

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY

To: Metro Mayor and Members of the Combined Authority

Date: 24 January 2020

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

LCR CLIMATE PARTNERSHIP

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Following the announcement by the Metro Mayor at the Environment Conference in November 2019 to create a Climate Partnership and a fund of £500k, this report is intended to update the Combined Authority on progress to create a Climate Partnership to co-ordinate the City Region's response to the climate and ecological emergency.
- 1.2 Further information will be provided on the funding arrangements in the near future.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority are recommended to:

- (a) Note the progress in the development of a vibrant and sustainable Climate Partnership that will contribute to the City Region reducing its carbon and climate impacts.
- (b) Note that more detail on the fund to support community environment projects, its terms of reference and bidding process will be shared at a future meeting of the Combined Authority.
- (c) Agree to progress to the next stage of developing the Climate Partnership.
- (d) To agree that the nomination of the Mayoral Advisor for the Natural Environment to act as Chair of the Climate Partnership.

3. BACKGROUND

Climate Partnership

- 3.1 The 2019 Year of the Environment saw more than 28,500 people and 125 partner organisations take part in more than 500 events and activities across the city region. There has been real appetite to engage with critical issues such as the Climate Emergency, commitments to clean the air, and the Metro Mayor's commitments to a Decade of the Environment.
- 3.2 At the LCR Green Summit in November 2019, the Metro Mayor stated that he would establish a Liverpool City Region Climate Partnership to co-ordinate our response to the climate and ecological emergency. This would bring together all organisations that want to play their part in achieving the city region's goal to be net zero carbon by 2040. The creation of a Climate Partnership will help build on the momentum of Year of the Environment (2019) and ensure that we collectively do what we can locally to address this global issue.
- 3.3 From an LCRCA perspective, it will be important to align the work of the Partnership carefully with the implementation of the Local Industrial Strategy, the Spatial Development Strategy, Air Quality Task Force and related technical work on the development of the Climate Action Plan stemming from the Climate Emergency commitment in July 2019..
- 3.4 There is also a natural link between the establishment of the Partnership and the management of the environment projects fund, providing that issues around potential conflicts of interest are managed carefully.
- 3.5 In governance terms, the Partnership could operate in a similar way and draw evidence from, the Air Quality Task Force established in March 2019, by acting as an advisory umbrella group to the LCRCA and to its partner authorities. The Partnership could capture concerns and ideas from its members, particularly from those operating outside of traditional public sector structures. Like the Air Quality Task Force, a partnership approach of this nature also recognises that no single body can tackle the problems faced in isolation.
- 3.6 A number of membership options have been considered. The option to create a core partnership group which is supported by a wider reference "plenary" group gives the best balance of inclusive representation and provides a mechanism to allow meaningful debate and representation with a much wider group of stakeholders and interested parties. It would provide the ability to focus the agenda and issues around tangible tasks and the wider "plenary" group gives a voice to individual citizens and groups.
- 3.7 In all cases, the work of the Partnership and plenary group would be supported by the Principal Policy Officer for Environment position that is in the process of being filled.

3.8 Core membership of the partnership group could include the following:-

Member	Nos of reps *
Combined Authority (Chair)	2
LCR local authority representatives	6
Chair of Nature Connected	1
LCR Growth Platform / LEP	1
Representatives of large charitable bodies and statutory consultees	2
Representatives from grassroots and community action bodies	2
Business representatives	2
Youth representatives	2
Representative from academia	2
Impartial think-tanks	1
Central Government representative	1

*To be confirmed

Community Environment Fund

3.9 At the 2019 LCR Environment Summit, the Metro Mayor announced a new £500k fund to support community led environment projects. The Combined Authority is working on the detail of the fund, including the capital and revenue splits, focus of terms of reference, and a bidding process. This should be informed by the new Climate Partnership group, and the Fund will therefore be formally launched in mid-2020, following agreement of the Combined Authority and its members.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

Funding for the new position to support the Climate Partnership and the associated project fund has been identified and agreed

4.2 Human Resources

The management of the Climate Partnership will be the primary responsibility of the Principal Officer – Environment Policy. This new role is being recruited to at the moment.

4.3 Physical Assets

There are no Physical Asset implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report

4.4 Information Technology

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

5. RISKS AND MITIGATION

- 5.1 There is potential for changes in the new national Government's energy, environmental or industrial policies and strategies. Brexit could also 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.
- 5.2 The incoming government outlined their commitment to climate change adaptation and mitigation in their manifesto. We expect this to be translated into policy positions in all key government spending departments from mid-year.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2 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 creation of the climate partnership itself, any actions it undertakes and any equalities consequences arising 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.

7. COMMUNICATION ISSUES

- 7.1 Climate Change is a defining issue of our age. Public consciousness of the issues is rising quickly alongside expectations to see actions to address the issues.
- 7.2 There is a significant job of work required to ensure that climate literacy is widespread amongst citizens to enable meaningful engagement and active participation in preparing and managing the transition of communities, institutions and economies to a net zero carbon position.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 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. This is required alongside effective communications to allow all our citizens and businesses to engage with and understand what is required of 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.

- 8.2 The Climate Partnership group aims to address the issues of citizen engagement and community involvement in making the transition to a net zero society a reality.

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