



**FOR PUBLICATION**

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – CLIMATE CHANGE,  
BIODIVERSITY AND CARBON REDUCTION**

**MONDAY, 7 FEBRUARY 2022**

**Report of the Executive Director - Adult Care**

**Acceleration Low Carbon Growth**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of current work and opportunities for accelerating low carbon growth in Derbyshire, particularly in providing support for businesses, skills and training, and the adoption and manufacture of new technologies. The content of the report will be supplemented by a presentation at the meeting that provides more detail on the key work programmes currently being delivered.

**2. Information and Analysis**

- 2.1 The Council's ambitions to de-carbonise the Derbyshire economy are well publicised and set out in key documents such as the COVID Economic Recovery Strategy which was launched in January 2021 and more recently, the Climate Change Strategy: Achieving Net Zero (2021-2025) which was approved at Cabinet in October 2021.
- 2.2 The Recovery Strategy has been developed in partnership with all Derbyshire local authorities; key business organisations such as the Chamber (EMC) and Federation of Small Business (FSB); transport providers; universities; colleges and Government departments.

2.3 The key principle set out in the Strategy was to ensure the economy was supported to ‘build back better’ through the various COVID recovery stages which meant:

Using the ‘Revive, Renewal and Regenerate’ periods of the Strategy to:

- Work towards longer-term regeneration and a more circular and distributed economy.
- ‘Level up’ key areas of economic and social disparity.
- Accelerate work to mitigate and adapt to climate change and achieve sustainable, good growth
- Reset the economic profile of Derby and Derbyshire - maximise contribution to UK plc.
- Build resilience into the local economy and reinforce/ restore public and business confidence.

2.4 The Recovery Strategy contains a number of priorities and work programmes which have been progressed in earnest over the last year or so, all of which have embraced the above principles in aiming to secure low carbon or net zero objectives. A summary of the Strategy proposals is set out below:

Priorities	Projects and Programmes
<b>Economic Development</b>	
Place	Focus on resilience and diversification of town centres, greening/ better use of space, vacant properties and use of natural capital
Industry	Focus on protecting and enhancing key sectors, supporting low carbon growth, diversifying and increased productivity. Better procurement to drive social value and business support programmes
Visitor Economy	Focus on immediate support for recovery and long-term transformation of the sector through cultural festivals programme and direct sector support
Enabling Infrastructure	Focus on improving physical and digital infrastructure as foundations for innovation and clean growth through new grant funding schemes, full fibre connectivity, defining a new approach to sustainable travel
Inward Investment	Highlighting Derbyshire’s unique offer to attract local carbon, innovative and green technology business through refreshed prospectus and links to business support programmes

Employment and Skills	
Young People	Focus on developing better career pathways and encouraging access to new industries and green technologies through workplace co-ordination, inspirational careers programme, targeted NEET activity
Adults	Focus on re-training and routes to better employment through better links to employers and colleges e.g. via talent retention scheme, digital skills campaign, sector academy programme
Entrepreneurship and self employment	Focus on stimulating business growth and enterprise e.g. through apprenticeship levy transfer, start up and growth support
Responding to Future Skills	Focus on facilitating a 'responsive skills system' e.g. via Green Skills Programme, higher level skills programmes and graduate recruitment/ retention

2.5 Other projects and programmes that sit outside the Recovery Strategy will be required to undertake a climate impact assessment (CIA), in line with the objectives of the Climate Change Strategy. Whilst the detail of the CIA hasn't been finalised yet, inevitably the assessment will be checking what impact a proposed project has on reducing carbon emissions, changing behaviour, improving 'green credentials' etc; for those projects that don't offer sustainable proposals, the ability to mitigate impacts will no doubt be a key consideration.

2.6 Low carbon growth for Derbyshire means 'good growth' – that is '*the right growth, being delivered in the right way for the right reasons*'. It is about businesses, labour market skills, geography and place – enabled by the right transport and digital infrastructure. Key projects and programmes implemented to date that are helping achieve Derbyshire's low carbon ambitions for businesses, skills and the adoption and manufacture of new technologies include:

- De-carbonise grant scheme to support local business to reduce carbon emissions from fleet or premises - £920,000
- Green Entrepreneurs Fund to fund 'low carbon demonstrator projects, grants to businesses and skills training - £2m
- Five new Business Start Up Advisers to help new businesses get off the ground and build in low carbon options from inception - £1m
- Created 424km of cycle routes across the County linking people to jobs and learning and encouraging sustainable tourism
- Cultural Framework and Cultural Recovery Fund to support hospitality and tourism-based businesses to progress low carbon recovery - £1m

- Digital infrastructure in hard to reach places to assist digital connectivity, reduce the need for travel and support e-commerce - £1m for top up vouchers
- Rolled out programme to refurbish laptops and moving IT into communities/households in need. Helps avoid landfill and supports expansion of digital skills and e-commerce
- Rolled out I Programme across the County to promote and teach digital skills to unemployed or inactive people and those at risk of redundancy - £3.1m for Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire area
- Continued roll out of electric vehicle charging –218 public facing charge points currently in place across the County
- Development of hydrogen and future fuel proposals with private sector – submission of £30m bid for funding to Government to support roll out of hydrogen buses
- Work with Derbyshire colleges to map existing ‘green skills’ training offer – to develop into a wider offer for a ‘green skills academy’. Revisiting curriculum to embed as much ‘green skills’ within existing courses (e.g. modern methods of construction)
- Development of proposals for mobility hub pilots for Buxton and Hope Valley – now integrated into Bus Service Investment Plan for the whole County.
- Secured through Department for Transport to produce 4 feasibility studies for walking and cycling via £250,000 Capability Fund: undertaking a bus and rail interchange audit (will inform future capital infrastructure); commercial e-bike hire in Peak Park and market towns; scoping a blue print for ‘one stop shop information portal’; capitalise on cycling networks in northern Derbyshire (Chesterfield, North East Derbyshire, Bolsover), including adult cycle training
- Commenced work with Job Centres to support job seekers in accessing sustainable and public transport (buses, e-bikes)
- Delivering Wheels to Work through Rural Action Derbyshire supporting apprentices and job seekers to access learning and employment through sustainable transport - £50,000 per annum
- Bikeability training provided to young people in targeted areas (high levels of deprivation e.g Bolsover) to raise confidence in cycling as a means of travel
- Buxton on the Move – travel plan developed with the Town Team to pilot and demonstrate how communities can become more sustainable

2.7 Further details on these projects, including take up and outputs, will be provided in the presentation to the Scrutiny Committee.

## 2.8 Additional, planned projects include:

- Race to Zero Accelerator - Community Renewal Fund project to be launched November 2021 to expand original de-carbonise project (part of £1.5m bid)
- Working with partners to promote and encourage access to 'green jobs' through the two Derbyshire Careers Hubs to future employees
- Bringing forward a review of vacant properties for town centres and working to reimagine places and spaces to create more sustainable
- Developing proposals for a 'green skills academy' for the County to attract new learners into the low carbon economy
- Developing the Trusted Trader scheme to include a 'low carbon' accreditation for the County
- Report commissioned and due by March 2022 detailing future demand locations for electric charging – will direct further roll out of charge points to achieve 1,000 units by 2025. Procurement exercise likely in 2022-23 to secure additional electric vehicle charging points (EVCP)
- Exploring hydrogen infrastructure roll out at critical locations in the County (north Derbyshire, linked to tourism offer and south Derbyshire linked to growth opportunities) – also wider promotion of future fuel options
- Development of Integrated Transport Strategy which will provide the platform for sustainable travel and transport in the County
- Development of Future Fuels Strategy – to capitalise on natural capital (e.g. water power) and the potential of future fuels such as hydrogen
- Developing proposals to extend Wheels to Work to subsidise access to e-bike as a means of sustainable travel to work and learning - £250,000
- Developing strategic proposals for 'Mobility as a Service' – app-based approach to sustainable travel (dial up services)
- Developing pilots for low carbon communities e.g. Travelling Light in the Hope Valley

## 3. Consultation

- 3.1 None as a direct result of this report but a wide range of engagement and consultation exercises took place with partners (including local authorities, Government departments, colleges, universities and local businesses) on the development of the Recovery Strategy – and continues to take place through the recovery governance arrangements.

#### **4. Alternative Options Considered**

- 4.1 None directly relevant to this overview but most of the substantive projects identified for supporting low carbon recovery have been subject to 'project development' processes where alternatives have been considered.

#### **5. Implications**

- 5.1 Appendix 1 sets out the relevant implications considered in the preparation of the report.

#### **6. Background Papers**

- 6.1 Presentation to Improvement and Scrutiny Committee on 'Delivering Economic Recovery', 23 July 2020 (Minute No.16/20 refers).

#### **7. Appendices**

- 7.1 Appendix 1 – Implications.

#### **8. Recommendations**

That Committee:

- a) Notes the approach being taken to 'build back better' in the Economic Recovery Strategy and the contributions of key work programmes to driving forward a low carbon economy.
- b) Considers other suitable projects and programmes that could form part of the next phase of 'good growth' recovery.

#### **9. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 9.1 To understand the progress that has been made to date in supporting the local economy to become more sustainable.
- 9.2 To help shape the nature of future low carbon work programmes in the County in the drive to net zero by 2032.

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**Implications**

**Financial**

- 1.1 No financial implications as a direct result of this report. The Council has set aside a COVID Recovery Fund of £15m which is supporting implementation of a number of the low carbon programmes listed above. Individual calls on this Fund are subject to separate approvals either through Cabinet or via delegated arrangements with relevant Cabinet members.

**Legal**

- 2.1 No legal implications as a direct result of this report. Any such implications are considered in the development of each individual project or programme as part of the development process and are clearly articulated at the point of seeking approval.

**Human Resources**

- 3.1 No human resource implications as a direct result of this report. Some of the projects outlined in this update have secured additional resources through dedicated project funding (e.g. DE-Carbonise) or through external expertise (e.g. Derby University in supporting the Green Entrepreneurs Fund).

**Information Technology**

- 4.1 No information technology implications as a direct result of this report.

**Equalities Impact**

- 5.1 No equalities impact as a direct result of this report but at the stage of project inception and development due consideration is given to potential impacts and mitigations on key groups of people, particularly geographical disparities and those furthest from the job market – which often includes those from ‘protected characteristic’ communities.

**Corporate objectives and priorities for change**

- 6.1 Delivery of the Economic Recovery Strategy and the Climate Change Strategy have been developed in direct support of the Council Plan objective to deliver a ‘green and prosperous Derbyshire’ and in

particular, to achieve net zero for the Council by 2032 (or sooner) and for the County by 2050.

**Other (for example, Health and Safety, Environmental, Sustainability, Property and Asset Management, Risk Management and Safeguarding)**

7.1 None.