

**Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership
LEP Board Paper agenda item 6a)**

Report title: A Blueprint for Clean Growth

Date: 23 April 2021

Purpose: This paper is for **decision**

Link to LIS: Indicate by **bolding** which area the paper links to.

Inclusive Growth		Clean growth		
Energy		Engineering		Digital
Ideas/ Innovation	People/Skills	Infrastructure	Bus. Environment	Places

Timing: Immediate

Financial Impact: There is no financial impact at this stage. Approval will be sought for any funding that is required to take forward the clean growth priorities on a case by case basis.

Decisions requested:

- i. Approval of the Blueprint for Clean Growth.
- ii. Agree that the Board will take responsibility for monitoring progress towards delivering the clean growth priorities.

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Summary

This paper seeks approval by the Board to the Heart of the South West LEP’s Blueprint for Clean Growth (attached), and to the proposal that the Board has responsibility for monitoring progress towards delivery of the clean growth priorities. The paper also highlights five priorities that we will pay particular attention to over the next 12 months.

1) Background

- 1.1 The UK was the first major economy to embrace a legal obligation to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. Doing so presents a huge economic opportunity for new, high-value jobs, disruptive business ideas, and innovative technologies, whilst also protecting the climate and environment upon which we depend.

- 1.2 The Heart of the South West is in a unique position to take a leading role to achieve this target. Recognising this, the LEP has made a commitment to clean growth in both the Local Industrial Strategy and the recently published Build Back Better plan.
- 1.3 We have drawn together into one document all the clean growth activity the LEP is actively leading or supporting partners to deliver by providing specialist resources and/or funding. We have also identified new areas that we need to turn our attention to if we are to deliver our clean growth ambition.
- 1.4 The development of these clean growth priorities has been informed by discussions with the Joint Scrutiny Committee and the Place Leadership Group, as well as several local authority officers and organisations such as the South West Business Council and the SW Energy Hub.
- 1.5 It is important to stress this document is not a standalone strategy or plan but instead, it is a blueprint for how we intend to deliver our commitment to clean growth. We will therefore do this through our annual delivery plan as well as the Local Industrial Strategy and Build Back Better programmes, driving sustainable economic prosperity across the Heart of the South West.

2) Blueprint for Clean Growth

- 2.1 The blueprint aims to grow the economy cleanly and sustainably by delivering inclusive economic prosperity whilst protecting the environment, lowering emissions, and enhancing natural capital.
- 2.2 We can achieve this by focussing on six key themes and objectives:
 1. Leadership: To become pioneers in delivering clean growth.
 2. Low Carbon Energy: To be a green energy powerhouse and a first net exporter of clean energy.
 3. Green Businesses: To unlock opportunities for clean growth in key sectors of the economy.
 4. Sustainable Communities: To be a testbed for the development of zero-carbon housing and sustainable communities.
 5. Decarbonised Transport: To realise a greener transport future.
 6. Natural Capital: To be the national leader in delivering nature-based solutions.
- 2.3 Each of these objectives has an identified set of priorities that we intend to focus on.
- 2.4 The Board is asked to approve this Blueprint for Clean Growth. The Board is also asked to agree to take responsibility for monitoring the progress we make towards delivering our clean growth priorities. Regular updates will be provided to the Board as part of the Chief Executive's report.

3) Next Steps

- 3.1 There are a number of important next steps that we will start to implement if the Board approves this blueprint.
- 3.2 Firstly, we will begin preparations for a clean growth communications campaign to raise the profile of the LEP's commitment to clean growth and proactively showcase the Heart of the South West's clean growth credentials. We hope to coordinate this with a range of partners and stakeholders so that it gains momentum in the run-up to the UN's COP26 climate change conference that is being hosted by the UK in November. A paper requesting a small amount of funding to deliver this will be presented to F&R in May, with the intention of starting the campaign immediately after the local elections.
- 3.3 We will also begin to explore ways to incorporate our clean growth commitment into future investment decisions, reviewing the different approaches that other organisations are taking. A paper on this will be brought back to the Board in July.
- 3.4 In addition to these leadership actions, we will focus particular attention on three new areas of activity:
 - Identifying ways to unlock grid capacity constraints both to large-scale energy generation and key employment sites.
 - Examining the opportunity to develop a social housing retrofit programme, working with the leading housing associations to understand the potential for collaboration to leverage funding from the government's planned Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund and ensuring it is integrated with a targeted skills and supply chain programme.
 - Establishing a resource efficiency advice service for SMEs, delivered through the Growth Hub with specialist advisors available to complete an audit and provide support to implement the recommendations.