



Combined Authority Board

22 January 2025

Title:	Greater South East Net Zero Hub – Overview of programmes, finance and governance
Report of:	Maxine Narburgh, Director of the GSEnz Hub
Lead Member:	Cllr Bridget Smith
Public Report:	Yes
Key Decision:	No
Voting Arrangements:	No vote required

Recommendations:

A	To note the overview of the Greater South East Net Zero Hub (GSEnzH) including an overview of programmes, finance and governance
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Strategic Objective(s):

The proposals within this report fit under the following strategic objective(s):

	Achieving ambitious skills and employment opportunities
x	Achieving good growth
	Increased connectivity
x	Enabling resilient communities
	Achieving Best Value and High Performance

1. Purpose

1.1	The report provides an overview of the GSEnz Hub governance, finance and programmes (operations) to supplement reporting of Hub Board decisions to the ESC and to the Board.
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2. Overview

2.1	The Hub's activities support the strategic priorities through: <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. supporting public sector organisations to develop net zero/decarbonisation projectsii. providing strategic support to public sector clientsiii. the acceleration of net zero projects to commercial investment andiv. administering grant schemes to further community owner energy projects and to provide advice to households on retrofit.
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3. Background

3.1 The CPCA is the Accountable Body for the GSEnz Hub. CPCA has a MOU in place with the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero to operate the Hub and its services for the Greater South East area. The Hubs' MoUs are time limited and renewed through the Spending Review process. The Hubs teams are currently funded to September 2026 through this Government's SR1.

The Director of Place and Connectivity has delegated authority from the CA Board to make decisions on behalf of the Combined Authority when sitting on the Net Zero Hub Board. These decisions are reported to the Environment and Sustainable Communities Committee (ESC) and/or Combined Authority Board.

Following an appointment in autumn 2024, the Hub Board is now chaired by Paul Jefferiss, who has considerable senior Executive experience in sustainability in the private and public sector.

3.2 The GSEnz Hub is one of five Hubs in England. The GSE region covers circa 48% of households in England and has 147 local authorities.



3.3 The Hub's finance update and complex programme (HUG2) performance is reported to the CA Board. This is delivered in 44 local authority areas and not in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. In CPCA this is delivered by the Cambridgeshire Energy Retrofit Partnership (CERP) and Peterborough have until recently been a member of a partnership for delivery led by another unitary authority.

- 3.4 The Hub has 45 staff working across several programmes of work:
- 23 FTE- Net Zero & Public Sector Decarbonisation
 - 4 FTE - Regional Projects (Community Energy & Local Energy Advice Demonstrators)
 - 8 FTE - Local Net Zero Accelerator
 - 10 FTE – HUG2

3.5 For clarity, any decision outside of the Director of Place and Connectivity delegation is brought to the CA Board. A verbal update can be provided to the meeting.

3.6 In October the revised budget for all GSEnz Hub programmes and projects was presented to the CA Board to update the MTFP. The CA Board agreed the revised budgets for HUG2 and the Local Net Zero Accelerator (LNZA) and budgets under delegated authority as agreed by the GSEnz Hub Board meeting in September.

3.7	It was agreed that a holistic overview of the Hubs operations, governance and finance would be brought to the CA Board to provide detail on the Hub activities.
3.8	The GSEnz Hub programmes and services are available to all local authorities in the GSE region, with the exception of HUG2 which is delivered on behalf of 44 local authorities in the GSE. The Local Net Zero Accelerator which is delivered in Greater Manchester CA, West Midlands CA, York and North Yorkshire CA.
3.9	Board members will recall at the November 2024 meeting the decision was taken not to apply for the Warm Homes Local Grant due to similarities with the HUG2 grant and associated delivery risks. Correspondence is underway with the Department about this.
3.10	Risk is managed in line with CPCA Risk Management Framework and procedures. Risk is reported through the Hub's governance (Hub Board, Retrofit Project Board, LNZA Programme Board) and escalated to CPCA as appropriate (PMO, corporate management team, CA Board/ESC Committee).

4. Appendices

4.1	Appendix A - GSEnzH Operations
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5. Implications

Financial Implications

5.1	There are no direct financial implications to this report as it is an update.
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Legal Implications

5.2	There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. The Single Assurance Framework, section 7.3 sets out the governance relating to the Greater South East Net Zero Hub.
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Public Health Implications

5.3	None
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Environmental & Climate Change Implications

5.4	The Hub's purpose is to support the acceleration to Net Zero, all work streams have a positive impact on climate change and reducing carbon emissions. This includes through the delivery of local renewable energy generation/net zero projects, heat networks/heat decarbonisation, transport decarbonisation and energy efficiency measures.
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Other Significant Implications

5.5	None
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Background Papers

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