

Report to:	Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board
Relevant Officer:	Scott Butterfield, Strategy and Climate Lead, Blackpool Council
Date of Meeting	28 September, 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 The Fylde Coast Green Growth report to the June 2023 meeting noted that much of the potential for shared work on the climate and sustainability agendas does not directly relate to the Board's Green Growth priority. It suggested that work would be progressed separately on these topics, with governance structures to be considered as required. In view of this, Blackpool Council convened a workshop on 28th July, which explored potential collaboration opportunities.

3.2 The workshop identified several projects with clear benefits to wider collaboration. Two already have lead organisations identified:

- **Exploring the use of Hydrogen Vegetable Oil as an interim fuel technology** to reduce emissions from vehicle fleets, pending widespread availability of battery or other technologies at a lower cost. Wyre Council are already progressing work in this area and will share their progress with Fylde and Blackpool to seek opportunities for joint procurement and collaboration;
- **Domestic energy use reduction and support.** Blackpool Council has earmarked an amount of Shared Prosperity Funding to develop the Blackpool Eco Hub concept. The Hub brings together Cosy Homes In Lancashire and Blackpool Eco Coaches to deliver a household-centred approach to reducing carbon emissions and energy costs. This covers significant physical intervention such as the installation of heat pumps and insulation, as well as smaller scale changes such as the use of energy efficient appliances, draft proofing, and room layout and furnishings. With a physical base at Palatine Library showcasing energy saving technology, the long-term intention is to start using other libraries and facilities across the town. Delivered by Groundwork, the scheme could be scaled up to cover other boroughs, and potentially funded by any successor to the current Shared Prosperity Fund;
- **Prioritising project rollout to school sites.** Blackpool Council has a dedicated eco-schools officer, and they will work with sites in Wyre and Fylde via Lancashire County Council where

suitable schemes become available;

- **Solar panel joint procurement, site selection and installation.** Covered in previous reports, this was being led by the Low Carbon and Sustainability Officer at Blackpool Council, who has subsequently left the organisation and will not be replaced in the short term due to funding constraints. In the absence of a lead officer, asset management teams will be encouraged to collaborate across the Councils on any planned procurement exercises.

- 3.3 A report is being prepared for the consideration of individual Council Management Teams to assess their interest in participating. This will include other projects highlighted at the workshop which are at a more formative stage, to assess the appetite for developing common approaches: exploring the creation of a shared “green team”, and the joint commissioning of research into sites suitable for renewable energy installations.
- 3.4 All Councils are now progressing work to support businesses on the green agenda via the use of Shared Prosperity Funding. Blackpool Council has launched a procurement exercise for a Net Zero Academy which looks to deliver quality advice and guidance for established businesses looking to decarbonise their business, improve productivity and support wider growth ambitions. Businesses must be looking to explore the benefits of improving green credentials to support wider business growth plans, such as supply chain opportunities, and meeting changing business/consumer preferences. Businesses will benefit from a Decarbonisation Action Plan and tailored business advice. Support services are expected to start in October.
- 3.5 Fylde and Wyre Councils both have projects underway via East Lancs Chamber of Commerce. At the time of their last report, Fylde Council had engaged with 34 Fylde businesses, with plans in development to hold business events within the borough, and the potential to hold joint events with other districts if appropriate. Wyre Council are planning a launch event for early October to raise awareness and provide details of the scheme, with regular lunch and learn events for businesses on different topics relating to reducing emissions. Businesses can also be linked up with the RedCAT project they have, which supports the development of new low carbon technology in Lancashire. There’s potential to link up across the Fylde coast with these events, particularly with a more detailed training programme they have called Green Rose, which engages businesses over 6 half day sessions once a month from their venue in Blackpool to go into more depth on how to reach net zero.