

27TH JANUARY 2020

CLIMATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE FRAMEWORK

Purpose of Report

This report outlines the proposed response framework to the climate emergency following its declaration at the 18th November 2019 Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) meeting.

Thematic Priority

Secure investment in infrastructure where it will do most to support growth.

Freedom of Information and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972

This paper will be available under the Combined Authority Publication Scheme

Recommendations

It is recommended that members:

- approve, subject to any final changes, the proposed response framework to the climate emergency and note the further work that will take place over the coming months to put in place specific interventions to deliver upon the policies set out.
- agree to receive the Energy Strategy; the first component of the framework, at the March MCA meeting.
- support the Mayor's intention to appoint a Climate Change Commissioner and form an advisory panel.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** At the 18th 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.
- 1.2** It was agreed that a report be provided at the next meeting setting out how we would move towards a sustainable City Region. This report, and the attached framework, sets out the City Region's approach to delivering upon the declaration.

2. Proposal and justification

- 2.1** It is recognised that a broad, far reaching and ambitious set of changes are required across a range of issues if SCR is to achieve net zero. The attached response to the Climate Emergency sets out this framework recognising that, at this stage, we do not know all the answers or have all the solutions.

- 2.2** A key component of declaring a climate emergency, is the target date by which the City Region will seek to achieve 'net zero'. Net zero emissions means that the total of active removals from the atmosphere offsets any remaining emissions from the rest of the economy. Immediate action is required to move the UK to a net zero target by 2050, with many local authorities setting more ambitious targets ranging from achieving net zero by 2030 through to 2050. In order to inform the City Region's net zero target date, Ricardo, a global engineering and strategic, technical and environmental consultancy, were commissioned to undertake carbon target setting and future scenario modelling. This work has proposed a net zero target date of 2040 for SCR.
- 2.3** The Ricardo modelling proposed that SCR should stay within a maximum cumulative CO₂ emissions budget of 44.7 MtCO₂ for the period 2020 to 2100. However, at 2017 CO₂ emission levels, SCR would use this entire budget by 2027. Therefore, immediate action is required to reach zero or near zero carbon by no later than 2040. At this date, 5% of carbon budget would remain.
- 2.4** Central to the delivery of the climate emergency response, is the 'approach' the City Region will adopt. This is set out in slide 3 of the attached document and includes the need to involve and listen to residents and businesses. As a response to declaring a climate emergency elsewhere in the UK, many local authorities have established 'Citizens' Assemblies'.
- 2.5** Due to the importance of this work, it is proposed to appoint a Climate Change Commissioner who will provide direct leadership on this agenda. The Commissioner will engage with the wider public, interest groups and experts and will be supported by a Climate Change Advisory Board. The Board will include representatives from local authority citizen panels across SCR, and a dedicated project team resourced jointly with Government and Sheffield University through the SCR:NZ (Net Zero) Partnership.
- 2.6** Another key approach proposed in the response document, is that the City Region will focus on factors which it can influence. Local authority partners, and national Government, will be better placed than SCR in tackling several issues due to their span of responsibilities and resources. The same applies to addressing macro-climate issues where Government or large business can and must play a lead role. An example of this would be airline emissions. Reducing the scale of emissions from flights should be addressed through a combination of Government policy and changes made by airlines themselves (e.g. recent example of EasyJet offsetting its jet fuel emissions). These are outside of the City Region's control. However, the City Region will work closely with Doncaster Sheffield Airport (DSA) on approaches to eliminate carbon emissions both from the airport facilities and surface transport.
- 2.7** This will be done through taking a new approach to the types of projects we invest in. Due to the significant amount of capital the City Region can invest in a range of projects, we can have a meaningful impact if we begin to give equal weight to environmental alongside economic considerations. For example, the Roads Implementation Plan which is part of a suite of delivery documents associated with the Transport Strategy, will set out a series of principles which will aim to prioritise public transport and active travel over car use.
- 2.8** This response provides a framework for us to work towards deliverable solutions. As such, the next step is that the City Region works alongside the University of Sheffield through the newly established SCR:NZ Partnership. This innovative agreement will bring together a virtual team from the SCR Executive, local authority partners and leading academics to develop new and deliverable solutions to help us achieve our net zero target. This will be done in collaboration, working with the public and interest groups to embed behaviour change.

- 2.9.** We recognise however that an emergency requires us to start delivering solutions, as soon as we know what they are. The MCA will receive the Energy Strategy at its March meeting which will set out the first set of specifics for moving towards this net zero target. At the same meeting we intend to bring forward the Active Travel and Roads Implementation Plans of the Transport Strategy, both of which will set out specific projects that will contribute towards this framework.

3. Consideration of alternative approaches

- 3.1** The MCA took a decision at the last meeting to declare a climate emergency and agreed to receive a proposal outlining a potential response, a do-nothing approach is not appropriate.
- 3.2** The MCA could choose not to accept the 2040 net zero target date, either preferring to adopt a later or earlier date. This target would require average annual emissions reductions of 13.2%, which is considered an achievable target if the right measures are put in place now. It could be possible to go harder and faster with these reductions, but this would require significant additional resource, probably from national Government, to make quicker changes to both our transport and energy systems. As such it is recommended that the 2040 date is adopted but is kept under review should further resources become available.
- 3.3** The MCA could also choose not to adopt the proposed Climate Emergency response and request that an alternative is prepared following the work outlined with both the University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University. This is not recommended given the need to agree an overall framework for how the SCR:NZ Partnership work should progress and to enable the MCA to effectively monitor progress against the policies set out.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial

A budget of £400k has been earmarked to take forward the climate change project over the first two years. This will be funded from the 2020/21 Mayoral Capacity Fund allocated to SCR. Any future financial implications from how the overall strategy and wider investments are determined will be incorporated into the medium-term financial planning process.

4.2 Legal

Approval to incur expenditure of the Mayoral Capacity Fund was delegated by the MCA to the Head of Paid Services in consultation with the Mayor. The vires to incur the expenditure includes powers under s.1 Localism Act 2011 (general power of competence).

4.3 Risk Management

Once adopted, a risk management plan will be produced for the response framework and associated projects.

4.4 Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion

None arising directly from this report. The detailed proposals to address the Climate Emergency will be inclusive through covering all the SCR, and the outcomes such as cleaner air, better health and wellbeing, more attractive urban and rural environments will be shared by all.

5. Communications

- 5.1** A full programme of strategic communications activity is proposed; both as part of the immediate Mayoral response to the Climate Emergency and also aligned to workstreams such as the SCR's Energy Strategy and the SCR:NZ Partnership with both the University

of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University. This communications and marketing activity, which aims to engage members of the public, partners, businesses and other stakeholders, will include external engagement, media relations, social and digital media, and campaign work through a range of audience-focused channels.

6. Appendices/Annexes

6.1 Appendix A: Mayor's Climate Emergency Response

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Background papers used in the preparation of this report are available for inspection at: 11 Broad Street West, Sheffield S1 2BQ

Other sources and references: None