

Environment and Energy Board

Date	7 th December 2022
Report title	West Midlands Greener Together Forum Update
Portfolio Lead	Councillor Ian Courts - Environment, Energy & HS2
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Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Environment and Energy Board is recommended to:

Note the opportunity to hear directly from West Midlands Citizens at the Forum and consider their recommendations and concerns.

1. Purpose

This paper provides a progress update on delivery of the West Midlands Greener Together Forum. It is accompanied by the briefing paper from the most recent meeting.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Greener Together Forum was established in March 2022 by the WMCA with the aim of creating a space for environmental NGOs, climate activities, community groups, the public and others from across the region to discuss the route to net zero and inspire collaboration. The Forum provides an open and inclusive platform for the sharing of information which is relevant to the region's journey to net zero as well as providing a space for the WMCA and other organisations to update one another and the wider community on the work being undertaken to achieve these targets.
- 2.2 The meetings provide an opportunity for Forum attendees to hear from a range of people on the chosen theme, providing some inspiration to take into breakout rooms. The meetings conclude with a plenary discussion. The Forum meetings are held in the evenings to maximise the opportunity for people to attend. They will

move around the region but will always be hybrid to enable everyone that wants to to join the discussions.

- 2.4 Briefing notes and slides are shared with Forum members after each meeting, uploaded onto the WMCA website and a blog write up is posted online. We have agreed that all Greener Together Forum briefing notes will be shared with the Environment and Energy Board to ensure the opportunities, challenges and opinions of the Forum members are heard by the Board and actions, which are in the power of the WMCA, can be taken.
- 2.5 The meetings to date have covered regional tree planting ambitions, retrofit and, most recently, fuel poverty and support being provided for people given current cost of living pressures. Officers from the WMCA Energy Capital Team, Dudley MBC and Coventry City Council came and presented to the Forum. The notes from the most recent meeting are attached to this Board paper.
- 2.6 A new Advisory Board is going to be established to agree agenda items for future meetings. It will meet for the first time in January. The aim is to have organisations on the Board that represent different interests from across the region with the aim of making the Forum as inclusive as possible.

3. Financial Implications

There are no finance implications as a result of this paper. Any financial implications will be considered on a project-by-project basis, with funding and approval sought through the appropriate channel/authority.

4. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications as a result of this paper. Any legal implications will be considered on a project-by-project basis.

5. Equalities Implications (*)

The work that has been undertaken and planned to address behaviour change is central to the addressing the challenges related to climate change; as achieving net zero requires significant behaviour change. However, we have been clear from the outset that WM2041 must also have significant social and economic benefits for the region. The work that we will be taking forward to address these issues will be driven by behaviour change principles and data available to us, ensuring interventions consider equalities issues in their design and therefore constructed and targeted appropriately and equitably. Ensuring that we have strong deliberative routes for the public to engage with, will provide the opportunity for them to directly influence policies and programmes which will affect their lives and the region.

6. Inclusive Growth Implications

This report links to a number of the WMCA's eight inclusive growth priorities, which are identified as 'a catalyst for improved and sustained outcomes for people place, co-designed with partners and beneficiaries'. Delivering the Greener Together Forum will support many of the outcomes due to the different topics discussed in each meeting.

- supporting the principle of powerful communities through engaging in deliberative democracy to help citizens feel influential;
- Improving education and learning around the climate emergency;
- reduction of health inequalities;
- addressing climate resilience through the promotion of nature-based solution to dealing with climate change; and,
- equality (reducing the numbers of people living in deprivation, which includes lifting people out of 'green deprivation' and fuel poverty).

7. Geographical Area of Report's Implications

The behaviour change programme of work covers all local authorities of the West Midlands and the delivery will also involve non-constituent members, where appropriate.

8. Other Implications

None.

9. Schedule of Background Papers

Appendix 1 – Summary note from 21st November Greener Together Forum.