

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY

To: Chair and Members of the Combined Authority

Date: 06 December 2019

Authority/Authorities Affected: ALL

EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL ITEM: No

Non-Key Decision

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF POLICY AND STRATEGIC COMMISSIONING AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER: LOW CARBON AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION CLIMATE PROGRESS UPDATE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report is intended to update the Combined Authority on progress since a Climate Emergency was declared in July 2019. It also describes the latest position on work being undertaken by the Combined Authority that will inform a Climate Action Plan for the Liverpool City Region.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority are recommended to:

- (a) Note the progress achieved to date in the development of a range of measures and initiatives outlined in this report that contribute to the City Region reducing its carbon and climate impacts.
- (b) Agree to progress to the next stage of developing a climate action plan.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 There is near consensus from the world's leading climate scientists and experts of an acceleration in negative impacts derived from man-made climate change. The causes of many of these changes are well understood as are the appropriate responses for individual citizens, businesses, municipalities and countries.

Liverpool City Region has a rich heritage as a global, mercantile and industrial powerhouse harnessing its natural resources and talented people to be at the forefront of revolutions in industry, transport, energy, medicine and public health and social justice. These areas are at the start of another revolution in order to successfully decarbonise our industries, homes and communities whilst improving the quality of life for our citizens. This reflects the LCR's challenges in terms of its

socio-economic base, plus the need to decarbonise its energy, industrial, housing and transport assets. The city region has related challenges associated with poor air quality stemming from transport emissions in the main.

- 3.2 At the June meeting of the Combined Authority, members agreed to declare a 'Climate Emergency' for the City Region and to return to this meeting with a Climate Action Plan. Significant progress has been made in establishing the shape of this Plan, building a baseline evidence base of climate impacts in the City Region and identifying how a 'climate in all policies' might work in practice. The work of the LCR Year of the Environment committee, the LCR Air Quality Task Force and the public engagement via the LCR Listens process has also begun to provide a ground swell of public sentiment evidence which will support and direct this work.
- 3.3. At the LCR Year of the Environment Summit on 9 November 2019 the Metro Mayor announced the creation of a new City Region Climate Partnership. It is anticipated that this group will be established before the end of the year and should be given time to convene to shape and direct the work of the Combined Authority as representatives of the public and environmental interest groups.
- 3.4 To this end the Combined Authority will bring forward an Interim Climate Action Plan to the March 2020 meeting, followed by a Final plan later in the calendar year. This will allow the Climate Partnership an initial period of engagement, followed by a fuller opportunity to engage public interest groups, with a final approach agreed by the Combined Authority following the May elections, which will also reflect any political change across that period.
- 3.5 UK Government Position
In July 2019 the Government committed the UK to be Net Zero Carbon by 2050. This represents the most ambitious legally binding target of any major economy. We will need to see the direction of the next Government as to whether they will continue with this roadmap approach or whether they will propose new structures and pace of adoption and transition.

4. COMBINED AUTHORITY PROGRESS

4.1 Public Engagement

A number of recent public engagement processes have been undertaken across the city region with reference to the environment and climate change over recent months, including:

- (a) The LCR Listens process has seen environment rated as the second highest concern after transport. The framing of the questions put to the public, respondents focused on a wider environmental agenda rather than climate change, including areas such as energy, food, resilience or resource management.
- (b) As part of the 2019 Year of the Environment programme, a series of consultation events were held including one specifically focused on climate change this recommended that the Combined Authority take a leading role to shape and deliver climate change policies focused on energy, transport, housing, skills and strategic planning. Also to assist in ensuring that all LCR

areas can achieve the greatest levels of carbon reduction through shared best practice.

- (c) The Local Industrial Strategy development work featured a stakeholder consultation focused on the Clean Growth agenda and featured leaders from local industry, community energy, transport, local authorities and civic amenity groups – this offered concrete ideas and ambition to shape our approach.

4.2 Climate Evidence Base

In October 2019 the CA team were given access to the Government's 'SCATTER' model; the principle tool developed by UK Government to measure carbon footprint piloted in Greater Manchester. Data is currently being loaded and test modelling started in early November. Initial findings will be offered to the CA in early 2020. A Strategic Energy Masterplanning project commenced in September 2019. The project is mapping capacity and systems resilience to climate change across the City Region for both electricity and gas networks and will direct strategic interventions from central Government to support decarbonisation of energy and transport networks.

4.3 SDS

Joint work between LCRCA and the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) on the possible climate impacts of our approach to strategic planning will be completed in December 2019.

Early engagement on the SDS has highlighted climate response as a key topic to address – especially with younger demographics. The SDS team is undertaking preliminary work on policies which may address this, including reviewing housing standards in national and local policy, including materials and insulations standards, which may make a positive contribution to the mitigation of Climate Change. Other areas of focus will include the options to facilitate zero emission transport systems including electric vehicle charging provision and climate resilience for infrastructure and buildings from impacts such as weather events.

4.4 Housing

The City Region Housing Statement and Delivery Plan 2019-24 was approved by the CA on 1 November. A key priority of the Statement is to improve housing quality in the city, including reducing carbon emissions from our housing stock (roughly a third of city region carbon emissions comes from homes). This will be achieved through SDS housing standards and the Strategic Investment Fund whereby housing development that the CA funds will be expected to be thermally and energy efficient. This will also help address fuel poverty. The City Region has recent experience of running large-scale energy efficiency housing retrofit programmes that delivered transformative change in efficiency, liveability and affordability. The City Region also hosts several leading research centres focused on aspects of building efficiency. The expertise in these centres will be harnessed to deliver sustainable solutions that are appropriate for the City Region.

4.5 Transport

In June 2019, the CA adopted its new Transport Plan. This includes prioritisation of green and active travel options as part of our delivery plan. Specific activities in delivery phase include:

- (a) Delivery of the LCR Hydrogen Bus project by mid 2020 – this will put 25 hydrogen-powered busses on our roads, and establish a permanent refuelling station in St Helens.
- (b) Project Charge commenced in July 2019. It is a national research programme centred on LCR that aims to understand the impacts, operational requirements and supply chain opportunities from the mass electrification of transport in the City Region, and the geographic master planning of a network of electric charging stations for the City Region.
- (c) In October 2019, the CA Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan was adopted and Simon O'Brien was appointed LCR Cycling Commissioner.
- (d) The first of the new Class 777 Merseyrail trains has been assembled and commenced pre-delivery testing in early November. The new units are highly energy efficient and are also being designed to allow future energy technologies such as battery energy storage.
- (e) New train fleets are being introduced by Northern Trains and Trans Pennine Express. Both fleets will allow much greater running on electricity rather than diesel, significantly reducing carbon and air quality emissions from regional and inter-city rail operations.
- (f) Liverpool will have new direct services to both Glasgow and Edinburgh from early December. These will be the first direct rail services to Scotland for thirty years.
- (g) The Halton Curve became fully operational during the summer bringing new, direct services between Liverpool and North Wales.
- (h) Work is underway to create and consider options for bus reform in the City Region, with the intention to deliver a higher quality, fully integrated bus network that provides an attractive option to the private car for local journeys.

4.6 Air Quality

The CA approved an Interim Air Quality Action Plan in November 2019. The report highlights how tackling poor air quality and harmful emissions are mutually supportive, especially in terms of transport interventions that seek to support modal switch, clean fuels and a mass increase in walking and cycling.

In early November, Sefton Council announced plans to explore options for the implementation of a Clean Air Zone (CAZ). This could see the introduction of a charge on Class B vehicles like Heavy Goods Vehicles, buses, taxis and private hire vehicles that do not meet required emission standards. Other City Region authorities are also considering options to reduce emissions from polluting vehicles.

4.7 Energy

There has been significant activity on the energy front since June 2019, including:

- (a) Detailed technical, commercial and environmental assessments are continuing on the Mersey Tidal project to ensure that the business case assessment is put before the CA in March 2020.
- (b) Throughout Qs 2 and 3 of 2019, the Crown Estate approved proposals for a further extension of offshore windfarm in Liverpool Bay to capacity of 2000 MW and released priority for a further 3000MW of investment by 2032.
- (c) Liverpool City Region has also been selected to host a new Offshore Energy Alliance centre. This centre is a joint venture between the Offshore Wind Industries Council and the Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult.
- (d) LCR Hydrogen projects received funding from BEIS to support industrial decarbonisation and trialling the use of hydrogen in energy provision: Project Centurion, HyNet and Glass Futures.

A Hydrogen Plan for the City Region will be published in January 2020. This will offer a roadmap for exploitation of a key City Region 'competitive advantage' in the low carbon economy and offer concrete investment proposals and timelines for delivery which will support our efforts to deliver a net zero carbon economy. The plan will be the first in a series of technology plans focused on delivering specific areas of energy development such as offshore wind and power networks. The plans will be developed in conjunction with key stakeholders including local and central government, businesses, regulators and investors.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial

The financial requirements to complete the required carbon assessments and climate change resilience requirements are to be determined.

A dedicated project management resource requirement has been identified to ensure the effective delivery of the required workstreams, external stakeholder relations and supply chain engagement.

5.2 Human Resources

Additional resource requirements to deliver individual elements will be identified.

5.3 Physical Assets

The medium and long-term viability of major Physical Assets will need to be assessed for their resilience and adaptability arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report.

- 5.4 Information Technology
There are no Information Technology implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report.

6. RISKS AND MITIGATION

- 6.1 There is presently no dedicated budget for a climate change and decarbonisation programme of works and resources. A costed options paper will be produced for the Combined Authority
- 6.2 There is potential for changes in national Government's energy, environmental or industrial policies and strategies post Brexit that could have ramifications for a range of the City Region's climate change projects and investments. The prevailing expectation is that existing standards and regulations will be 'passported' across and remain in force during the period.
- 6.3 There will be a new government from mid-December. It is fully expected that, whatever its makeup, climate change mitigation and adaptation will be at the forefront of government thinking.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

Members are reminded that under Public Sector Equality Duty, the Combined Authority has a duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Whilst the level of detail contained within this report does not lend itself to a full appraisal of the operational implications with respect to equality and diversity, it is possible that there could be resultant implications for people who share a protected characteristic, for example older disabled people. Therefore whilst there are no issues with the budget itself, any actions undertaken as part of the management of any schemes, the equalities consequences will be fully appraised and considered as part of the process, and any negative implications for any of the protected characteristics will be mitigated, where possible, subject to available resources.

8. COMMUNICATION ISSUES

None as a direct result of this report.

9. CONCLUSION

The Combined Authority is providing thought leadership on delivering viable, scalable and deliverable climate change solutions. However, a strong and dynamic evidence base and significant public engagement are necessary to ensure a sustainable, and community led, approach to this agenda. It also requires effective communications to allow all our citizens and businesses to engage with and understand what is needed from them, how they can deliver their contributions and ensure opportunities from this revolution can be maximised to deliver a truly sustainable City Region economy and society.

The Combined Authority will bring forward an Interim Climate Action Plan to the March 2020 CA meeting which highlights the required pace of action and change based on modelling and evidence and offers a framework for delivery developed in harness with the new LCR Climate Partnership.

COUNCILLOR ROB POLHILL

Portfolio Holder: Low Carbon and Renewable Energy

AILEEN JONES

Assistant Director of Policy and Strategic Commissioning

Contact Officer – Mark Knowles, Lead Officer: Energy and Climate Change