

**ANNEX 2: WEST OF ENGLAND COMBINED AUTHORITY
COMMITTEE AND JOINT COMMITTEE**

DATE: 9 October 2020

REPORT TITLE: CLIMATE EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

DIRECTOR: JESSICA LEE, HEAD OF POLICY & STRATEGY

AUTHOR: HELEN EDELSTYN, SENIOR POLICY MANAGER

Purpose

1. In July 2019 the West of England Combined Authority Committee agreed to develop an action to plan to work up the options and actions for delivering carbon neutrality by 2030.
2. This report provides the draft Climate Emergency Action Plan.
3. The plan has been developed with input from representatives from our unitary authority partners, who have given their time, knowledge, expertise and skills to inform its content through a series of workshops. We will continue this co-production approach as we implement the actions in this plan.
4. We have also worked closely with our businesses to understand their needs and how WECA can help foster green innovation and invest in the skills needed to make sure our region takes advantage of the economic benefits of clean growth.
5. Delivering our regional goal will be complex and will require action by national government, combined authorities, unitary authorities, individuals, business and international government. WECA does not have the funding or levers to do it all alone. The diagram below sets out the areas WECA is responsible for:



- The plan is not intended to be fixed, nor can it predict an absolute pathway to carbon neutrality. Over the next few years there will be decisions nationally on the future of our energy production and supply, as well as investment in new green fuels; these decisions by Government will influence our ability to reach our climate emergency goal regionally. By focusing our efforts on the steps, we can take now and over the next five years, to support and enhance local delivery we are putting the West of England on the pathway towards net zero carbon and are not constrained by the big and structural decisions Government needs to take to make our net zero carbon future possible.
- We are committed to playing our role in influencing and supporting local action through the funding and strategic policy decisions we make. To support this, every committee report requires the author to consider the impact on climate change.

Recommendation

- The WECA Committee and the Joint Committee are asked to approve the draft Climate Emergency Action Plan.

Impact of Covid-19 pandemic

The climate emergency action plan will be a key part of our Covid-19 recovery plan. It is about supporting our climate emergency goal alongside securing our economic future following the covid-19 outbreak. It will be a part of a set of plans for the region, that stem from our Local Industrial Strategy, and take the ambitious action needed to deliver clean and inclusive economic growth.

The Combined Authority has actively reviewed its key activities and work programme to reflect changing priorities as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Specific issues relating to the Covid-19 situation that impact on or are addressed through this report are as follows:

- Work towards the decarbonisation of the transport system and increase cycling and walking and the use of public transport; building on positive behaviour change following the covid-19 lockdown period

- Help business and local people benefit from growth in the green economy; maximising government green recovery investment in the region and supporting our businesses to build back better

Background / Issues for Consideration

In July 2019 the West of England Combined Authority Committee agreed to develop an action to plan to work up the options and actions for delivering carbon neutrality by 2030. This report provides the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

Co-Production

The plan has been developed with input from representatives from our unitary authority partners, who have given their time, knowledge, expertise and skills to inform its content through a series of workshops. In addition, the action set out within the plan build on and support the actions and commitments made by our unitary authority partners. We will continue this co-production approach as we implement the actions in this plan.

We have also worked closely with our businesses to understand their needs and how WECA can help foster green innovation and invest in the skills needed to make sure our region takes advantage of the economic benefits of clean growth.

Monitoring progress

Each year, we will update and report on progress against actions set out in our 5 challenge areas, in line with WECA's monitoring and evaluation framework. As actions are developed to the business case stage, we will estimate the carbon reductions they will deliver with more precision and will evaluate these estimates during delivery.

We will continue to report to Committee every 6 months on delivery progress [as agreed in July 2019]; the next 6 monthly report will be April 2021 subject to agreement of the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

Consultation

- 7.1 The plan has been developed with input from representatives from our unitary authority partners, who have given their time, knowledge, expertise and skills to inform its content through a series of workshops. We will continue this co-production approach as we implement the actions in this plan.
- 7.2 We have also worked closely with our businesses to understand their needs and how WECA can help foster green innovation and invest in the skills needed to make sure our region takes advantage of the economic benefits of clean growth.

Public Sector Equality Duties

- 8 An Equalities Impact Assessment [EqIA] has been conducted and concluded that there are a wide range of opportunities in respect of the actions detailed within the Plan which have the potential to positively impact on all, regardless of Protected Characteristic or socio-economic status.

Finance Implications, including economic impact assessment where appropriate:

- 9 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. We are committed to embedding our zero-carbon goal within our business plan, policy and programmes with each individual project assessing its environmental impact as part of the initial assessment criteria.

The overall WECA Investment Programme will be kept under regular review with further consideration to any specific projects required to help the region move towards zero-carbon.

Advice given by: Malcolm Coe, Director of Investment & Corporate Services

Legal Implications:

- 10 The legislation and guidance being issued as a result of Covid-19 and climate emergency will need to be kept under review as the actions outlined are implemented. This will ensure that WECA is complying with its statutory obligations.

The combined and unprecedented impact of Covid-19 on the local economy, both on businesses and the workforce, will exacerbate inequalities, with some groups disproportionately impacted for the short, medium and long term. The need for robust equalities impact assessments at the appropriate time is therefore critical.

Advice given by: Shahzia Daya, Director of Legal

Climate Change Implications

- 11 On 19 July 2019, the West of England Combined Authority declared a climate emergency, recognising the huge significance of climate change and its impact on the health, safety and wellbeing of the region's residents.

This action plan sets out the actions WECA will take, within our powers, to support the rapid delivery of this climate emergency goal for the West of England.

Land/property Implications

- 12 There are no direct land/property implications arising from this report, however we are committed to embedding our zero-carbon goal within our business plan, policy, programmes and projects.

Human Resources Implications:

- 13 There are no direct human resource implications arising from this report, however we are committed to embedding our zero-carbon goal within our business plan, policy, programmes and projects.

Appendix:

Climate Emergency Action Plan

West of England Combined Authority Contact:

Any person seeking background information relating to this item should seek the assistance of the contact officer for the meeting who is Ian Hird on 07436 600313; or by email:

democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk