

REPORT TO: Employment, Learning & Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board

DATE: Monday 24 June 2019

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community & Resources

PORTFOLIO: Economic Development

SUBJECT: 'Delivering the Hydrogen Economy NW' event

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 A presentation will be made to the Board describing the 'Delivering the Hydrogen Economy NW' event held at The Heath Business and Technical Park on Wednesday 05 June.

The presentation will also describe the many and various major schemes and funding applications currently being advanced across the Liverpool City Region and the Cheshire & Warrington LEP area and the likely impact upon the economy of Halton of the development of a hydrogen economy locally.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That:**

i) Members note the significance of the development of a hydrogen economy locally and the contribution likely to be made to the decarbonisation of industry, the creation and sustainability of local employment and a range of significant positive public health outcomes.

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 **Background**

The Liverpool City Region and Cheshire & Warrington functional economy is taking a proactive approach to the deployment of hydrogen as a green fuel with numerous projects, both ongoing and emerging, related to hydrogen production, storage, distribution and application.

However, the scale, significance, interconnectivity and, critically, opportunities presented by the numerous hydrogen related projects currently in development isn't necessarily recognised by a wider audience of both decision makers and influencer and potential

beneficiaries.

It was, therefore, proposed that an event be held in the Borough of Halton that would :-

- Position the Liverpool City Region\Cheshire & Warrington area (and potentially the North West of England) as the preeminent region in the UK for the deployment of a viable and interconnected hydrogen economy
- Reflect the actual, as well as the hypothetical, deployment of hydrogen as the future fuel for transport, industry and domestic use by showcasing the range of hydrogen related projects in advanced development across the region.
- Deliver a positive narrative regarding the numerous hydrogen related demand and supply projects currently planned or being delivered across the region
- Deliver a positive message regarding the region's collaborative approach to developing interconnected low carbon solutions and delivering a green, low- carbon, future.
- Provide a platform for the announcement of a range of new projects, strategies or funding streams
- Provide a platform for senior national and regional political figures to endorse the development of the hydrogen economy in the region

The event took place at The Heath Business and Technical Park, Runcorn on Wednesday 05 June

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 UK government has placed the adoption of hydrogen firmly at the centre of both industrial policy ('Building a Britain Fit for the Future') and environmental policy ('Leading the Way to a Low Carbon Future').

The adoption of hydrogen as a low carbon fuel for industry, transport and domestic usage will also contribute positively to a raft of national, regional and local health initiatives, policies and strategies.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The cost associated with the delivery of the event were met wholly from sponsorship.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

A viable hydrogen economy will contribute to the energy security,

environmental performance and, therefore, sustainability of a number of Halton's major, energy hungry, manufacturing concerns.

The hydrogen economy will also potentially provide future, high value, employment for the young people of Halton.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Industrial de-carbonisation targets will impact significantly on a number of the Borough's major employers. It is, therefore, critical that the region puts in place a fully integrated and viable green energy system. The production and distribution of hydrogen will be one critical element of that emerging system.

The roll-out of an integrated green energy system has the potential to create a large number of skilled, high value and sustainable jobs and secure the future of local workers currently employment in manufacturing occupations.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

It is increasingly evident that air quality has an important effect on public health, the economy, and the environment. According to Public Health England, poor air quality is the largest environmental risk to public health in the UK. Evidence from the World Health Organization (WHO) shows that older people, children, people with pre-existing lung and heart conditions, and people on lower incomes may be most at risk.

The development of an integrated green energy system with hydrogen at its heart will, through the deployment of hydrogen fuelled vehicles and other measures, reduce nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), a major contributor to air quality issues, and CO₂ the most significant green house gas.

6.4 A Safer Halton

No implications

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

The development of an integrated green energy system will make a positive contribution to the urban renewal of Halton particularly in the West Runcorn Impact Area

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

There are no immediate risk issues.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

There are no equality and diversity issues

9.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None under the meaning of the Act.