



West Midlands
Combined Authority

Environment Board

Date	27 February 2020
Report title	#WM2041 - Progress on Engagement and Dissemination
Portfolio Lead	Environment, Energy & HS2 - Councillor Ian Courts
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Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Environment Board is recommended to:

- (1) Receive the update on the #WM2041 climate change action plan
- (2) Provide input/suggestions for any final routes for engagement to ensure the consultation is as wide-ranging/ robust as possible
- (3) Note the follow-on work around citizen engagement and investment case and suggest support or input into those programmes.

1. Purpose

The #WM2041 climate change action plan was launched formally on 23 January. This report (and the presentation to be given at the meeting) is to provide an update on the consultation, actions and next steps in relation to the plan.

2. Background

- 2.1 Following its launch on 23 January 2020, the focus of work up until 12 March, when the consultation closes, is to engage with as many businesses, networks and individuals as possible to ensure that the action plan is as robust and comprehensive as we are able to make it. This section describes the ongoing work since the launch and some of the next steps being taken around #WM2041
- 2.2 We have appointed Novoville to run a two-week social media campaign from mid-February to support our online consultation. It will use the same questions as our online consultation portal but will engage audiences using an online chat bot. The company has worked with other local authorities and the Sprint team before. Currently we've had around 100 responses to the consultation. Novoville's Recent work with Stevenage Council generated 1,500 results.
- 2.3 In addition to the online consultation, we have also engaged Democratic Society to work with us to undertake some in-depth work with small, focused groups on the #WM2041 plan and to understand how they would like to be involved going forwards in a conversation on climate change. This will need to compliment (not replicate or confuse) the consultation and engagement that is being undertaken in the constituent local authorities. We will engage local authority communications teams before organising these sessions to ensure they do not replicate any local work.
- 2.4 Along with the launch of the #WM2041 action plan, we began 'The Virtual Forest' tree planting platform to try and bring together the different tree planting groups and initiatives across the WMCA area (wmca.org.uk/plantatree). The site (at time of writing) is showing a total of 622 trees in the West Midlands. This is thanks to some tree planting by Birmingham Trees for Life. The organisation has agreed to register all 10,000 of the trees they are planning to plant so we are adapting the website to be able to register high numbers of trees in one transaction. There is a meeting of tree planting groups taking place on 20 February to move this work forwards and start to spread the message about the site.
- 2.5 We have submitted an application for the Municipal Journal's Local Government Achievement Awards under the category of 'Leadership in responding to the Climate Emergency'. This is an excellent opportunity to have our ground-breaking work recognised nationally.
- 2.6 The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) are engaging organisations from the built environment to respond formally to the consultation on our WM2041 document. This formal response will be published as a report comprising a series of short essays. RICS will launch the report at an event that Deborah will attend at MIPIM. They have asked the Mayor to support with a short video.

- 2.7 We have also engaged SWM Green Business Networks Adelan (Hydrogen Fuel Cells); Black Country Consortium; Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust; RSPB; Friends of the Earth; University of Birmingham; Energy Systems Catapult; Cadent; Tyseley Energy Park; Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership; the Circular Economy Club; Innovation Alliance for the West Midlands; the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership and the Wolverhampton Climate Change Citizen's Assembly. We have also been asked to lead a workshop at the University of Birmingham's climate change day on 29 April.
- 2.8 Arup is working with us to scope the metrics round the action in the #WM2041 plan. We will be looking at the economics of the implementation as well as carbon savings and other potential co-benefits. The initial contract will be in place until the end of March to scope the work that we need to undertake. The full investment case will be developed once the consultation has concluded and we have the comprehensive list of actions.
- 2.9 To keep collaboration as high as possible, and to share the work that all the authorities are doing to address climate change, a 'Low Carbon Officers Group' has been established to pick up actions from the Environment Board as well as to share the different stages of working. This will be held on 12th March at the WMCA offices.
- 2.10 We are working closely with the Young Combined Authority and we are including them in many elements of the planning for the work on #WM2041, including co-design of the workshop activity that will be taking place with Democratic Society. There is a small group of the YCA Board that is particularly interested in supporting the work on climate change and there will be regular meetings going forward.

3. Financial Implications

Currently, the delivery of the action plan is estimated at £40bn (based on the Committee on Climate Change's high-level estimate of UK costs for decarbonising and extrapolating to the regional context). The Arup work will help us to understand the actual costs of decarbonising going forwards. A budget ask has been put into Government to support this work.

4. Legal Implications

None as yet.

5. Equalities Implications

None to report as yet.

6. Inclusive Growth Implications

The delivery of the #WM2041 plan is being done in the context of a 'just transition' – the aim is that we will move to a low carbon economy 'without leaving anyone behind'. Addressing climate change is fully aligned with the WMCA work on inclusive growth.

7. Geographical Area of Report's Implications

The work on the #WM2041 plan covers the whole of the Combined Authority area.

8. Other Implications

Not applicable

9. Schedule of Background Papers

The key paper is #WM2041 (latest version at wmca.org.uk/climatechange) and appended to this report as well.