

<b>Report to:</b>	Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Scott Butterfield, Strategy and Climate Lead, Blackpool Council
<b>Date of Decision/ Meeting</b>	29 June 2023

## FYLDE COAST GREEN GROWTH

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To update the Economic Prosperity Board on the progress of work under its Green Growth priority.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To note the report.

### 3.0 Background information

3.1 At the meeting on 2 March 2023, the Board requested that officers develop schemes to install solar panels on suitable Council assets, and provide updates to future Board meetings.

3.2 Since the meeting, Blackpool Council's Strategy and Climate Lead has raised the issue with Management Teams at Wyre and Fylde Councils. Both committed to identifying officers with relevant expertise to progress the schemes, which will enable quicker progress to be made on project scoping in terms of usable assets and finances. Initial work by Blackpool's Strategy and Climate Team has highlighted the potential benefits of using Wyre Borough Council's assets to generate solar power, and the list of assets under consideration can now be refined in light of local knowledge. A workshop to explore the activity required in detail will take place in July 2023.

3.3 Given that this work is indirectly related to the Board's Green Growth priority, the group will also consider establishing project oversight and management structures, alongside identifying the staffing and financial resources required to support the exercise. Initial discussions have taken place on how shared resources can be used to deliver this agenda.

3.4 Updates will be provided to future board meetings on solar projects, but the primary focus of these updates will shift to discussion of the support of businesses and project operating in the field of sustainability, carbon reduction or associated technologies, and support of businesses in other sectors seeking to reduce their carbon footprints and improve environmental sustainability.

3.5 Both Fylde and Wyre Councils are progressing work to support businesses on the green agenda via the use of Shared Prosperity Funding. Since April, Fylde Council has been working in partnership with East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, who are delivering their 'Chamber Low Carbon' project to interested businesses across Fylde. The project aims to support them to reduce their carbon footprint

by developing a decarbonisation plan. The project is currently scheduled to run until March 2025.

- 3.6 Wyre Borough Council also appointed East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce to deliver a similar piece work looking to support businesses in calculating their carbon footprint, produce carbon management plans covering their value and supply chains, enabling adoption of new technologies which reduce emissions, and raise awareness of potential funding opportunities and resources to support further reductions. This will be accompanied by events aimed at specific business sectors and charities.
- 3.7 Blackpool Council is establishing some sector-specific groups, one of the aims of which is to better understand business requirements on the low carbon agenda. A draft proposal seeking to deliver a package of business support on green issues tailored around business size and readiness to act has been circulated for internal discussion, with a tender exercise to follow.
- 3.8 The potential ethically-powered data centre and accompanying heat network scheme on the Fylde/Blackpool border at the Airport Enterprise Zone, continues to progress with support from the Connected Places Catapult, and is covered in another paper on this agenda. In April 2023, Blackpool Council was awarded funding to participate in Innovate UK's Fast Followers fund, which will pay for staff time and a new post to oversee the development of a co-operative model for the ownership and operation of heat networks, and to participate in the national project with other funded partnerships.