

Reference	Work Programme Item
BB1	Invite local businesses to move more strongly toward a low carbon economy and support local businesses wherever possible, including continued promotion of Oxfordshire Green Fund (see appendix one 'current activity')
<p>Please describe your vision of how this item could be implemented: <i>Please indicate here if the approach would be different for South or Vale Council and provide details. If you would prefer, please complete a separate template for South and Vale</i></p> <p>For all following work programme items, I propose a unified approach for South and Vale. This is in keeping with the current approach of the Economic Development team through our business facing South and Vale Business Support (SVBS) function. SVBS exists to provide impartial advice, support and resource signposting to the 15,000+ businesses based in the districts.</p> <p>SVBS would be able to offer support and resource signposting through dedicated pages of the South and Vale Business Support website (svbs.co.uk) under an appropriate heading such as "Low Carbon Economy" or "Sustainable Business".</p> <p>Providing Support</p> <p>The Economic Development team does not currently have specific expertise related to the low carbon economy. To address this, it is suggested that the councils strengthen ties with organisations who can provide appropriate expertise and cost-effective solutions.</p> <p>The most appropriate organisation identified is Oxfordshire Greentech, a recently formed network for low carbon and cleantech companies based in Oxfordshire.</p> <p>Oxfordshire Greentech is part of the OxFutures programme, a £3.2m project to boost low carbon economic development in Oxfordshire. It is supported by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and run through a collaborative partnership between the Low Carbon Hub, Cherwell District Council, Bioregional, Oxford City Council, the University of Oxford, and Oxford Brookes University.</p> <p>There is an option to join Greentech as a "Founder Member". This would cost the councils £5000.00 (£2,500 each) per annum if joined under a joint entity spanning both councils, i.e. South and Vale Business Support. Alternatively, it would cost the councils' £5,000 each per annum for individual council membership. (See prices at: https://oxfordshiregreentech.co.uk/member-benefits/types-of-membership/)</p> <p>Founder membership would include the following benefits for the Councils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steering group membership • Access to exclusive networking events • Access to facilitated international innovation events • Business sustainability visioning workshop with senior leadership using the One Planet Living framework • Dedicated account manager and bespoke membership action plan for the councils 	

This is in addition to standard benefits, including:

- Free entry to all Oxfordshire Greentech Special Interest Groups – Including Access to Finance, Built Environment and Electric Vehicles
- Regular roundup of events, funding and commercial opportunities in the Greentech sector
- Regular networking events in and around Oxfordshire
- Discounted tickets to our annual conference and the Cleantech Venture Day investment forum
- Associate membership and access to all events and activities of Cambridge Cleantech – a partner organization with a UK and international network
- Information and guidance on integrating sustainability into your organisation – using the globally recognized One Planet Living framework
- Jobs, news and events posting to 2000+ cleantech companies and individuals
- Oxfordshire Greentech also administer the **Oxfordshire Green Fund**.

The Economic Development team would be able to promote activities, news and opportunities from Oxfordshire Greentech to all South and Vale businesses, whilst also building knowledge and connections within the low carbon / cleantech industries.

The **bespoke action plan** offered by founder membership should mean that the councils would need to engage with consultants to establish a wider understanding of the opportunities for businesses in the low carbon economy. This could be a cost saving, considering the day rate of a consultant is in the region of £350.00 per day.

Please set out the elements which can be delivered within existing resources:

The Economic Development team can help to showcase opportunities in the low carbon economy, such as the green fund, through our regular newsletter, website and social media channels. The same channels can signpost businesses toward events, opportunities and guidance related to business support.

Businesses based in South and Vale have access to various support services, including dedicated business mentors, workshops and networks. The new SVBS Business Mentoring scheme offers business planning and marketing workshops, alongside dedicated one to one support from industry experts. Two of the workshops are dedicated to the low carbon economy. The mentoring scheme is funded through the councils' one-off Brexit preparedness funding. It will cease on 31 March 2020. Additional funding is required to continue the service.

The Economic Development team's annual business breakfast is typically themed around a theme or industry and attracts over 100 business guests alongside councillors and support organisations. A future event could be themed around opportunities to embrace the low carbon economy, with appropriate speakers and information available.

Would additional budget and/or staffing resource be required? Please set out which elements of the vision would require additional resources and itemise any elements that would need extra resources/funding together with the officer time/costs:

Please indicate whether any costs provided are based on quotations or are based upon officer estimation at this stage. If applicable, please attach quotations.

Making support for the low carbon economy a priority for the Economic Development team would result in the de-prioritisation of a current priority (business support, skills, infrastructure, and space) being de-prioritised and is likely to have a significant impact on resources .

The challenge of inviting more businesses to move towards a low carbon future is ensuring that the message reaches businesses not aware or engaged in the low carbon conversation, and that the team can offer adequately qualified advice. To grow the reach of the message, significant resources will be required to ensure that accurate, clear advice can be relayed to a large audience on a regular basis.

To help achieve this, a dedicated new post - Economic Development Low Carbon Lead – would be needed. The skilled officer would be tasked with collating and managing all the available strands of support that already exist, and highlighting any opportunities related to the low carbon economy. A dedicated officer would help to manage regular communications with relevant stakeholders.

The post would be Grade 6 working 0.6 FTE. The post holder would be responsible for working with and gaining knowledge of low carbon activities. The total cost for this would be £27,617 per annum (including on-costs).

In addition to the post, an increase in marketing budget would help to accelerate business awareness and engagement. The cost would be between £5,000. to £10,000.

As previously outlined, Founder Membership of for Oxfordshire Greentech would be priced at £5000.00 per annum per council and include several benefits that could be presented as cost savings when set against costs of consultancy.

A Low Carbon Business Breakfast event could be organised for £2,000.

Please indicate any internal or external timescales which would impact on the ability to deliver this item:

Oxfordshire Greentech is linked to EU ERDF Funding. Although it is understood that ERDF funding is guaranteed by government until 2023, it is unclear how funding might continue or be replaced after this point.

Please set out any partners who would be essential to delivering this item:

Oxfordshire Greentech.

Reference	Work Programme Item
BB2	Develop and compile a portfolio of project examples to inspire local businesses to act
<p>Please describe your vision of how this item could be implemented: <i>Please indicate here if the approach would be different for South or Vale Council and provide details. If you would prefer, please complete a separate template for South and Vale</i></p> <p>Identification, collation, validation and distribution of case studies appropriate to businesses in South and Vale.</p> <p>Guides such as Lloyds Sustainability eBook, and B-Corp’s Impact Measurement tool can be actively promoted and pointed to as resources.</p> <p>Projects that don’t take the form of case studies could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involving and engaging businesses in the sustainability of the area. Don't seek to force decisions on them, but let businesses know they can play a part in the vision. Ask them to contribute their suggestions for improving sustainability, either through regular events or by sending ideas to a dedicated email address. • Regular feedback – including sustainability reports and statistics. A live dashboard could be a great way of communicating this to the public. The best example on offer is the environmental dashboard for Oberlin, that offers the community visual feedback on their consumption of resources: https://environmentaldashboard.org/cwd • Showcase environmentally friendly businesses, including regular sustainability awards or highlighted monthly articles and posts based on local “Sustainability Champions”. • A “low carbon” themed business breakfast could be organised for late 2020, inviting appropriate businesses and interested parties together to showcase successful projects and initiatives. 	
<p>Please set out the elements which can be delivered within existing resources:</p> <p>A portfolio of suitable case studies, as well as guides and tools can be sourced by the Economic Development team The content can be distributed through existing SVBS channels including the website, newsletters and social media posts.</p>	
<p>Would additional budget and/or staffing resource be required? Please set out which elements of the vision would require additional resources and itemise any elements that would need extra resources/funding together with the officer time/costs: <i>Please indicate whether any costs provided are based on quotations or are based upon officer estimation at this stage. If applicable, please attach quotations.</i></p>	

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Making support for the low carbon economy a priority for the Economic Development team would result in the de-prioritisation of a current priority (business support, skills, infrastructure, and space) and have a significant impact on resources required. As above a skilled part time Grade 6 post dedicated to supporting the low carbon economy is essential to achieving the councillors' vision.

Compiling and distributing regular business sustainability reports and statistics, or designing a live dashboard is likely to require significant resources. This includes:

- Depending on the statistics included within the dashboard reports, data and input will be required from multiple sources.
- Designing an environmental dashboard such as that for [Oberlin](#) would need significant design and technical expertise. As the Oberlin tool is relatively unique it's hard to put an estimate on design for a similar tool.
- Showcasing environmentally friendly businesses, including regular sustainability awards or highlighted monthly articles would require staff time. This could be the responsibility of a dedicated low carbon business lead or alternatively, the activity could be covered by members of the ED team, but would need to replace an existing focus area. (Areas of focus include business support, business space, skills, infrastructure, Science Vale and more)

It may also be possible to deliver a low carbon focused business breakfast event in 2020 without additional budget or staff resources.

Please indicate any internal or external timescales which would impact on the ability to deliver this item:

Nil

Please set out any partners who would be essential to delivering this item:

Oxfordshire Greentech is an essential partner to identify relevant case studies and the latest credible statistics and reports

Oxford Universities

Business park owners

Innovation centre managers

Any other factors, information or comments you wish to provide:

Making this item a priority for the Economic Development team would result in the de-prioritisation of a current priority (business support, skills, infrastructure, and space)

Case studies would not be effective as a standalone piece of work, but can be compelling when linked to business support, funding and particularly access to customers.

Reference	Work Programme Item
BB3	Encourage new, low-carbon enterprises business into the area, identifying incentives for them to locate locally
<p>Please describe your vision of how this item could be implemented: <i>Please indicate here if the approach would be different for South or Vale Council and provide details. If you would prefer, please complete a separate template for South and Vale</i></p> <p>At the planning stage, the team would need to understand what incentivises businesses that operate in in the low carbon sector. This would involve engaging consultants to undertake research and compile a report and appropriate recommendations.</p> <p>Desired incentives may be similar to businesses operating in other sectors. This would mean potential incentives could include:</p> <p>Being part of a cluster or a low-carbon enterprise zone: Businesses are attracted to areas where clusters of similar businesses are thriving. This can improve access to skills, facilities and supply chain.</p> <p>Access to business support: General business support is available from a range of sources throughout Oxfordshire. Although existing services could be applied to businesses operating in any sector, we may want to offer specific support to low carbon businesses. This could be completed in association with an organisation such as Greentech, or through engaging relevant consultants / business mentors (see the SVBS mentoring scheme as an example of existing expert support).</p> <p>Access to funding: Access to relevant investors, grants funds or advice on the best source of funding for businesses is all desirable. Strategies detailed in the Oxfordshire LIS include an investment fund for Oxfordshire businesses that may prove attractive if actioned.</p> <p>Financial incentives: The possibility of offering a discretionary rates relief for low carbon businesses could be explored. This would require input from the council's policy and finance departments. If arranged, the councils would be able to market a financial incentive for businesses to relocate.</p> <p>Access to markets / sales opportunities: One of the best ways to attract businesses to the area is to offer access to potential customers. The council could seek to establish access to markets in several ways including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise Community Employment Plans (CEP) for new developments. CEPs often include meet the buyer events for local businesses. The Economic Development team could seek to ensure more low carbon businesses are aware of these opportunities and seek to broker relationships with developers. • Establishment of a low carbon cluster or enterprise zone as described above. The presence of large corporates in the area offer positive supply chain opportunities. 	

- Establish an approved low carbon business register listing South and Vale based businesses that are environmentally friendly or offer energy efficiency products or services. This could be used by consumers and business alike to source suppliers.
- Procurement. The Councils could look to leverage and support low carbon businesses by a weighted procurement approach basing more emphasis on supporting environmentally friendly businesses.
- Another attractive idea from the Oxfordshire LIS is the possibility of establishing Living Labs in the county. A living lab is a research concept, defined as a user-centered, open-innovation ecosystem, often operating in a specific territory. A living lab allows businesses to test innovative new products or services from concept to commercialisation with support of local governance. This could offer direct routes to market for businesses involved in a host of areas, including automated vehicles, real world charging or energy consumption. The Didcot Garden Town, Berinsfield Garden Village, or Dalton Barracks Garden Village sites could be low-carbon living labs

Please set out the elements which can be delivered within existing resources:

Making this item a priority for the Economic Development team would result in the de-prioritisation of a current priority (business support, skills, infrastructure, and space) Business support, encompassing signposting, impartial advice, planning and infrastructure support can run alongside existing economic development activities.

All other measures would require additional financial resources to be delivered.

Would additional budget and/or staffing resource be required? Please set out which elements of the vision would require additional resources and itemise any elements that would need extra resources/funding together with the officer time/costs:

Please indicate whether any costs provided are based on quotations or are based upon officer estimation at this stage. If applicable, please attach quotations.

Establishing a low carbon cluster or enterprise zone: Suitable businesses would need to be identified, mapped, contacted and connected. They would also need to be convinced to be marketed as part of a cluster.

Cluster management and promotion takes expertise and budget. Examples such as the Space, HealthTec and Energy clusters established at Harwell employ development managers and offer business space and facilities. Typical salary expectations for a cluster development manager are £70,000+.

Marketing a low carbon cluster would also take significant resources in order to be successful in attracting businesses. Science Vale is a similar local scheme, the scheme has several stakeholders and significant marketing budget.

Access to business support: There are several options to establish dedicated business support service for low carbon businesses, these include:

1. A dedicated Low Carbon Officer post sitting within the economic development team. It is proposed the Grade 6 post would work 0.6 FTE. The total cost for this would be £27,617 per annum (including on-costs).
2. Founder membership of Oxfordshire Greentech at £5000.00.
3. Engaging relevant consultants or mentors at £360.00 per day.

Access to funding: As above point.

Discretionary rates relief: Dependent on the council's finances and commitment. Marketing the scheme would take significant budget.

Access to markets / sales opportunities:

- It should be possible to deliver CEP's under existing resources, but would require the assistance of colleagues in planning and at OxLEP to grow the number and impact of CEPs.
- Establishing a low carbon business register would require branding and marketing, as well as someone to administer and monitor the scheme. Buying into an existing brand or working in collaboration with a partner such as Greentech or the Low Carbon Hub may reduce costs. Estimate of establishing a scheme - £25,000.
- Procurement initiatives should be delivered in house by the appropriate department and marketed through existing channels. Would require changes to policy and the possibility of a consultant to advise on the procurement weighting changes. i.e. comparing sustainability to economic benefits.
- Living labs would require input from planning policy and approval at various levels of governance. Opportunities would need to be identified with countywide partners including OxLEP.

It's important to measure and report on the impact and success of each factor so that understanding can be gained of the success of each in attracting businesses to South and Vale. This would require additional resources.

Please indicate any internal or external timescales which would impact on the ability to deliver this item:

- Adoption of the Oxfordshire LIS and establishment of associated strategies (living labs, investment fund) may take several years. The document covers the period 2020 to to 2040.
- Large developments suitable for CEP's may already be in action or at advanced planning stages.
- Identification and appointment of appropriate officers and consultants resources could take 12-18 months.

Please set out any partners who would be essential to delivering this item:

Internal council departments including planning policy and finance.

Countywide partners including OxLEP, **Oxford Universities, Business park owners, Innovation centre managers**

Industry partners including Low Carbon Hub and Oxfordshire Greentech.

Any other factors, information or comments you wish to provide:

Making this item a priority for the Economic Development team would result in the de-prioritisation of a current priority (business support, skills, infrastructure, and space)

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Reference	Work Programme Item
BB4	Develop skills in the local workforce, including apprenticeship opportunities, in respect of low carbon infrastructure and installation
<p>Please describe your vision of how this item could be implemented: <i>Please indicate here if the approach would be different for South or Vale Council and provide details. If you would prefer, please complete a separate template for South and Vale</i></p> <p>It is important to recognise the councils' locus of control. The councils have little to no ability to influence the curriculum taught at schools and colleges, and if an apprenticeship course for low carbon infrastructure has been developed. Ultimately these are national level conversations that need to be driven by the education sector as it responds to market demands.</p> <p>However, there are two distinct options for increasing awareness of low-carbon jobs and skills</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Light touch approach. Review existing national or regional skills-based research papers that offer broad guidance on the skills required for the low carbon economy. This can involve papers such as Oxfordshire's Low Carbon Economy by the Institute for Environmental Change. <p>Increasing awareness of the skills needed could be integrated with the Economic Development Skills Lead work plan for 2020 / 21. This would form a major part of the role and would need to be balanced with other areas such as a focus, such as digital and enterprise skills, and pressing needs in industries such as healthcare and engineering.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Local detail. Alternatively, to tailor skills development to the local area, we would need to build a broader understanding what skills are required by the local workforce in relation to low carbon. This is likely to be a large body of work that would involve: 	

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- Identification of, and contact with, local employers involved with low carbon infrastructure and installation.
- A period of research.
- Identification of relevant training and apprenticeship providers.
- A skills report with recommendations of career paths and opportunities.
- Monitoring and review periods to ensure information is relevant.
- Ongoing work with educational providers and employers to develop and maintain a workforce pipeline.

Option one is the preferred option as it can be accommodated within the current economic development work plan at little cost. Option two would be a costly, intensive programme that would require outside consultancy and the support of a dedicated skills officer on an ongoing basis.

Please set out the elements which can be delivered within existing resources:

Making this item a priority for the Economic Development team would result in the de-prioritisation of a current priority (business support, skills, infrastructure, and space) It should be possible to deliver option one with existing resources, however this would need to be balanced with skills projects focusing on other pressing skill shortages and needs.

Would additional budget and/or staffing resource be required? Please set out which elements of the vision would require additional resources and itemise any elements that would need extra resources/funding together with the officer time/costs:

Please indicate whether any costs provided are based on quotations or are based upon officer estimation at this stage. If applicable, please attach quotations.

Option 2 would require significant resources, including research specialists and consultants. For similar projects quotes of £25,000 to cover consultancy would be reasonable.

Please indicate any internal or external timescales which would impact on the ability to deliver this item:

Regarding option 1, publication timescales of national and local skills strategies are unknown. Whilst existing papers are available, they may not be relevant to South and Vale, or quickly become outdated.

If option 2 is preferable, it would take in the region of 12-18 months to engage appropriate consultants, conduct research and generate a report. A similar time scale would be required for our Skills Lead to finish existing work programmes in order to be dedicated to a Low Carbon skills programme.

Please set out any partners who would be essential to delivering this item:

OxLEP Skills team
Local school enterprise advisors
Oxfordshire Greentech
Federation of Small Business
Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce
Oxford Universities

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<p>Business park owners Innovation centre managers</p>
<p>Any other factors, information or comments you wish to provide: Making this item a priority for the Economic Development team would result in the de-prioritisation of a current priority (business support, skills, infrastructure, and space)</p>

Reference	Work Programme Item
BB5	Work with partner bodies across the County to ensure that the climate emergency is adequately reflected in the development and implementation of county wide strategies and plans such as the Oxfordshire Industrial Strategy and Oxfordshire Energy Strategy
<p>Please describe your vision of how this item could be implemented: <i>Please indicate here if the approach would be different for South or Vale Council and provide details. If you would prefer, please complete a separate template for South and Vale</i></p> <p>The Economic Development team can raise the climate emergency when informing the development and delivery of local, county-wide and national economic strategies. If the strategies are not owned by the South and Vale councils, the Economic Development team is unable to guarantee that the climate emergency is reflected in all county-wide economic strategies.</p>	

The Economic Development team can support the information, delivery and implementation of the county-wide strategies at the South and Vale level and help to communicate the implications of such strategies to all local businesses.

**Please set out the elements which can be delivered within existing resources:
The Economic Development team can raise the climate emergency at relevant opportunities.**

Would additional budget and/or staffing resource be required? Please set out which elements of the vision would require additional resources and itemise any elements that would need extra resources/funding together with the officer time/costs:
Please indicate whether any costs provided are based on quotations or are based upon officer estimation at this stage. If applicable, please attach quotations.
Nil

Please indicate any internal or external timescales which would impact on the ability to deliver this item:

The Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy document is already published. The investment prospectus and delivery plan are due to be completed by March 2020. Whilst there may be opportunities to help influence future documents, these are externally owned and compiled policy documents and as such the economic development level of influence is limited.

Please set out any partners who would be essential to delivering this item:

**OxLEP
Oxfordshire district councils
Oxford Universities
Business park owners
Innovation centre managers**

Any other factors, information or comments you wish to provide:

Making this item a priority for the Economic Development team would result in the de-prioritisation of a current priority (business support, skills, infrastructure, and space)