



Black Country Executive Joint Committee
Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton

REPORT OF THE CITY DEAL AND GROWTH DEAL ADVISORY BOARD

TO

BLACK COUNTRY EXECUTIVE JOINT COMMITTEE

ON

16th September 2015

BLACK COUNTRY GREEN GROWTH PIPELINE – UPDATE REPORT

Key Decision:	No
Forward Plan:	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update to the Joint Committee on the current progress achieved in the development of a green growth pipeline of projects for the Black Country.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Joint Committee note the progress in the development of the low carbon and environment project pipeline for the Black Country, noting the details, taking into account the wide variety of projects and lead partners that are now contributing towards the pipeline.

3. REPORT DETAIL

- 3.1 The Low Carbon Development Project aims to develop a strong pipeline of low carbon and environment projects in advance of funding opportunities. Although the initial focus was to respond to the call for ERDF funded projects due to the timescale of the calls, the role is also looking at other funding sources such as Local Growth Fund and Horizon 2020.
- 3.2 To develop the project pipeline, a dedicated Low Carbon Development Officer was appointed and has undertaken a range of activities including:
- Reviewed strategic documents including the Green Growth Plan and Environmental Infrastructure Implementation Plan and assessed project ideas in terms of readiness;
 - Met with partners and stakeholders to identify their ambitions in relation to the low carbon and environmental agenda;
 - Reviewed the funding opportunities themselves and specifically targeted organisations/ partners who could deliver against certain priorities.
 - Supported partners to develop good quality proposals to meet the funders' criteria including ERDF compliance.

- 3.3 A call under ERDF priority 4, supporting the shift towards a low carbon economy, was opened at the end of March 2015 for projects that delivered benefits across the whole of the Black Country. A total of £4.65 million was available for this priority.
- 3.4 The Black Country Low Carbon Officer supported three bids, all of which were successfully in getting through the first stage, and all now need to be developed in detail. Concurrently, there are continuing discussions with other partners who are considering submitting bids, but need further development work, and consideration of additional local projects, all for a further Low Carbon call anticipated in September.
- 3.5 In addition, the call for ERDF priority 6, preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency, was released in August, with a closing date of 20 September. This priority will fund investments in environmental projects that increase the area (in hectares) of rehabilitated land and habitats supported to attain a better conservation status. Actions can include investment in green infrastructure including: established green spaces: new sites and blue infrastructure; site clearance, decontamination and land remediation contributing to green and blue infrastructure; and sustainable drainage.
- 3.6 The project pipeline to date is outlined at Attachment 1.
- 3.7 Other funding opportunities - the Low Carbon Development officer is continuing to engage with key partners/stakeholders including Local Growth Funding, Environment Agency, Carbon Trust and neighbouring LEPs.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Low Carbon Development Programme is funded by a grant of £65,000 funded through the Black Country LEP Development pot, via Walsall MBC as Accountable Body. The funding supports a Low Carbon Development Officer, who started in post December 2014, and specialist support through Sustainability West Midlands.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 A grant agreement is in place with Walsall MBC, as accountable body for Black Country LEP's development fund, for the full grant. An appropriate legal agreement will be put in place with Sustainability West Midlands outlining the support required and reflecting the grant agreement. This agreement may require separate authority. [Legal Code: TS/11082015/G]

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 The Development Officer Low Carbon is due to leave her post earlier than expected, however alternative resources have been identified to continue this work and specialist support is being commissioned through Sustainability West Midlands..

7. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None at the time of drafting.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The report has previously been considered by the Black Country Green Growth Group who have fed into the pipeline of projects and are leading the development of some of the projects. Councillor Lawrence, Bilston and Reynolds have also been consulted.

Back Ground papers

Black Country LEP Green Growth Plan

Attachments

Green Growth Project Pipeline Projects

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Attachment 1

Project	Description	Lead	Readiness	Status
Resource efficiency	Support to SMEs to improve their environmental efficiency and reduce costs	Groundwork	Submitted in ERDF Spring call	
Sustainable retrofit and smart grids	Stimulating opportunities for new to market technology around sustainable retrofit and smart grids	Accord	Submitted in ERDF Spring call	
BECCI	Built Environment Climate Change Initiative working with SME to develop innovative climate change solutions within the built environment. It specifically focuses on products associated with the retrofitting of housing.	University Of Wolverhampton	Submitted in ERDF Spring call	
Industrial Symbiosis	Waste reduction/reuse project providing support to SMEs	Industrial Symbiosis	ERDF Spring call - possibly Innovation rather than LC call	
Light Rail Innovation Centre	Specialise in prototype vehicle design and construction, as well as providing education, and research and development facilities to local businesses	Dudley MBC	Local Growth Funding in place.	
Nature Improvement Areas	Enhancing wildlife habitats across the BC (green infrastructure)	Birmingham & Black Country Wildlife Trust	Awaiting summer environment call – some match in place. Potential cross LEP with GBS LEP	
Canal infrastructure	Enhancing canal network (blue infrastructure)	Canal and Rivers Trust	Awaiting summer environment call – some match in place	
JEREMIE	Financial Engineering Instrument being developed at WM wide level.	BCC on behalf of BC LEP	Under development by BCC	
Interconnect	Transport project – details tbc	Centro	Potential autumn call	
Electric Vehicle Charging Points	Provides electric vehicle charging point to businesses at half cost	Cenex	Accountable body and partners to be	

			identified. Could form part of Groundwork resource efficiency project via sub contracting	
Centre of Excellence for Land Remediation	Centre of Excellence for Land Remediation	BCC	Consultant reviewing opportunity. Potential ERDF depending on project design and lead	
Wolverhampton Smart City	Package of activities as part of the low carbon strategy including demonstration project for city centre	Wolverhampton City Council	Potential LC project – autumn call	
Future spaces	Energy efficiency in Wolverhampton Civic Centre	Wolverhampton City Council	Feasibility study planned	
BC Urban Park	Ideas have been explored in the past but never achieved funding	To be agreed	Need lead to drive forward, match and accountable body	
Black Country Garden City/ Endless Garden Village	Unsuccessful bid by MADE for Wolfson prize, with initial focus on Sandwell, however potential to link to other regeneration activities such as Bilston Urban Village	Accord Group –	May be better seen as planning approach than ERDF application	
Supporting energy efficiency in the housing sector	Various ideas adding value to existing work being undertaken by Registered Providers	Registered Provider	Dependent on definition of output in final operational plan	