

North and West Yorkshire Business rates pool 2019 - 20

Lead organisation	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Name of project	Climate Emergency Evidence Base
Area project covers	North and West Yorkshire
Lead contact	Jacqui Warren / Noel Collings
Accountable officer (within Authority)	Alan Reiss
Total cost of project	£100,000
Total BRP funding requested	£100,000

Project details	
Theme your project is applying under:	Low Carbon
Project description	
<p><u>Summary</u></p> <p>Nine of the 13 local authorities plus the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (Combined Authority) that make up North and West Yorkshire have declared climate emergencies, committing them to acting to address increasing emissions.</p> <p>This project will help to develop the evidence base that will enable local authorities to have a better understanding of how and where they should focus their efforts to address the climate challenge. The evidence base which is developed as part of this project will ultimately lead to the development and delivery of interventions that reduce emissions and provide resilience to a changing climate across the region.</p> <p>Funding allocated to this project through the Business Rates Pool will be used for several discrete consultancy pieces of work that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act to strengthen regional and local understanding of where public authorities should be focussing their resources to achieve the largest emissions savings. • Facilitates the delivery of interventions which will enable public authorities to address the climate emergency. • Enables delivery to be accelerated in line with the urgency of needing to act. <p><u>Key activities to be funded as part of the project</u></p> <p>The project will fund up to five discrete consultancy pieces of work that further regional and local knowledge of the interventions, activity and mechanisms that are required to address the climate emergency. Key requirements of each piece of</p>	

consultancy work will be to facilitate the delivery at pace and scale of interventions that reduce emissions and improve climate resilience.

While subject to further consultation with local authority officers, the initial list of work that could be funded through this project is:

- **North and West Yorkshire Emission Reduction Pathways:** identify the sector-specific interventions, their costs and delivery timetable which will contribute to the region becoming net-zero carbon. A budget has already been secured for this work from the Combined Authority and the North East, Yorkshire and Humber Energy Hub in respect of the Leeds City Region and how to make progress towards the declared net-zero carbon by 2038 target. However, the additional funding provided through the Business Rates Pool will allow the work to be extended to the whole of North and West Yorkshire and for more detailed modelling and scenario development to be undertaken.
- **Local Authority Emission Baselineing:** producing emission baselines of existing local authority operational activities e.g. energy use in buildings, fuel use in fleet vehicles. There is a need to increase the level of knowledge across local authorities of where to prioritise investment to address the climate emergency.
- **Large-Scale Solar PV Constraints Study:** aiming to develop a pipeline of large-scale solar PV installations that could act as a joint investment project for local authorities in North and West Yorkshire. The project would be focussed on where current, and potential, local authority assets could be used to site large-scale solar installations. The information generated through this project could be used to seek a joint venture partner to undertake the development and delivery of the solar PV installations.
- **Public Sector as Market Makers:** developing the understanding of how and where the different powers, e.g. legal, financial, ownership, that local authorities have available to them can be used to stimulate the market to deliver against the climate emergency ambitions. This piece of work is likely to include a review of existing procurement strategies and how these can be refreshed to include the climate change agenda and the development of evaluation methodologies that build carbon reduction into procurement processes.
- **Tree Planting and Peatland Recovery Project Pipeline:** aiming to develop a strategic pipeline of tree planting and peat recovery schemes that could bid into future funding streams e.g. Northern Forest, Shared Prosperity Fund, Environment Land Management Scheme.

It is unlikely that £100,000 will fund all the projects identified above fully, therefore Members of the Pool are asked to indicate which of the project should be prioritised. Officers will then work to refine the preferred proposals.

Strategic fit

Clean growth, the reduction of emissions and the protection of the natural environment are key to the productivity and growth of North and West Yorkshire. Indeed, the emerging Local Industrial Strategies for the Leeds City Region and York, North Yorkshire and East Riding identify clean growth and emission

reduction as key priorities. This reflects the importance placed on the clean growth agenda at a national level with a Clean Growth Grand Challenge incorporated into the national Industrial Strategy. This project will make a direct contribution to the clean growth agenda at a regional level through the identification of interventions that reduce emissions and improve the natural environment.

In addition, the Leeds City Region Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) has the creation of a zero-carbon economy underpinned by high-quality green and blue infrastructure as a key ambition and identifies energy and environmental resilience as one of four priorities for the City Region. Again, this project will make a direct contribution to achieving the ambition and priority through the identification of interventions that reduce emissions and improve the natural environment.

Both the Leeds City Region and York, North Yorkshire and East Riding LEPs have recently completed Energy Strategies. These strategies begin the process of identifying the interventions that could be implemented to address climate change and reduce emissions within an energy context. This project will supplement the outputs of both strategies enabling the region to have a better understanding of where resources and funding should be targeted.

Climate emergencies have been declared by several local authorities in North and West Yorkshire. This replicates a trend that is being seen across the UK. By declaring a climate emergency local authorities are making a public commitment to address the causes of climate change and implement interventions that reduce emissions. This project will provide the evidence base on which local authorities can base their response to their respective climate emergencies.

The Tyndall Centre for Climate Change has recently developed an emission reduction target and carbon budget for North and West Yorkshire. To comply with the Paris Agreement on Climate Change the region should aim to be zero carbon by 2039 and to remain within a carbon budget of 134 MtCO₂ over the period 2018 to 2100. This equates to achieving savings of 13.5 percent per year. This project will help to identify the interventions that will deliver the pace and scale of change required.

Problem / Opportunity

The following problems and opportunities have been identified which this project seeks to address:

- The opportunity of transitioning to a zero-carbon economy was articulated in the Leeds City Region Energy Strategy and Delivery Plan. High-level modelling suggested that the transition could be worth over £11 billion in GVA and 100,000 jobs. This project will begin to identify where these financial benefits could be made.
- Nine of the 13 local authorities, plus the Combined Authority, that make up North and West Yorkshire have declared climate emergencies. An almost complete decarbonisation of all elements of society will be required if local authorities are to deliver against their climate emergencies. This project will provide some answers on how local authorities can deliver against their climate emergencies.
- Local authorities that have declared climate emergencies are all developing their local response. It is likely there will be synergies between each

response and economies of scale and efficiency of resources could be made by working on this agenda at a regional level. Given the regional focus of this project, it will enable these benefits to be achieved.

- Alongside the declaration of climate emergencies several local authorities have also set challenging emission reduction targets e.g. zero-carbon by 2030 (Leeds City Council and City of York Council). As with point two this project will provide some answers on how local authorities can deliver against these targets.
- Across North and West Yorkshire there is a need to increase the level of knowledge to deliver against the climate emergency declarations. This project will provide added capacity, knowledge and evidence on how to reduce emissions.
- While there is some evidence for North and West Yorkshire that can be used to prioritise interventions for delivery e.g. Energy Strategies for the Leeds City Region and York, North Yorkshire, and East Riding, there is a need for additional, robust evidence on which investment decisions, funding bids and resource asks can be based. This project will provide this information.

Project outputs and outcomes

The outputs of the project are:

- North and West Yorkshire Emission Reduction Pathways
- Large-Scale Solar PV Constraints Study
- Public Sector as Market Makers Study, including specific procurement guidance and mechanisms
- Local Authority emission baselines and interventions
- Pipeline of tree planting and peatland recovery schemes

The outcomes of the project are:

- Strengthened regional and local understanding of where local authorities should be focussing their resources to achieve the largest emission savings.
- Better understanding of the interventions that need to be implemented to address the climate emergency.
- Acceleration of the delivery of interventions in line with the pace and scale of change that is required to deliver against climate change commitments.

Timescales for delivery

It is proposed that the project begins in October 2019 and is completed by May 2020.

Governance and accountability

The proposed governance and accountability arrangements for the project are:

- The Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for the project is Alan Reiss, Director Policy, Strategy and Communication for the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.
- The project managers for the delivery of the project are Jacqui Warren, Head of Energy and Sustainability, Noel Collings, Policy Officer for the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, and Katie Thomas, Circular Economy and Low Carbon Lead for the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding LEP.
- The Green Economy Panel of the Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership (the LEP) will act to oversee progress and advise on project related matters.
- Update reports on progress will be reported to the Business Board of the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding LEP and North Yorkshire County Council.
- The Chief Executive of Harrogate Council as Lead Chief Executive for Energy in the Yorkshire and Humber will be provided with regular updates on progress to deliver the project.
- Engagement and input will be sought on the individual consultancy pieces from local authorities across the region.
- Other relevant panels of both LEPs will be engaged with on an as and when basis.