



FOR PUBLICATION

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 February 2023

Report of the Executive Director - Place

**THE COUNCIL'S ROLE IN THE GROWTH OF LOW CARBON SKILLS,
EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING**

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the Council's role in the growth of low carbon skills, employment, and training in Derbyshire. 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 and grow the local skills offer 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 and Vision Derbyshire Climate Change Strategy: 2022 – 2025 which was approved in April 2022. Within the context of a proposed combined authority for the area, it's likely additional strategies and plans for skills will emerge
- 2.2 The Climate Change Strategy contains 28 priority targets across five key areas (four county-wide, one concerning the Council's estate and operations) which commits DCC to delivering net zero buildings, expanding local renewable energy generation, changing transport choices, generating green jobs, and preventing waste being sent to landfill, and to benefit the local economy. These targets are supported

by over 120 actions, initiatives, and projects which we anticipate Derbyshire County Council will either lead or support. DCC want to enable and empower our partners, residents, and businesses to take action to tackle climate change.

- 2.3 The COVID Recovery Strategy has been a key driver for DCC's role in the growth of low carbon skills, employment, and training and sets out the employment and skills priorities of:
- Young People - developing clear progression pathways
 - Adults – realigning labour market, retraining and routes to employment
 - Responding to Future Skills Needs – responsive skills system
 - Entrepreneurship and Self Employment - stimulate enterprise and business growth
- 2.4 The presentation to Scrutiny Committee will explore:
- Strategic Context
 - The Council's role – strategically and operationally
 - Challenges and opportunities
 - Highlight examples of good practice
- 2.5 The skills arena is large and complex and requires DCC to interact with different audiences and take on different roles. These roles include:
- Facilitator – bringing key partners together (Job Centre Plus, local authorities, colleges, employers, LEP)
 - Voice – the identifies the issues, joins up the partners and brokers solutions
 - Delivery – Adult Careers team, Adult Community Education (DACES), Multiply programme
 - Funder – Green Entrepreneurs, Youth Hub, I Step up
- 2.6 A number of different partners operate within this area working towards the same/ similar goals: local authorities, the D2N2 LEP, colleges, universities, training providers, employers, and the labour market. This is further complicated by the various funding regimes which need to be navigated; these include European funding, ESFA (coming to an end), Government sources (e.g. adult education budget), grant schemes (e.g. Multiply), local authority money (e.g. Green Entrepreneurs and UKSPF)
- 2.7 Derbyshire County Council officers, in their 'facilitator' role, provide support and advice to local businesses – either those already working in the low carbon/ green sector or those looking to de-carbonise. Examples include advanced manufacturing businesses such as Worcester Bosch, based at Clay Cross and Vaillant, based at Belper. This will be covered in more detail in the presentation.

- 2.8 Others include: a regional contractor for external wall insulation (EWI) and solar PV where the Economic Development Service brokered connections to the Staveley Town Deal and the National Careers Service, helping them to source apprenticeships and 'grow their own talent'; and, the Insulated Render and Cladding Association (INCA) to discuss opportunities for targeted NVQs and brokering links to Chesterfield College and the Staveley Skills Hub.
- 2.9 As a funder, Scrutiny Committee will be aware of the £2m Green Entrepreneurs grant scheme set up by DCC which is made up of three strands:
- Green entrepreneurs small grant fund. This offers grants between £6,000 to £20,000 for projects for alternative energy, clean fuel and carbon reduction projects. There must be a minimum spend of £15,000 and a maximum intervention rate of 40%. There has been £500,000 of the £2m allocated towards this.
 - Green entrepreneurs demonstrator grant fund. This fund is targeting high quality, larger scale carbon-cutting projects in Derbyshire. This is aimed at innovative solutions and has £1.2m allocated towards this.
 - Green entrepreneurs' scholarship fund. This fund is to support individuals to retrain to get the skills to move into low carbon or green skills. It allows people to obtain the skills and qualifications to change or progress employment into 'green jobs'. £100,000 has been allocated towards this and a total of 46 scholarship grants have been awarded.
- 2.10 The green entrepreneurs small grant fund criteria were recently amended to reflect feedback and demand from local businesses looking to reduce their costs, especially with the continuing rise in energy costs. This strand of grant funding now supports low carbon energy solutions such as solar pv and electric vehicle charging at premises. Obviously any increase in such demand from businesses places more demand on the skills system for more manufacturers and qualified installers.
- 2.11 DCC supports Derbyshire residents through funding a Wheels 2 Work (W2W) scheme. This programme, undertaken by Rural Action Derbyshire, helps residents overcome transport barriers to employment and skills. It does so on a case-by-case basis by aiding candidates where access to the training or work base is difficult e.g. due to cost, geography or lack of suitable public transport options. The scheme provides financial support with access to subsidised bus tickets, or through the lease of a cycle or motor scooter.

2.12 The project has seen increased demand from residents and a further pilot is being rolled out as part of the Staveley Town Deal where the aim is to expand the offer at a physical base to access a cycle or motor scooter (both electrically powered) in a location which also provides real-time bus passenger information and has provision for a car pool with charging facilities for electric vehicles. The impact on skill requirements to support this type of provision is clearly evident.

2.13 Below in 2.14 is the progress against the employment and skills element of the COVID Recovery Strategy:

Priority	Action	Progress
Young People: <i>developing clear progression pathways</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £700k secured to roll out two new Youth Hubs in the next 2 years Over 300 YP supported in year 1 of the Youth Hub Going Forward: Graduate retention programme, Green Skills Academy,	
Adults: <i>realigning labour market, retraining and routes to employment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 138 SME businesses (Total businesses all sizes 143) supported to secure 204 apprentices through Levy transfer committing £1.3 m) CRF programme successfully delivered Delivery of £3 m Multiply Programme to support numeracy Adult Careers promoting green skills and GEP to clients Going Forward: enhanced social value through Vision Derbyshire, digital inclusion programme and Digital Skills Strategy (LEP level)	
Responding to Future Skill Needs: <i>responsive skills system</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospitality Charter being rolled out with employers Green Skills development work Festival of Business year 2 launched Development at the National Stone Centre of market leading facility promoting sustainability in Quarrying Going Forward: Freeport Skills Academy, Charters for other Sectors, secure more Apprenticeship Levy from Large Employers to spend to support Derbyshire SMEs	
Entrepreneurship and Self Employment: <i>stimulate enterprise and business growth</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £2m Green Entrepreneurs Fund Apprenticeship levy transfer supporting SMEs Developing approach to 'enterprising places' – £1m business start up, £1.5m CRF Accelerator delivered Festival of Business year 2 Going Forward: Social enterprise strategy	

2.14 DCC has also been working hard with further education (FE) partners to map the existing 'training offer and revisit the curriculum to embed as much of the 'green skills' agenda as possible within existing courses (e.g. modern methods of construction).

2.15 The Construction Skills Hub is a great example of this. The innovative Construction Skills Hub (Chesterfield College and University of Derby) will provide a practical platform for construction training (with embedded green construction skills, including retro fit), careers activity and work experience on a live construction site in Mastin Moor. Over ten years, the Hub aims to provide training, careers insights, and work experience for over 5,000 learners.

- 2.16 DCC has also delivered £2m to support businesses, employment, and skills through Community Renewal Fund. This was split across two schemes and a more detailed update will be provided in the presentation:
- Derby Business College - £500,000 to develop/deliver/test and evaluate the efficacy of: a) an integrated employment/skills system and b) alternative methods of engagement across classroom /online /blended
 - Derbyshire Accelerator - £1.5m to strengthen the place-based business support ecosystem through: Race to Zero Carbon Accelerator, Digital Transformation Accelerator, Start Up to Scale Up Accelerator, Kickstart Accelerator and Financial Accelerator
 - The project supported
 - 831 people of which 77 gained employment
 - 641 businesses
 - 25 businesses were created
 - 49 Decarbonisation plans completed

3. Consultation

- 3.1 None as a direct result of this report but a wide range of engagement and consultation exercises have taken place with partners (including local authorities, Government departments, colleges, universities and local businesses) in the development of the plans, strategies and projects outlined here.

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 'Accelerating Low Carbon Growth, 28 November 2021

7. Appendices

7.1 Appendix 1 – Implications.

8. Recommendations

8.1 That the Committee:

a) Notes the approach being taken to the Council's role in the growth of low carbon skills, employment and training.

9. Reasons for Recommendations

a) To understand the progress that has been made to date in its roles as a facilitator, voice, delivery agent and funder.

b) To help shape the nature of future low carbon work programmes in the County in the drive to net zero by 2050.

Report Author: Joe Battye, Director Economy and Regeneration

Contact details: joe.battye@derbyshire.gov.uk

Implications

Financial

- 1.1 No financial implications as a direct result of this report. The Council has an agreed budget of £2m to support implementation of the GEF. Applications to this Fund are subject to separate approvals as described in the GEF grant payment stage process. Multiply and Community Renewal-funded projects are support directly through Government grants.

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 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