

**Bolsover District Council**

**Meeting of the Executive on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

**Acceptance of funded support for Local Area Energy Planning**

**Report of the Portfolio Holder for Environment**

<b>Classification</b>	This report is Public.
<b>Report By</b>	Chris Fridlington Economic Development Director

**PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT**

This report provides Members with an update on proposals for the creation of a regional Local Area Energy Plan.

A Local Area Energy Plan sets out the change required to transition an area's energy system to 'net zero' in a given timeframe. This is achieved by the analysis of data to evaluate the existing situation and future energy demand, then considering a range of technologies and scenarios which, when combined with stakeholder engagement, leads to the identification of a series of preferred options to create the most cost-effective sequenced plan that would systematically reduce the demand for fossil fuel and achieve decarbonisation of the area's transport, housing, and industry.

This report seeks acceptance of funded support from the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMMCCA) to ensure the Council is fully included in the region's Local Area Energy Planning. This report also seeks approval of delegated authority to allow officers to enter into the associated memorandum of understanding with Nottingham County Council to allow the Council to access this support.

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**REPORT DETAILS**

**1. Background**

- 1.1 Local Area Energy Planning has long been promoted by the Midlands Net Zero Hub along with many other regional and national organisations as the most appropriate tool to accelerate delivery of a local area's ambitions to reduce reliance on non-renewable energy sources and dependency on fossil fuels.
- 1.2 The scope of a typical Local Area Energy Plan will include evaluation of industrial, commercial, and domestic properties, assessment of future energy needs and amongst other things will identify:
  - electricity grid capacity;

- areas of low EPC values;
  - areas of fuel poverty;
  - areas eligible for retrofit funding; and
  - impact and options for electrifying corporate vehicle fleets.
- 1.3 The resulting process aims to achieve a transition to 'net zero' through decarbonisation, which is an important part of any Council's approach to climate action and response to a climate emergency.
- 1.4 In this context, the Midlands Net Zero Hub with the support of this Council and other local authorities across the region, have successfully negotiated an award of funding from the EMMCCA to carry out Local Area Energy Planning across the region.
- 1.5 To be able to benefit from this funding and ensure the Council is fully included in the region's Local Area Energy Plan, it is necessary to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Nottingham County Council acting for the Midlands Net Zero Hub and EMMCCA.
- 1.6 However, entering the Council into this MOU is not authorised by any of the delegated authorities granted to officers by the Council's Constitution. Therefore, this report seeks approval from the Executive to obtain the delegated authority to allow officers to sign the MOU.

## **2. Details of Proposal or Information**

### Memorandum of Understanding

- 2.1 The objective of the MOU is to ensure all parties work with each other on Local Area Energy Planning in a way that allows for genuine co-operation and that all parties ensure sufficient and appropriately qualified employees and other necessary resources are available and authorised to fulfil the responsibilities set out in the MOU.
- 2.2 Although the consultants that have been commissioned to carry out this work will use nationally available data to develop the Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP), the main ask of the Council in the MOU is to provide local information including:
- Site allocations and plans for growth in the Local Plan, Business Growth Strategy, and the Council's ambition documents;
  - Information on the Council's own assets including its housing stock, offices, and commercial properties;
  - travel information;
  - business intelligence on local manufacturers and other businesses with high energy demand; and
  - local objectives and initiatives on fuel poverty and retrofit.
- 2.3 In addition, EMMCCA has divided the region into eight small groups of connected local authorities and each area will receive its own LAEP. Bolsover District is grouped with Chesterfield Borough and North East Derbyshire District and the MOU requires this Council to work collaboratively with these local authorities.

- 2.4 There are no objections to these proposals because the information requirements placed on the Council are proportionate and would help ensure the Local Area Energy Plan meets the identified needs of the Council and the proposed grouping is logical.

### Procurement and Contractual Arrangements

- 2.5 Via procurement undertaken by the Midlands Net Zero Hub, EMMCCA have appointed Mott Macdonald and Integrated Environmental Systems (IES) to create the Local Area Energy Plans for each local authority within the region.
- 2.6 The contract is managed by Nottingham City Council on behalf of EMMCCA and this requires the City Council to enter into separate contractual arrangements with each of the individual local authorities in the region.
- 2.7 Funding for the contract has been provided by EMMCCA and there is no direct cost to Bolsover District Council. The MOU also sets out the contractual arrangements and relationship between this Council and Nottingham City Council.
- 2.8 The MOU is attached to this report as Appendix 1 and on review, it is considered that the document does not contain any unfair or unreasonable terms and there are no substantial risks to the Council arising from signing the MOU.

### **3. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 3.1 The creation of a Local Energy Area Plan for Bolsover will use data, local information, and stakeholder engagement to create a strategic framework that will support the Council maximise inward investment in energy infrastructure, renewable energy, and energy systems.
- 3.2 The Local Energy Area Plan will also provide a framework to support the Council to create the conditions for clean and inclusive growth, reduce energy costs for business and residents, and improve the environment.
- 3.3 The cost to the Council of entering the MOU is primarily officer time used in providing information to, and engaging with, the consultants to identify local need and local priorities. The MOU does not otherwise place any unreasonable burdens on the Council or contain any unfair or unreasonable terms.
- 3.4 Consequently, it is recommended that the Executive endorse the acceptance of the supported funding for a Local Area Energy Plan for Bolsover District and approve delegated authority to officers to sign the associated MOU on behalf of the Council

### **4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

- 4.1 Bolsover District Council could not participate in this research but there will be reputational damage in not supporting this EMMCCA led project. The LAEP will support our development plans and the transition to Net Zero, not entering into the MOU risks BDC undertaking projects and spending inefficiently.

To undertake a LAEP, or a similar plan, including appointing consultants would cost the authority approximately £150K, in addition to the costs of officer time and the procurement process.

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## **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

1. Executive accept the supported funding for a Local Area Energy Plan for Bolsover District and approve delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer to sign the associated MOU on behalf of the Council.

Approved by Councillor Anne Clarke, Portfolio Holder for Environment

### **IMPLICATIONS:**

**Finance and Risk:**            Yes             No

**Details:** There are no financial implications for the Council arising from this report.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

**Legal (including Data Protection):**            Yes             No

**Details:** There are no legal implications arising from this report.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

**Environment:**            Yes             No

Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment.

**Details:**

**Staffing:**            Yes             No

**Details:** There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

## DECISION INFORMATION

<p><b>Is the decision a Key Decision?</b>  A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards, or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:</p> <p><b>Revenue - £75,000</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Capital - £150,000</b> <input type="checkbox"/>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p><b>Is the decision subject to Call-In?</b>  <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>

<p><b>District Wards Significantly Affected</b></p>	<p>All</p>
<p><b>Consultation:</b>  <b>Leader / Deputy Leader</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Executive</b> <input type="checkbox"/>  <b>SLT</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Relevant Service Manager</b> <input type="checkbox"/>  <b>Members</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Public</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Details:</p>

<p><b>Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, and Environment.</b></p>

DOCUMENT INFORMATION	
Appendix No	Title
1	Covering Letter & Memorandum of Understanding

<p><b>Background Papers</b></p>
<p><i>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive you must provide copies of the background papers).</i></p>