

# SHIPLEY & KEIGHLY TOWNS FUND – SUSTAINABILITY & NET ZERO

This note follows discussion with Ravinder Panesar, Michelle Rushworth and Angela Hays on 13 July 2023. As an experienced sustainability professional of 20 years', and a local resident, I have material concerns that opportunities to deliver on key sustainability goals may be missed in the delivery of the Shipley and Keighley Town Fund Programmes (the programme(s)). In addition to clear national drivers, BMDC declared a Climate Emergency in 2019, are members of the LCR Climate Commission, and have a Sustainable Development Action Plan in place setting out their ambitions for a “sustainable district”. In this context, the programmes should strive to achieve their full potential, notably for carbon emission reduction, climate resilience, local skill and supply chain development, community connectivity and wellbeing, and environmental enhancement.

## A clear strategy for delivering sustainability

There is notable action in this area. Town Investment Plans (TIPs) have set clear strategic objectives to deliver against a range of sustainability themes.

*“This TIP will deliver a thriving, self-sufficient town that is also driven by national Carbon Net Zero objectives” (Shipley TIP, Executive Summary)*

*“Strategic Objective SO7 – to support the health and well-being of Shipley by improving access and linkages to a range of clean, green spaces.” and “investing sustainably in existing building stock” (Shipley TIP, p32)*

*“The TIP will...help to fulfil the carbon net zero agenda” (Keighley TIP, p7)*

Individual project business cases build on this to include their own sustainability and carbon emission reduction commitments. Detailed plans are seeing this come to life on some sites. However, success should not rest on the shoulders of individual delivery partners alone. Proactive, programme level steps are needed to achieve these commitments.

**Opportunity:** Develop a **programme level sustainability framework**, including objectives, outcomes, (resourced) actions, and KPIs for individual projects and the programme(s) as a whole to maintain visibility and comfort that the programme is on track to deliver its strategic objectives.

## Build capacity and share good practice

Collaborative approaches will drive better outcomes: cost, resource, procurement and sustainability. There is an opportunity to share lessons learned in a structured way, between Shipley projects (and with Keighley).

**Opportunity:** Host a **half-day workshop** and facilitate individual projects to showcase sustainability and net zero achievements and share challenges.

**Opportunity:** Establish a **sustainability and low carbon ‘working group’** with representatives from each of the projects, with responsibility for reporting progress to the TF Board.

## Make infrastructure improvements count

The success of both programmes in **achieving carbon emission reductions**, improved local air quality, improved access to green space, and enhanced community health and wellbeing rests heavily on **transport infrastructure improvements**. Are the TF Board confident in the success of these interventions in achieving the strategic objectives?

**Opportunity:** Develop a clear understanding of whether transport interventions are on track to deliver these objectives.

## Drive net zero and climate resilience in SMEs

The Towns Fund investment presents a huge opportunity to drive climate change resilience and the net zero agenda through the SME community.

**Opportunity:** Ensure every business that is touched by the capital assistance programme receives a grounding and support in sustainability and net zero principles for businesses.

## Govern to achieve sustainability outcomes

**How confident are BMDC and the TF Board(s) that the Strategic Objectives will be met?** (ie improved environmental quality, sustainable building stock investment and supporting the net zero transition). Both TIPs noted that: *“The Town Deal Board will establish sub-groups to progress the projects through business case and delivery stage, supported by the Council’s Sustainable Growth Board.”*

**Opportunity:** **Appoint a TF Board member** with responsibility driving delivery of the strategic sustainability aspirations set out in the TIPs.

**Opportunity:** Make sustainability (including carbon emission reduction and climate resilience) a **standing agenda item at TF Board meetings**.

**Opportunity:** Make **regular and standardised reporting on sustainability metrics** a requirement for all projects, at all deliver stages.