

Decision Log

Decision Title: Heat from Mines Feasibility and Development Funding Application Form

Decision Date: 27th February 2024

Decision Reference Number: ENV_2024_0009

Decision Taken

That £1.55m of MCA funding set out in the Feasibility and Development Funding Application Form will be used for investigating heat from mines including:-

- 1) MCA and UA officer time including the recruitment of a new Project Manager
- 2) An opportunity map for the West of England
- 3) An area study for Bath and North East Somerset (around the settlements of Radstock and Midsomer Norton)
- 4) Up to 5 detailed site studies to confirm suitable location(s) for testing
- 5) Ground investigations into the mines; and communications with residents who may be effected by these.

Reasons for the Decision

To achieve net zero by 2030, we need to decarbonize heat. With c100,000 homes above or near to former mines in the West of England, the potential for heat from mines need investigation. The principle for investing £1.66m of Green Recovery Fund (part of the MCA Investment Fund) was agreed at Committee in March 2023.

The investigations will require project officer and project manager support to progress the project through work packages identified in Appendix 1. The Project Support Officer role was approved by Env Directors in July 2023 and has been recruited into the MCA (using c£99k of the £1.66m). Appendix 1 does not define which Local Authority hosts the Project Manager; however, the intention agreed by Environment Directors is for this Project Manager to be hosted by South Gloucestershire Council, and for them to be managing this project across the West of England. The recruitment of this role is needed to progress work packages further.

The selection of which sites to do detailed desktop investigations on; and the subsequent decision of where to invest the majority of this funding in ground investigations requires careful consideration. This Paper proposes the assessment of these sites is carried out in collaboration between MCA and UA officers; and brought to Environment Directors for decision; and again for decision, following these investigations, the ultimate decision of which site(s) to conduct ground investigations.

Authority for the decision

A delegation to Environment Director by West of England Committee on 6 October 2023 to:- *approve business cases and funding applications within the Green Recovery Fund (approved by Committee in March 2023) be delegated to the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority's Head of Environment in consultation with Unitary Authority Environment Directors. In the event of a consensus not being reached at Director level, decision making to be escalated to the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in consultation with the Unitary Authority CEOs.*

Decision-Taker

Full Name: Roger Hoare

Position: Director of Environment

Date: 27 February 2024

In Consultation with: Unitary Authority Environment Directors