

Report to Sheffield City Region Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting:	29 October 2020
Subject:	Climate Emergency – Progress to Date
Purpose of the Report:	To provide an update on the implementation of the progress made since the Climate Emergency declaration in November 2019, providing responses to specific questions raised by the OSC Board.
Recommendation(s):	That the progress in delivering the Net Zero agenda be noted; and the comments of the Committee are invited on the issues raised in this report.
Category of Report: Open	
Under the Freedom of Information Act and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, this paper and any appendices will be made available under the Combined Authority Publication Scheme.	

Summary:

The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the implementation of the progress made since the Climate Emergency declaration in November 2019, providing responses to specific questions raised by the OSC Board:

1. What actions have been undertaken since the MCA declared a Climate Emergency at the MCA meeting on 19 November 2019?
2. How does the MCA's leadership champion and direct action on climate change?
3. How is the MCA adopting a clear and detailed strategic plan, and how is it mainstreaming climate change mitigation and adaptation?
4. Has the MCA reviewed its investment strategy, supply chains and procurement models to give due consideration to climate change impacts?
5. How is the MCA integrating sustainability and resilience into its transport and energy plans?
6. How has the MCA set out policies encouraging high levels of energy efficiency and sustainability in new buildings?
 - a. If these policies exist, are they sufficiently ambitious, and how do they tie into national incentives where relevant?
7. How is the MCA promoting climate education, diversifying the labour market and focusing on sectors that are sustainable?
8. How does the MCA identify those who are most at risk from the impacts of climate change, and what is being done to assist the most vulnerable?
9. How is the MCA supporting and working with all relevant public?

1 Introduction/Context

- 1.1 At the November 2019 meeting, the MCA declared a climate emergency. This recognised that due to the need for urgent action to tackle the causes and effects of climate change, fundamental change and strong leadership will be required from the whole of the public sector. The answers to the specific questions asked by the Committee are set out below.

2 Responses to the Questions Raised

2.1 Question 1 - What actions have been undertaken since the MCA declared a Climate Emergency at the MCA meeting on 19 November 2019?

Following the declaration of a Climate Emergency in November 2019, a Climate Response Framework was developed and presented to the MCA Board in January 2020. The Framework provides a high-level approach for delivering on the declaration and included the 'Net Zero Target' date of 2040 with a carbon budget of 44.7 MtCO₂. The MCA adopted the Framework at that meeting and agreed to carrying out further work that would develop specific interventions to deliver against the Framework. In July, the consultant Urban Foresight was appointed to support the MCA in developing a Net Zero Programme, which will set out priority actions and activities, their interdependencies and the phasing of delivery to meet the Net Zero ambitions and target. The first draft of this work is due to be completed by the end of October.

2.2 Question 2 - How does MCAs leadership champion and direct action on climate change?

Within the Climate Response Framework there are five broad areas of action including 'Leadership'. One way in which Leadership has been shown so far is through the creation of a Net Zero Partnership Board. This Board is Chaired by Mayor Jarvis and consists of Members of both Houses of Parliament; Leaders or Portfolio Holders from all South Yorkshire Local Authorities; Vice Chancellors of both Sheffield Universities; the Lord-Lieutenant of South Yorkshire; the Chief Executive of the Manufacturing Forum; representatives from the 'blue light' services; and others. The Board provides high-level strategic input and oversight to the Net Zero Programme and has met twice in 2020 (February and October).

2.3 Question 3 - How is the MCA adopting a clear and detailed strategic plan, and how is it mainstreaming climate change mitigation and adaptation?

The clear and detailed strategic plan being developed is the Net Zero Programme which will be in draft form by the end of October 2020. The Programme is being developed around the Climate Response Framework, as discussed in para 2.1, and one of the five action areas is 'Climate Adaptation,' which includes a number of actions to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change in South Yorkshire such as in relation to flooding, as well as natural capital mapping and tree planting in liaison with the Woodland Trust.

2.4 Question 4 - Has the MCA reviewed its investment strategy, supply chains and procurement models to give due consideration to climate change impacts?

The review of the appraisal process for investments, procurement processes, and frameworks is underway by the MCA Executive. An example output is the draft SCR Housing Fund (Brownfield) which is being considered by the SCR Housing and Infrastructure Board on 22 October 2020. It includes the intention for higher environmental standards and decarbonisation measures to be incorporated within the housing schemes that the MCA supports through the Fund.

2.5 Question 5 - How is the MCA integrating sustainability and resilience into its transport and energy plans?

The SCR Transport Strategy sets out the strategy and measures to be taken / are being taken to decarbonise transport between now and 2040 to reduce our emissions and improve our air quality. The SCR Energy Strategy incorporates the policies and targets from the Transport Strategy to ensure alignment and complementarity with the wider energy and low carbon reduction measures; and together they will form much of the 'Carbon Reduction' strand of Net Zero Programme.

2.6 Question 6 - How has the MCA set out policies encouraging high levels of energy efficiency and sustainability in new buildings?

- **If these policies exist, are they sufficiently ambitious, and how do they tie into national incentives where relevant?**

Policy on energy efficiency of existing and new buildings is contained within the SEP and SCR Energy Strategy. Due to the current availability of funding from Central Government for energy efficiency – totaling around £8bn – work is ongoing with the Local Authorities, social housing providers, and the North East, Yorkshire and Humber (NEYH) Energy Hub, to ensure that all opportunities to fund energy efficiency within the existing housing stock, public buildings, and business premises are maximised. Current Government funding schemes include the Green Homes Grant, Local Authority Delivery Scheme, Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, and Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund.

2.7 Question 7 - How is the MCA promoting climate education, diversifying the labour market and focusing on sectors that are sustainable?

Little work has been undertaken to date looking at climate education. However, this has been highlighted to the Net Zero Partnership Board by the Manufacturing Forum as a gap which businesses would like to be filled.

2.8 Question 8 - How does the MCA identify those who are most at risk from the impacts of climate change, and what is being done to assist the most vulnerable?

Sheffield Hallam University are partnering with the MCA to carry out research including a piece focussed on a 'just transition to net zero for Sheffield City Region'. This work will highlight the exposure, vulnerability and opportunities in relation to net zero and develop a set of principles for a just transition. Work is underway with local authorities and the NEYH Energy Hub on specific programme interventions to target Green Homes Grant support to low income families.

2.9 Question 9 - How is the MCA supporting and working with all relevant public, private and civic actors in the area towards climate change mitigation and adaptation?

Please refer to the creation of the Net Zero Partnership Board noted in para 2.2. Further to this, conversations have been ongoing with a large number of local private sector organisations working in different areas of the low carbon economy to match them with potential projects and unlock new opportunities. Hydrogen potential, flood prevention, natural flood management, tree planting, and green infrastructure all form part of these discussions.

a. Financial

The Mayor has allocated £400k from the Mayoral Capacity Fund to take forward the initial climate change project work. The Net Zero Programme development work will help to identify how the various actions and activities will be best implemented and where resources will be required and from what funding source. Any future financial implications for the MCA in supporting the delivery of the Programme will be considered through the MCAs medium-term financial planning process.

Further to this, £2.6m has recently been accepted from the Government's Get Britain Building Fund to install a programme of circa 230 electric vehicle charging points throughout South Yorkshire. Work is underway to deliver this programme within the next 18 months.

b. Legal

There are no specific legal issues arising from this report.

c. Risk Management

Once adopted, a risk management plan will be produced for the Net Zero Programme as a whole and for individual projects managed by the MCA.

d. Environmental

The Net Zero Programme will form the core of the MCA’s environmental strategy approach to deliver both the SEP and the Net Zero Framework ambitions.

e. Equality Impact Assessment

None arising directly from this report. The detailed Net Zero Programme will be inclusive through covering all of South Yorkshire, and the outcomes such as cleaner air, better health and wellbeing, more attractive urban and rural environments will be shared by all. Principles will be developed to ensure a just transition to Net Zero.

f. Performance Management/Measuring Outcomes

The Net Zero Programme has a long-term target of becoming a net zero economy by 2040. A single pathway to reach this goal was highlighted by Ricardo Energy & Environment in their report which produced the Net Zero target and carbon budget, and included targets for energy efficiency, renewable energy generation, transport decarbonisation and much more.

The Net Zero Programme development work includes considering what progress has been made to date in addressing the Climate Emergency and therefore, what further actions and delivery timescales are required to accelerate change and meet the SCRs 2040 Net Zero target. The programme will include a framework for monitoring further progress to ensure an up-to-date position is known over the coming years.

3 Consideration of alternative approaches

3.1 The MCA took the decision to declare a Climate Emergency; adopt the Climate Response Framework; and to develop a Net Zero Programme. Along with the SCR Energy Strategy, various options have been considered in developing each of these, and continual monitoring and evaluation will ensure that options continue to be kept ‘live’ for consideration, should alternative courses of action need to be taken to maintain progress on meeting the Net Zero target.

4 Issues the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may wish to consider

4.1 Answers to the questions raised by the Committee are set out in Sections 2 above.

5 Recommendations

5.1 That the progress in delivering the Net Zero agenda be noted; and the comments of the Committee are invited on the issues raised in this report.

6 Appendices/Annexes

6.1 N/A

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Other sources and references: N/A	