energy needs.
 - Households in the most deprived neighbourhoods are 50% more likely to be in fuel poverty.

Policy response: Better Homes Hub (BHH)

- 2.11 The Combined Authority recognises the many problems that people living in fuel poverty face. The BHH is the Combined Authority's regional programme to scale-up domestic

¹ The Ofgem energy price cap for October to December 2023, announced on 1 October, shows a further reduction to £1,923.

retrofit to alleviate fuel poverty, deliver against our climate emergency commitments, improve the quality of housing stock and health outcomes of residents and secure quality green jobs.

- 2.12 As this Committee has seen before the Better Homes Hub is a complex long-term programme that encompasses all the Combined Authority's activity on domestic retrofit, with a vision that 'Everyone in West Yorkshire can live in a warm, comfortable and low carbon home'.
- 2.14 Since the Committee had its last update, a consortium led by Energy Saving Trust has been appointed as client-side support for the BHH programme. They will provide expert advice and a robust evidence-base to drive our decision making for the programme.
- 2.15 The BHH team have also been successful in securing a total of £836,833 in funding from the Local Energy Advice Demonstrators competition from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. A supplier will be commissioned to test approaches to delivering in-person retrofit advice to hard-to-reach, seldom-heard and digitally excluded communities.
- 2.16 Work continues to progress on retrofitting homes through the social housing decarbonisation fund, developing demonstrator projects and the one stop shop, including financial options for homeowners.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1. Progress on improving building energy efficiency has a direct impact on emissions reduction as well providing a key lever for tackling fuel poverty.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1. Fuel poverty has a disproportionate impact on disadvantaged households with low incomes.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1. Single parent households and ethnic minority households are more likely to be affected by fuel poverty and fuel poverty can have a disproportionate impact on disabled people .

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 messages from the monitoring indicators.

11. Background Documents

There are no background documents referenced in this report.

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Monitoring indicators analysis