



CarbonCo-op



# Innovate UK Net Zero: Pathfinder Places

## Oldham Green New Deal Delivery Partnership - Phase 1

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## Executive summary

### **Accelerating a successful and socially just energy transition to Net Zero through a collaborative approach: The Oldham Green New Deal Delivery Partnership model.**

*Oldham's size and demographics aligned with its commitment to the clean energy transition and Green New Deal (GND) principles create a distinct offer for prospective delivery partners. Its co-operative values and high degrees of community involvement offer the potential for an impactful commercial partnership as community involvement acts to de-risk investments in the energy transition, whilst the GND Partnership model offers cross-sectoral assurance and oversight to ensure a just and socially valuable energy transition is delivered.*

*An effective delivery partnership model offers a test-bed for a potential larger Greater Manchester wide partnership, demonstrating replicable solutions to common challenges and citizen-centred infrastructure design and delivery.*

This feasibility study report sets out the work undertaken by Oldham Council, Carbon Co-op and the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) in identifying innovative approaches to unlock non-technical systemic barriers to the delivery of Net Zero targets. Oldham Council recognises the need to establish a robust and effective model to implement the infrastructure in the Oldham Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP), based on the principles set out in the Oldham Green New Deal Strategy 2020-2025.

Oldham's LAEP suggests that an investment of £5.6bn (including business-as-usual investment) is required in low carbon infrastructure to take the borough to Net Zero. It also recognises through Council work and experience, and through understanding of similar positions of other local authorities across the country, that delivering the energy transition is extremely challenging not only due to the number of technical barriers, but also due to the substantial number of non-technical barriers. This Phase 1 Feasibility Study has provided the opportunity to deep dive into the analysis of the non-technical barriers in relation to the establishment of an Oldham Green New Deal Delivery Partnership.

*The OGND Delivery Partnership is Oldham Borough's mechanism to deliver the infrastructure set out in Oldham's LAEP. It is designed to secure the required levels of investment and delivery capacity to achieve this, mainly from the private sector. It is also designed to de-risk implementation and drive the economic and social benefits of the energy transition through a governance structure which includes all key stakeholders - including strategic anchor organisations and the community - in the design and implementation process.*

This feasibility study builds upon the knowledge gained from the Oldham Energy Futures<sup>1</sup> project (2019-2021). The project successfully developed a methodology to

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<sup>1</sup> <https://oldhamenergyfutures.carbon.coop/>

integrate Community-Led Energy Planning with Oldham's LAEP. This highlights the importance of bottom-up, granular-scale knowledge and energy transition strategies, which complement the high-level strategies outlined in the LAEP at the borough level. Additionally, there is a need to establish an Oldham Green New Deal Delivery Partnership (OGND DP). The importance of deep and effective community-led participation has been emphasised in various research studies, including recent reports, such as Citizens Advice<sup>2</sup>. Critically, the strategy will offer actionable recommendations and a replicable approach for how CLEP and LAEPs can be integrated into municipal planning, and ensure that planning processes become a critical enabler to the delivery of infrastructure energy projects, bringing clarity to the social process in project development and delivery.

Through this Phase 1 study we have identified, captured under 6 themes, 10 key non-technical barriers, and possible solutions. These are:

1. Finance
2. Viability
3. Capacity and knowledge
4. Strategy
5. Democracy
6. Economy
7. Legitimacy
8. Timing
9. Retrofit
10. Cross-organisational decarbonisation opportunities

The 6 themes are:

- Social
- Governance
- Procurement
- Finance
- Skills, capabilities and capacity
- Regulatory

The analysis and synthesis of our research has helped formulate a number of actions, shaped in clear work packages, for Phase 2 in order to pilot and test the identified solutions to these non-technical barriers. Phase 2 will continue the collaboration between the existing partners with the addition of a new partner: First Choice Homes Oldham housing association, to address non-technical barriers identified around retrofit at-scale as well as inter-organisational collaboration on key strategic low carbon infrastructure such as district heat networks.

Phase 2 has detailed work packages (WPs) that will address the identified barriers, they will include actions such as: The designing of the operating and governance model; The procurement of Investment & Delivery Partner as indicated by the actions from other work packages; The establishment of OGND DP governance and initial operations. The WPs are captured in the Resource Plan GANTT chart.

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<sup>2</sup> "Close to Home: How to Engage Local Communities in the Development of Local Area Energy Plans (LAEPs)" <https://bit.ly/443coUE>

## 1.0 Introduction

### **Oldham approach**

Oldham Council is one of 10 Local Authorities in Greater Manchester and works with the other councils in collaboration under the Combined Authority umbrella (GMCA). Within the combined authority Oldham has been a Co-operative Council since 2011. Phase 1 has enabled us to share knowledge with GMCA and Manchester City Council as part of the IUK cohort group and this collaboration has also proved fruitful in outlining Phase 2 joint-approach opportunities.

The Co-operative Council approach starts with recognising shared problems and ambitions. Council executive members, elected members and officers then sit down together to look at what each needs to do in order to get a better result that benefits the borough. This ambition stems from Oldham Co-operative Values<sup>3</sup> which support the Council's commitment to developing a co-operative future, aspiring for all members of the community to play an active part in building a co-operative borough. Council staff, citizens and partners are encouraged to adopt these values in everything they do.

### **Adoption of Green New Deal Principles**

Oldham Council has set out a Green New Deal approach in order to drive positive and sustainable growth and renewal for the borough. The three pillars of the strategy are: Green Economy (including work, skills and business engagement); Low Carbon (including infrastructure and technology); and Northern Roots (including green infrastructure and tourism). All three main pillars work together under the Green New Deal approach.

In March 2020, Oldham Council adopted the Oldham Green New Deal Strategy, the first green local authority plan of its kind in the UK.

Through this approach the Oldham Energy Futures, funded by ICLEI<sup>4</sup>, project was delivered in two local Oldham neighbourhoods between 2019 and 2021. Through Community Led Energy Planning, which formulated energy action plans around the communities' needs and aspirations, the project paved the way for deeper understanding by all partners, especially OMBC, about the importance and value of embedding meaningful and effective bottom-up engagement with local communities and local stakeholders - not only to ensure a just energy transition but also as a way to gain local support and thus de-risk the delivery of complex Net Zero energy infrastructure projects as identified in the LAEP. This approach also enhanced capacity in the local community to enable them to understand and engage in discussions about the energy system changes and what that means for them at the local level.

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<sup>3</sup> The Co-operative Charter sets out the Co-operative Values  
[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200572/co-operative\\_oldham/944/the\\_co-operative\\_charter](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200572/co-operative_oldham/944/the_co-operative_charter)

<sup>4</sup> <https://iclei.org/>

The project established the CLEP<sup>5</sup> methodology as a complementary approach to the LAEP borough-scale strategies, harnessing the unique characteristics and needs at granular level - both ward and neighbourhood scale. It also picked up on the importance of community engagement to the successful delivery of Net Zero projects benefiting place and people, across the borough. This has also been identified in recent research by Regen (May 2023)<sup>6</sup> supporting local authorities calling for collaborative partnerships to create regional energy system plans, and by the recent report commissioned by Citizens Advice that highlights the clear need for “[...] *the engagement and buy-in of local people will be essential to the success of any LAEP - and therefore the success of meeting our national Net Zero targets.*”<sup>7</sup>

### **The purpose of this report**

The purpose of this report is to set out the non-technical barriers we have identified along with research findings, and potential solutions and actions to inform Phase 2 and make delivery of Oldham’s LAEP projects possible to decarbonise the energy system and maximise social benefits locally.

Through this Phase 1 work we have come to understand with greater clarity that there are fundamental non-technical barriers to the implementation of plans set out in LAEP documents (as evidenced by research and reports from officers) and that business-as-usual approaches cannot overcome these barriers, as shown by the difficulties encountered in delivery of LAEP strategies by many Local Authorities (LAs) in the UK. Our analysis shows that fundamental change is required to how Local Authorities plan, engage with citizens and procure energy transition projects, to ensure citizen acceptance and involvement and holistic, energy system wide approaches to delivery. This conclusion is further supported by recent research commissioned by Citizens Advice<sup>8</sup>.

A Green New Deal Delivery Partnership has the potential to tackle key barriers including Finance, Viability, Democracy and Capacity & Skills - as captured in section 2.1 of the report - and in doing so catalyse real energy system project delivery involving diverse public and private stakeholders.

Such an approach offers a high degree of replicability in other parts of the UK and can inform future policy development in LA involvement in delivering the Net Zero energy transition. This is relevant to forthcoming changes in how energy systems are planned, and the local and regional role in this.

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<sup>5</sup> Community-led energy plan  
<sup>6</sup>

<https://www.regen.co.uk/local-authorities-call-for-collaborative-partnerships-to-create-regional-energy-system-plans/>

<sup>7</sup> Quote from the Exec Summary of “Close to Home” report by Citizens Advice <http://bit.ly/3JndiDh>

<sup>8</sup> “Close to Home” report by Citizens Advice <http://bit.ly/3JndiDh>

## 2.0 Planning the Oldham GND Delivery Partnership

### 2.1 Systemic Barriers

We believe that the Oldham Green New Deal Delivery Partnership (OGND DP) has the potential to overcome non-technical barriers and in doing so catalyse real energy system project delivery involving diverse public and private stakeholders, and this approach needs to marry with robust and effective community involvement.

It is therefore during this Phase 1 work that we identified 10 critical non-technical barriers to the successful implementation and delivery of the LAEP:

1. Finance
2. Viability
3. Capacity and knowledge
4. Strategy
5. Democracy
6. Economy
7. Legitimacy
8. Timing
9. Retrofit
10. Cross-organisational decarbonisation opportunities

We have categorised them under 6 themes in order to bring a thematic lens to the analysis:

- Social
- Governance
- Procurement
- Finance
- Skills, capabilities and capacity
- Regulatory

Below we set out these themes and key points from our analysis of the non-technical barriers for each theme along with solutions to them..

#### 2.1.1. Social

**Barriers identified:** Legitimacy, Democracy, Capacity & Knowledge, Cross-organisational decarbonisation opportunities

#### **Key points**

- **A lack of citizen and community engagement** risks the non-delivery of Net Zero projects - due to potential local opposition or overlooked projects that would otherwise have been identified by on the ground local insight and knowledge.
- **LAEP approaches require more social processes** to offer 'shovel ready' projects and to offer a form of 'social derisking' to ensure the development of effective delivery partnerships.

- The integration of a **Community Led Energy Planning** approach (CLEP) offers a mechanism for community buy-in at an early stage, with the potential to augment or add to formal LAEP and statutory planning approaches.
- Additionally, Oldham's approach **puts people at the heart of the energy transition** through the adoption of Green New Deal principles and strategy and the formation of the Oldham Green New Deal Delivery Partnership approach to procurement and delivery

### 2.1.2 Governance

**Barriers identified:** Finance, Viability, Strategy, Democracy, Timing, Retrofit, Cross-organisational decarbonisation opportunities.

**Key points:**

- The £5.6bn of investment requirements set out in the Oldham LAEP cannot be delivered without **strategic coordination** across multiple energy vectors, geographies, landowners and customers.
- A robust and coherent approach to energy system governance supports **accountability and engagement** and offers **a more attractive context** for prospective investors and delivery partners.
- **Local authority energy system governance touches on many duties, powers and functions** but the context for this governance is currently under consultation and includes concepts such as a Regional System Planner that will involve local authorities.
- Despite this uncertainty, the **Oldham Green New Deal Delivery Partnership and further council policy alignment (planning policy, highways policy)** can perform an energy governance function, adapting energy system development to local priorities and citizen benefit and to provide certainty to investors and developers.
- Oldham Green New Deal Delivery Partnership, supported by an Independent Assurance Provider, has the opportunity to **combine and catalyse different schemes** across anchor organisations, businesses and communities and to harmonise with stakeholders including ENW, GMCA and national policy priorities.

### 2.1.3 Procurement

**Barriers identified:** Finance, Viability, Capacity & Knowledge, Timing, Cross-organisational decarbonisation opportunities, Democracy

**Key Points:**

- Local Authority **procurement of energy system projects is complicated and risky** due to complex interdependencies between energy technologies, grid impacts and market mechanisms, and geographic (Place-Based) and economic considerations, differing levels of return on investment from different schemes (and in turn attractiveness to the private sector) and in some cases very long project lead ins and lifetimes (ie 40 years).

- These complexities and risks therefore require **a strong alignment in values** between procured project and investment partners and local authority (and in turn citizens and communities)
- The local authority **preference is for a single development partner** to maximise carbon reduction impacts by **packaging financially marginal projects with more profitable ones** and to **strategically coordinate a blend of public, community and private funding sources** for programmes.
- A **local authority/private Joint Venture long-term energy partner** with shared values based around the Council's GND principles and commitment to Community Led Energy Planning can deliver quick wins set out in the LAEP and facilitate other schemes.
- In contrast, a short term **concession for the planned heat network** offers little by way of wider opportunities to develop other schemes.
- Oldham Council is one of the few contracting authorities to have experience of the **Innovation Partnership** approach to procurement, which was used for the co-design and delivery of Oldham's Social Prescribing network. This approach to procurement could be explored to address the non-technical barrier around Democracy in the design and delivery of low carbon schemes.
- See Appendix 1 for Procurement Case Studies.

#### 2.1.4 Finance

**Barriers identified:** Finance, Viability, Capacity & Knowledge, Legitimacy

##### Key Points

- The £5.6bn investment required to realise schemes set out in the LAEP requires a **range of types of organisations, people and scales** across a range of technologies to deliver. Some aspects are more viable than others e.g. for retrofit the barriers are less around finance and more around a lack of effective delivery models - as a result there is no interest in retrofit amongst big infrastructure providers.
- The **Oldham GND Delivery Partnership offers the ability to prioritise the business cases ready to go now** i.e. the heat network. With governance and delivery structures in place Oldham can take advantage of opportunities as they arise - e.g. via Place-Based Investments for Net Zero or neighbourhood scale retrofit schemes.
- A **commercial partner will bring investment know-how** and can look at potential schemes to assess financial suitability.

#### 2.1.5 Skills, Capability & Capacity

**Barriers identified:** Capacity & Knowledge, Strategy, Knowledge, Retrofit, Cross-organisational decarbonisation opportunities.

##### Key Points

- **Oldham Council lacks energy system expertise and capacity and a dedicated team** to bring relevant council functions together whilst locally, in common



with the rest of the UK, there is a limited trained and skilled workforce ready to progress projects.

- Oldham can **boost the area capacity through the Green New Deal Delivery Partnership**, its **commercial partner** and an **Independent Assurance Provider** to provide support in the early stages of the set up. Partners can **share knowledge and build up an energy system capacity more broadly**.
- A commercial partner would be required through a contractual obligation to involve Oldham's **Green Technology and Services businesses** to support new local jobs, skills and economic benefit. Oldham's **schools, colleges and services to reskill and support people into work** will be supported to be energy transition ready too.

### 2.1.6 Regulatory

**Barriers identified:** Strategy, Knowledge, Legitimacy, Retrofit, Cross-organisational decarbonisation opportunities.

#### Key points

- **Energy system governance and regulatory change is in process, with consultation from Ofgem and DESNZ ongoing.**
- Proposed changes include the creation of a **Regional Systems Planner (RSP)**, **Heat Regulation** (current use of Heat Code prior to Heat being regulated by Ofgem) and **Heat Network Zoning**.
- With **uncertainty on the form and shape of the future energy system regulatory make up**, Oldham will take a flexible approach, alongside ongoing engagement with policy making institutions and seeking appropriate legal advice.
- In the meantime, **strategies and policies will be aligned** through Oldham Green New Deal Delivery Partnership and Oldham Council's planning and permitting policies to enable LAEP infrastructure projects to progress.
- The commercial delivery partner and Independent Assurance Provider will **add regulatory, technical and investment expertise**.

## 2.2 Phase 2 Proposal Opportunity

The work undertaken in the Phase 1 feasibility study has informed actions, captured as work packages for Phase 2 delivery. Our approach to Phase 2 is anchored in a systems approach to establish the Oldham Green New Deal Delivery Partnership and the Community-Led Energy Planning methodology and toolkit.

The Phase 2 opportunity also builds on the strength of a collaborative approach between Oldham Council, GMCA and Manchester City Council, formed in the Phase 1 Innovate UK Net Zero Living Pathfinder Places programme.

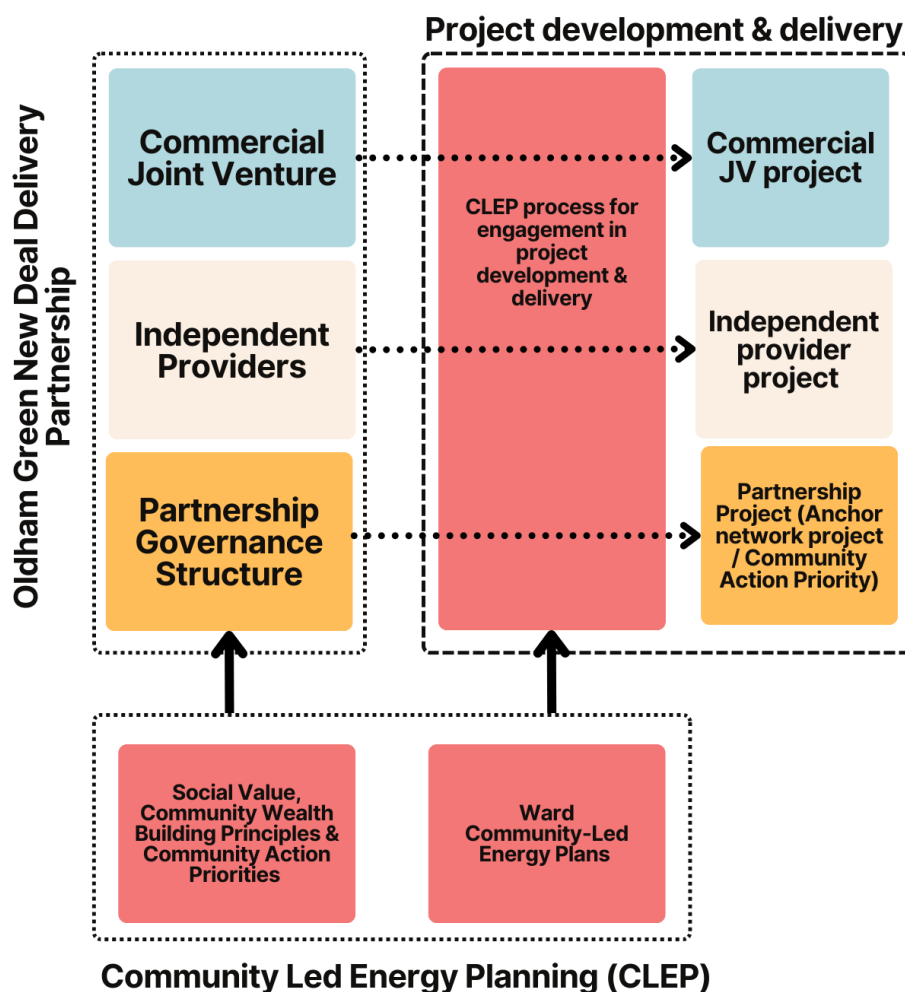
These three projects are taking important steps in our respective and collective journeys to Net Zero, and form part of our active delivery of ambitious Net Zero plans across the city region.

We have worked in co-operation throughout delivery of Phase 1, recognising that these three approaches provide complementary learnings and insights. This collaboration has led to the co-development of an overall Phase 2 programme, led by GMCA, which allows us to design, challenge, test, and validate three different scales and types of place-based, Net Zero delivery. This approach creates economies of scale and enables real-time cross fertilisation of learnings and an acceleration of replicable opportunities.

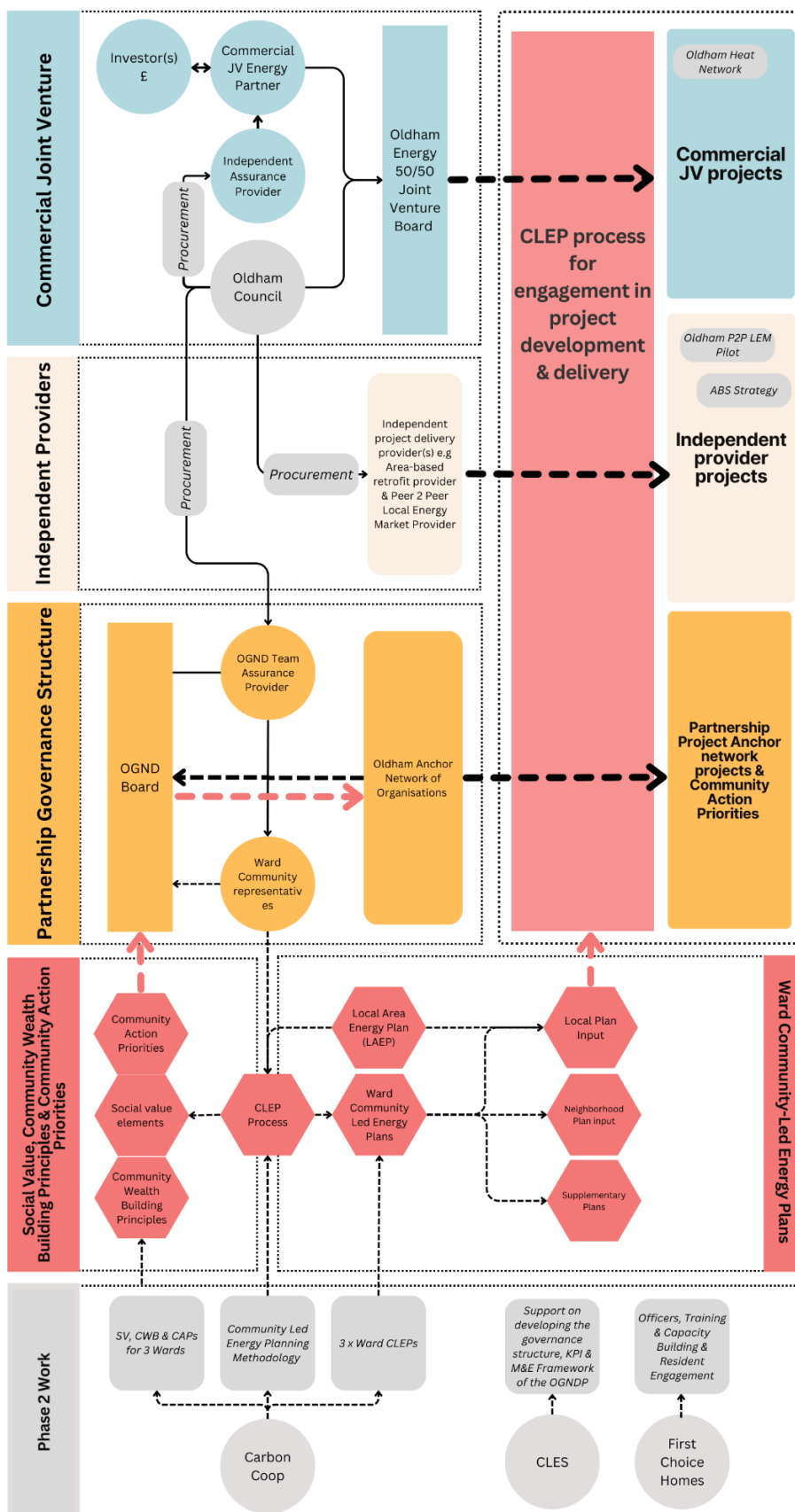
### 2.2.1. A System Approach to the OGND DP

Our proposal takes a systems approach to delivering a just energy transition by establishing the Oldham Green New Deal Delivery Partnership (OGND DP), including a commercial partner and investors, to deliver the borough's decarbonised energy system projects, and integrating Community-Led Energy Planning to ensure social value, community wealth building principles and community benefits are embedded into the OGNDP processes.

## Systems



**Figure 1:** Diagram showing the key system components of the Oldham Green New Deal Partnership (OGNDP) and the integration of the Community-Led Energy Planning (CLEP) system with the OGNDP, project development & delivery.



**Figure. 2:** Diagram showing the detailed components within the system and the Phase 2 approach of partners in developing the system.

**Phase 2 of this approach places Oldham Council in a leadership role**, responsible for procurement and establishing of the OGND DP, made up of a commercial joint venture, independent providers and a partnership governance structure.

**Oldham Council will appoint an Independent Assurance Provider** to identify an investment delivery partner and support Oldham Council to form a commercial joint venture with them.

Oldham Council will sub-contract various independent providers to deliver projects that may sit outside of the Commercial Joint Venture. **In Phase 2, this includes the Peer-2-Peer energy trading market (Oldham Local Energy Market)** and a provider to plan an area-based retrofit scheme. Depending on the JV procurement, it is possible that some of these projects could be picked up by the JV in the future.

**Anchor network organisations and community groups will be brought together with a partnership governance structure**, which will act as a conduit for the actioning of the CLEP outputs. Organisations such as **First Choice Homes Oldham, a significant housing provider in Oldham will sit within the anchor network and in Phase 2 will be a project partner. First Choice Homes** will train and support their staff in engaging in Community-Led Energy Planning and explore how to integrate a new local heat network with their existing heat network at St. Mary's, whilst ensuring community needs are met.

Integral to Phase 2 is the work led by Carbon Coop, developing a methodology for Community-Led Energy Planning, designed to engage communities in:

- Identifying locally contextualised social value, community wealth building principles and community action priorities.
- Developing ward community-led energy plans; and
- Identifying effective approaches to project development & delivery of Net Zero projects and infrastructure.

The Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) will host a member of staff to support:

- The establishment of the partnership governance structure;
- The design of the KPIs for the partnership based on community wealth building and Green New Deal principles; and,
- The establishment of monitoring processes to assess the delivery of the desired social and economic outcomes of the partnership.

In essence, this system approach in developing the OGND DP will ensure that roles and responsibilities across Oldham Council and between multiple stakeholders operating at different scales, are coordinated and cohesive. It will ensure that Community-Led Energy Planning is embedded within the partnership activities and its approach to the delivery of Net Zero projects in Oldham.

### 2.2.2. Community-Led Energy Planning

Work in Phase 2 will develop a refined Community-Led Energy Planning (CLEP) methodology that complements and integrates with the Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) methodology.

LAEPs provide comprehensive representation of energy transformation in a given area, outlining the early no-regrets actions, zones in which to focus action on heat pumps, retrofit and heat networks along with areas for installation of renewable energy generation. It also outlines the potential challenges and risks, whilst creating engagement opportunities between stakeholders. What it doesn't do well is provide detailed transition strategies and disaggregated data. It also doesn't address how communities will be engaged in the energy transition, overlooking important questions around vulnerability and energy justice within this process.

**Through our early work and through the deep dive in this study, we identified the opportunity to create a refined CLEP process - integrated with the LAEP process - to overcome non-technical barriers to implementation of energy projects in communities, focusing on co-designing projects and de-risking delivery.**

There is great potential to develop a methodology that engages communities in the project delivery process for the energy themes identified within the LAEP and to set out a human-centred co-delivery process involving communities in early stages of project development, ensuring that as projects come forward they are sensitive to the local contexts. This also aligns with the stated aims of the Regional System Planner. Such an approach would be highly replicable (scalable).

We have identified three important factors:

1. Consider how we can best secure the confidence and buy-in of communities
2. Demonstrate that schemes can be delivered in an efficient and coordinated manner, promoting joined-up thinking<sup>9</sup>
3. Establish an ongoing opportunity for communities to remain engaged in infrastructure programmes.

We will approach refining the CLEP methodology in two ways:

1. Develop a streamlined Ward CLEP process
2. Test the refined CLEP methodology in three ward areas.

#### **Develop a streamlined Ward CLEP process**

Both the LAEP and the CLEP face issues of scale, one too big, one too small. The LAEP presents high-level plans for the whole borough while the CLEP's hyper-local neighbourhood format does not enable it to hold weight in formal planning and delivery decisions. Therefore, it will be important to explore this gap in scales, and one way would be to look at redefining the CLEP at the ward and Oldham district

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<sup>9</sup> Here, the principle of "disturb once only / maximise disturbance opportunity" is key.

scale and integrate data from the LAEP at these scales in Community-Led Energy Planning and engagement.

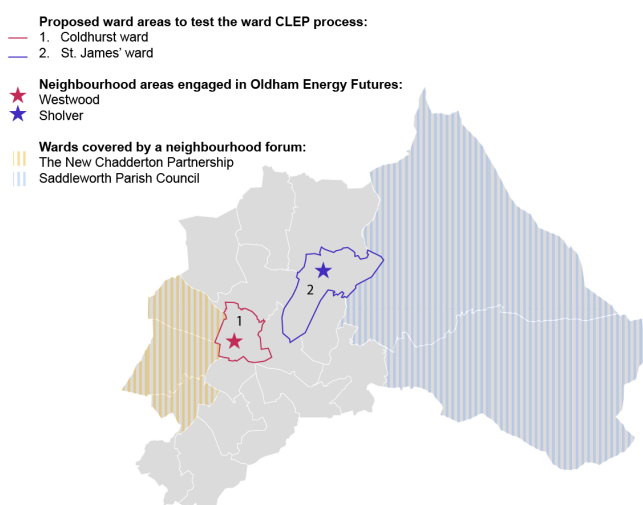
The CLEP development will include discussion of the challenges and opportunities around decarbonisation of the energy system in the neighbourhood, while also exploring the potential of formulating Community Action Priorities (CAP), similar to that of the ‘community benefits wishlist’ successfully demonstrated in East Renfrewshire and Perth & Kinross<sup>10</sup>.

The CLEP development will also address the issue of data aggregation within the LAEP. We will take a refined approach to utilise the data spatially to understand where specific interventions could be co-designed with communities.

### **Test the refined CLEP methodology in three ward areas**

We will test the CLEP methodology in three specific ward areas: Coldhurst, St. James’s and one additional ward (TBC). Coldhurst and St. James’s areas have been selected due to the CLEP framework established in the Oldham Energy Futures (OEF) neighbourhood areas.

Engagement in the three ward areas will streamline the original CLEP methods used in the Oldham Energy Futures project and will include in-community workshops and feedback sessions for knowledge exchange and collaborative planning.



In Phase 2 we will:

- Extend the CLEP engagement and test it with the business community and a broader range of stakeholders;
- Explore how the CLEPs could be integrated into planning policy through developing ‘Supplementary Plans’ in two wards; and
- Explore which third area could be selected to explore the integration of the CLEP in Neighbourhood Planning.

<sup>10</sup> See case study “Community Benefits Wishlist”

## 2.3 Long-term plan

2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
IUK Phase 2			Beyond Phase 2								
Establishment of OGND Delivery Partnership including procurement of Joint Venture partner, Local Plan finalised and published			Delivery of projects in first 5-year block and scoping of projects in 2nd 5-year block, including input from CLEPs from the rest of the borough (roll-out of CLEP approach over 2nd 5-year bloc					Delivery of projects in 2nd 5-year block and scoping of final and 3rd 5-year block, along with methodology for review of impacts on Oldham and GM energy system			
Establishment of project pipeline for 1st 5-year block, including project input from CLEPS in Sholver, Westwood and one other ward											
			Oldham Town Centre District Heat Network								
			Pilot of local Oldham peer 2 peer energy trading platform with one or more generation projects supplying one or more business customers		Pilot of Oldham LEM p2p exchange supplying to domestic customers in social housing		Further demonstration of LEM principles at Oldham scale, nesting within and integrating with the developing Greater Manchester LEM				
Development of CLEP 2.0 Methodology, toolkit and delivery of CLEP programme activities across 3 wards in Oldham & CLEP training for council team			Oldham Council roll out of ward CLEPs across the rest of Oldham borough with findings, feeding into OGND Partnership delivery and borough strategic planning, potentially via Supplementary Plan Documents								

### The Innovate UK funded Phase 2 project will achieve the following:

- Establish the Delivery Partnership structure and governance, designed to be flexible enough to evolve and adapt to new circumstances, and to be self-funding from revenue income arising from the delivery of low carbon infrastructure projects. In Phase 2 work, we will clarify whether the self-funding revenue is part of a 'community fund' by the commercial joint venture, or by other projects
- A long-term investment and delivery energy partner procured by the Council, to deliver the initial pipeline of “anchor” infrastructure projects established as part of the procurement process during the Phase 2 project
- An approach to Community Led Energy Planning which can function as both an integrated element of the delivery partnership and also the local authority strategic planning system

*The above will be set up and operating by the close of the project in December 2025.*

Through Phase 1 work we concluded that the partnership contract with the investment and delivery partner should take the form of a Joint Venture with the



Council with a term of at least 15 years, with options to extend in blocks of 5 years. The delivery programme is likely to be structured in blocks of 5 years, with annual business plans and reporting.

### **Projects within first 5-years within Council control**

The first 5-year block (from 2025 to 2030) will comprise the delivery of the high level project pipeline, across different energy systems, set out in the procurement of the investment and delivery partner. Whilst not yet confirmed, this project pipeline is likely to include:

- £25m Oldham Town Centre Low Carbon District Heat Network incorporating minewater, air source, and biomass heat sources (the key anchor project, Outline Business Case will be complete by September 2023 ready for the procurement of the strategic partner)
- Community Electric Vehicle Charging Hubs on Council-owned sites
- EV Charging Stations on Council-owned Town Centre car parks
- 5MW of Solar PV on Council-owned land and buildings
- Decarbonised energy-system projects arising from the Westwood, Sholver and one other ward (TBC for Phase 2) Community Led Energy Plans
- Decarbonisation of the Council fleet

Other projects outside of the remit of the strategic partner, but still within the delivery partnership, will also be implemented - for example, area-based able-to-pay domestic retrofit programmes, which will be explored as an offer option to the JV to delivery, and piloted by First Choice Homes Oldham who are joining the team partnership for the IUK Phase 2 work.

### **Projects within first 5-years outside of Council control**

These projects - on land owned by third party private landowners - may also be supported by the strategic partner in some capacity such as feasibility, investment, delivery or all three. Currently known projects in this class include:

- 10MW community owned and led wind farm
- 10MW wind farm on privately owned land (local business)
- 5MW solar farm on privately owned land (local farm)

Further projects in the first 5-year block may come forward as a result of the engagement exercise in the Phase 2 grant period with 'anchor' organisations in the borough, i.e. the Oldham Partnership, which includes organisations such as the NHS, First Choice Homes Oldham and other public and third sector organisations. Further private businesses will also be engaged where possible to identify further project opportunities for the first 5-year block, together with the additional project development capacity that the delivery partner will bring to the partnership - in order to identify projects not already on the radar.



*Activity in the first 5-year block will focus on delivery of this initial project pipeline, with a view to making maximum progress towards the 2030 carbon neutrality target for Oldham borough set out in the Oldham Green New Deal Strategy.*

The renewable energy generation schemes delivered in the first 5-year block could feed into an Oldham Local Energy Market platform, aiming to test the concept of supply of this locally generated renewable energy to local businesses and residents, at a fair and sustainable price for both generators and consumers. The Partnership will also remain alert to any new business models or solutions coming out of innovation schemes or other pilots, e.g. neighbourhood scale investment for retrofit / heat decarbonisation and would seek to be a location for testing and scaling.

During the first 5-year block of activity, a further project pipeline for the second 5-year block (from 2030 to 2035) will be identified which will build on the first to close any remaining gap on carbon neutrality that exists once the first 5-year block of projects has been completed. A much larger heat network, based on the formal Heat Network Zone identified by the Department for Energy and mandated by national legislation, will follow on from the initial Town Centre heat network project. Further renewable energy generation projects will be identified and developed to feed into both the local Oldham and wider GM Local Energy Markets. The transformation of Oldham's energy system will deepen with the close involvement of the local Distribution Network Operator (Electricity North West) and cyber-security and flexibility services providers to ensure the effective integration of generation with electrical heating and vehicle charging infrastructure. This will offer opportunities to pilot domestic peer-to-peer or neighbourhood flexibility, in order to further strengthen the democracy and community approach.

**Beyond the first 10 years** of delivery, the form of the delivery programme is more difficult to envisage as much will depend on the lessons learned from the first 10 years. The impact of national legislative and regulatory changes will need to be assimilated into the delivery programme and advances in technology and changes in the energy markets make it impossible to predict any further than 10 years out how the energy system will develop.

The effective operation of the projects implemented in the first 10 years will need to be assessed over the third 5-year block before further changes are made.

It may therefore be appropriate for the main contract with the investment and delivery partner to span 15 years, with options to extend in 5-year blocks. Integration of Oldham's programme with the wider regional Greater Manchester programme will be sustained over this period.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

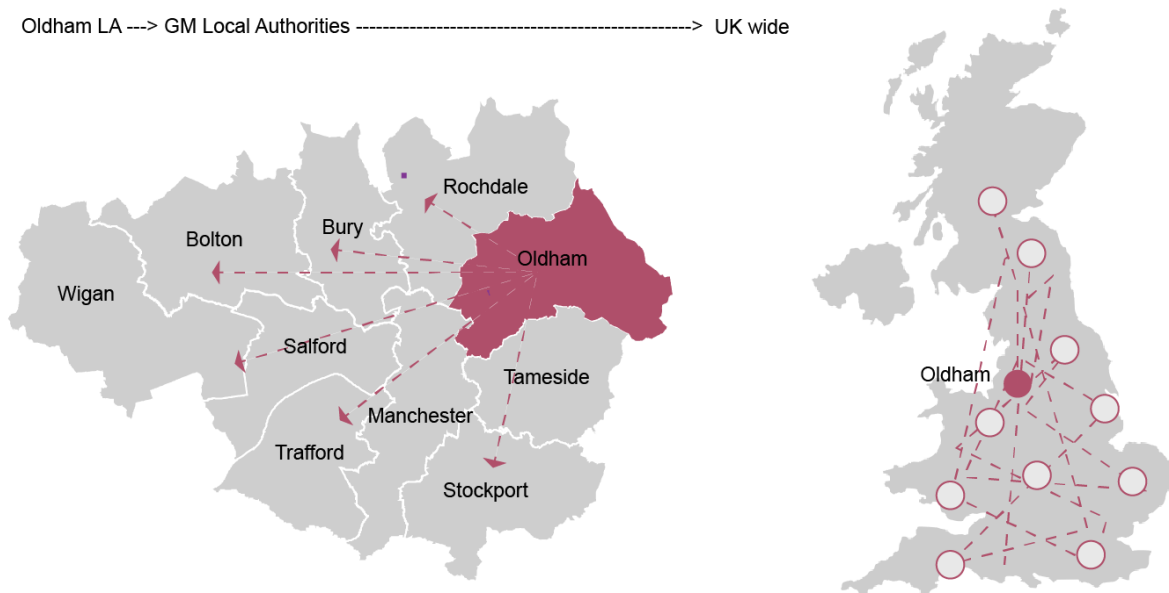
Monitoring and evaluation of the delivery programme and partnership performance will take three forms:

- **Technical performance** - carbon and energy cost savings from implementation of infrastructure schemes, against the 2038 and 2030 stretch targets, will be monitored by the Independent Assurance Provider, a key element in the overall delivery partnership
- **Organisational performance** - an “Oldham Green New Deal Dashboard” will be developed to track the progress of organisations in Oldham borough towards the achievement of a Net Zero standard within their own organisations, whilst offering support via GM Green Economy.
- **Social performance** - the social value being delivered by the partnership will be assessed against a suite of Community Wealth Building indicators, which will track the outcomes from the integration of Community Led Energy Planning and CWB principles into the partnership governance design and will pull through into the Joint Venture contract.

## 2.4 Scalability & Replicability

Potential to scale up and replicate the LA partnership delivery model and community-led energy planning methodology

Oldham LA ----> GM Local Authorities -----> UK wide



The principles being explored in developing a model for an Oldham Green New Deal Delivery Partnership have been derived from non-technical barriers which can be seen at multiple levels in the Greater Manchester City Region - they are seen at city regional level, at a borough level and also at a more local (ward) level. However, it may be that resolving these barriers is most effectively done at a particular level - more strategic barriers and securing economies of scale may be better tackled at a city regional level, and barriers associated with democratic legitimacy may be better tackled at a hyper-local level.

Notwithstanding the above, **our project aims to develop an innovative delivery model for Oldham borough, centred on Oldham Council as the local authority and using the local authority’s pivotal position as community leader and convenor across all sectors. As such, this project will demonstrate an approach to**

**full-spectrum decarbonisation which can be replicated by any local authority anywhere in the UK or even further afield.**

In this sense, while the Oldham project is self-contained, it will necessarily interface deeply with the Greater Manchester level decarbonisation programme and will also yield learning which can be applied at a hyper-local level. Learning from this Oldham project will be multi-layered and will enable the other 9 Greater Manchester districts to take a mix-and-match approach to delivery in their own local authority areas, using elements of Oldham's approach where appropriate and blending them with more strategic approaches developed at GM level as well as more specialist local engagement approaches appropriate to their own localities.

### **Dissemination processes**

Oldham officers attend a number of GM level meetings such as the GM 5-Year Environment Plan and Climate Emergency Liaison Meeting, Decarbonisation of the Public Estate and the Greater Manchester Green City Region Partnership meeting. Learning from the Oldham Green New Deal Delivery Partnership will be disseminated via all of these meetings and through engagement with other GM level organisations such as the GM Energy Innovation Agency, Green Economy and the various Universities.

As the OGND Delivery Partnership will draw on a wide range of initiatives elsewhere in the UK via the research associated with this feasibility study, the implementation of the delivery partnership in Oldham will be able to integrate learning from all of these other initiatives, updating approaches to avoid potential pitfalls.

There is potential for nationwide dissemination through organisations such as the Local Government Association, Co-operative Councils Innovation Network, the Collective for Climate Action, Ashden's Learning Out Loud scheme and the UK Energy Research Council.

### **Strategy for a CLEP roll-out across the borough**

From our learnings and reflections in testing the CLEP methodology on the ground, we will develop a borough-wide strategy for the roll out of the CLEPs to enable action to continue on the ground in developing ward CLEPs and for communities to engage in early discussions in the roll out projects across their ward areas.

A key part of this process will be to explore and clarify the Council's role in implementing and managing the use of LAEPs and the rollout of future CLEPs, with the goal of establishing clear boundaries and responsibilities for these processes and unlocking barriers to allow communities to engage meaningfully in the energy transition across Oldham. The development of a strategy for this work will form part of a Phase 2 package of work and this will inform delivery of the CLEP beyond Phase 2 across the wider Oldham borough area.

The strategy will build on the lessons learned from the ward engagement work in Phase 2. It will establish a roadmap for local authorities across Greater Manchester and nationally to engage their communities in Community-Led Energy Planning. This approach will supplement local area energy planning by addressing its current lack of social engagement process both during the development of project ideas and their delivery.

*Critically, the strategy will offer actionable recommendations and a replicable approach for how CLEP and LAEPs can be integrated into municipal planning. This approach aims to ensure that planning processes become a critical enabler as opposed to a barrier to the delivery of infrastructure energy projects, bringing clarity to the social process in project development and delivery.*

## 2.5 Expected Outcomes

The main outcomes of this project will be as follows:

- A **commercial Joint Venture** between the Council and one or more private sector infrastructure partners and investors which will secure investment to accelerate the decarbonisation and transformation of Oldham borough's energy system
- A **wider delivery partnership governance structure** which serves to convene Oldham's anchor organisations, private landowners, businesses and the third sector to ensure that projects are identified and delivered in a way which meets the area's social requirements and facilitates the Community Led Energy Planning approach and co-production of the design and delivery of schemes
- A **funded and deliverable pipeline** of decarbonisation projects across all technologies with a governance process including gateway reviews, independent assurance and approval by the Council with advisory input from a strategic partnership board
- **Community Led Energy Plans** for a number of wards, and a methodology and funding mechanism for rolling out the approach to the rest of the borough. An approach to give the CLEPs weight in terms of local planning policy via Supplementary Planning Documents for each ward, or a similar mechanism to be determined.

## 3.0 Resourcing the Oldham GND Delivery Partnership

### 3.1 Phase 2 Resourcing & Delivery Plan

Phase 2 will include the same partners as Phase 1, with the addition of First Choice Homes Oldham. Their lead role and deliverables are listed below:

**Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council** - Project Partner Lead - The Council will establish a Project Board for Phase 2 project delivery with lead officers from Finance, Legal, Procurement, Planning, Highways, Districts and other key services.

**Carbon Co-op** - will lead on the design of people-centred systems for co-production and co-design of decarbonisation schemes by communities, including further development of the Community Led Energy Planning approach in three ward areas.

**The Centre for Local Economic Strategies** - will lead on providing support to develop the partnership governance structure and develop KPIs and monitoring processes for the partnership governance structure.

**First Choice Homes Oldham** - owners of the existing St Mary's District Heat Network which will form a part of the new wide-scale Town Centre heat network which will be used as the "anchor" project for procurement of the commercial delivery partner. As well as a lead housing association in Oldham with a remit to deliver retrofit at scale for their own buildings portfolio.

Oldham Council will also seek external resources, which will be procured to support a range of activities such as establishing a JV, specification and procurement of the main commercial partner and partnership governance organisation, training and capacity for Council teams and First Choice Homes engagement staff / residents and programme management.

#### **Phase 2 Planning and Management**

The 21 month programme will be managed by Oldham Council as Lead Partner, with monthly team progress meetings, and fortnightly progress and update meetings with workpackage leads.

There will also be regular meetings (TBC) for the joint approach between Oldham Council, Manchester City Council and Greater Manchester Combined Authority. The project lead from Oldham Council will attend these meetings.

Key milestones and activities will be set out in the programme plan and each work package lead will be responsible for delivering these. The fortnightly meetings between work package leads will ensure that any issues are spotted early and managed promptly, the monthly team team progress meetings will offer the opportunity to provide updates on progress.

## **Key Timescales** *(as captured in the Appendix GANTT resource planning)*

### **January 2024**

- Commencement of grant-funded project

### **January 2024 – June 2024**

- Procurement of Independent Assurance Provider, to support with design & procurement of main delivery partner and OGND DP governance structure and operating model
- Procurement of Legal support to assist with establishing JV / SPV
- Procurement of external consultants to provide capacity and training for Council officers
- Setting out of methodology and scheduling of activities for the CLEP 2.0 programme

### **July 2024 – June 2025**

- Establishing JV / SPV for delivery partnership
- Procurement of other organisations involved in the delivery partnership including organisation providing governance arrangements
- Delivery of training for Council teams and added capacity for Districts Teams to support Community Led Energy Planning process (Carbon Co-op)
- Delivery of CLEP programme of activities and development of toolkit
- Finalisation of delivery partnership governance structure
- Appointment of organisation providing partnership governance
- Commencement of Year 1 of delivery partnership operation (pending appointment of main commercial partner)

### **June 2025 – September 2025**

- Appointment of main delivery partner
- Finalisation of JV / SPV contracts with main delivery partner
- Establishment of delivery programme, assurance arrangements, KPIs etc including Council approvals and gateway process for individual projects
- Commencement of “anchor” project – Town Centre Minewater District Heat Network
- Refinement of CLEP 2.0 methodology and toolkit, for replicability and scalability.
- Dissemination of learning through agreed outputs.

## 3.2 Phase 2 Financial Plan

Initial outline costs for the Phase 2 bid are summarised in the table below.

The match funding shown in this table below, at the time of completing the Phase 1 report, is based on Innovate UK State Aid guidelines.

Item	Cost
Independent Assurance Provider Stage 1 - design of operating model, specification & procurement of OGND Delivery Partnership (inclusive of JV / SPV Partner)	£300,000
Independent Assurance Provider Stage 2 - Year 1 inception / setup stage of OGND DP (projects, programme, assurance, KPIs etc)	£100,000
Setup and pump priming of legal Joint Venture / Special Purpose Vehicle for commercial element of OGND DP and other Legal support associated with procurement and establishment of partnership	£100,000
Organisation delivering governance of the partnership (either Council or external) - Setup and in-year Year 1 operations, including Communications costs	£100,000
OGND Dashboard - performance monitoring for the partnership	£20,000
Design of area-based domestic retrofit schemes	£20,000
Oldham Council staff costs supporting the project - management, procurement and administration	£124,388 (Green Energy & Sustainability Manager) £51,809.30 (External Funding Manager) £77,720.30 (Senior Category Manager, Commercial Procurement Unit) Total £253,917.60
External consultants to support Districts Teams in community engagement on decarbonisation plus training for Planning, Highways and other services	£100,000
<b>Partner:</b> Carbon Co-op - designing human-centred systems for co-production and co-design of decarbonisation schemes and their delivery, design of Community Led Energy Planning 2.0 approach and the ward CLEPs arising	£250,000 (including £75,000 match)* *Assuming match funding can be secured
Partner: Centre for Local Economic Strategies -	£50,000

Partnership coordination	(including £15,000 match)* *Assuming match funding can be secured
First Choice Homes Oldham - 2 officers for resident engagement, supporting technology (e.g. applications) to engage residents, carbon literacy training for residents	£180,000 (including £54,000 match)* *Assuming match funding can be secured
<b>Total</b>	£1,473,917.60 (including £144,000 match)*  Grant requirement £1,329,917.60 *Assuming match funding can be secured



### 3.3 Sustainability Plan

The OGND Delivery Partnership founded on Oldham Green New Deal principles, and a refined CLEP 2.0 methodology will provide the basis for a successful sustainability plan. It will put in place legitimacy and capacity for Oldham to deliver ongoing energy system decarbonisation.

Sustainability plans focus on three key aspects: community sustainability, financial sustainability, and organisational sustainability.

#### **Community sustainability**

Phase 2 will see the development and implementation, through pilot activities, of the Community-Led Energy Planning (CLEP) 2.0 methodology. This methodology will embed Oldham's values and commitment to a high degree of community level involvement in the delivery of projects for Net Zero clean energy transition.

It will provide a positive and replicable model, through the production of a toolkit, for local authorities across the UK on how to include meaningful community and stakeholder engagement to achieve local buy-in and thus de-risk investments in the energy transition.

The Oldham GND Partnership will offer community level assurance and oversight.

Phase 2 will also deliver training for Council and First Choice Homes Oldham officers in effective engagement methods and tools, in order to build up capacity, confidence and skills across key Council departments when engaging with citizens beyond the life of the Phase 2 programme and integrating local priorities into energy infrastructure programmes across the borough.

This greater capacity and ability to engage with communities alongside robust and enduring governance structures form a key role in the overall impact beyond Phase 2.

We will also ensure that the planned reflection sessions will provide an opportunity for the involved community members to offer feedback and suggest improvements to the engagement process, ensuring our outputs accurately reflect their inputs.

#### **Financial sustainability**

The core of the OGND Delivery Partnership will be a commercial partnership between the Council and a private sector infrastructure partner, informed by the wider Delivery Partnership, the function of which will be to enable identification, co-production and de-risking of profitable infrastructure projects, the realisation of social value and Community Wealth Building outcomes and strategic co-ordination of the decarbonisation of the borough inclusive of all stakeholders.

In view of this, the commercial partner will be required to fund the operations of the OGND Delivery Partnership on an ongoing basis (indirectly via payments back to the Council) - including the Independent Assurance Provider - from profits arising from successfully delivered infrastructure schemes. This should offer good value for the commercial partner, which would in any case ordinarily expect to allocate a budget for advertising, promotion, community engagement, social value, market research, planning consultation and other activities which will all be met through the activities of the OGND Delivery Partnership. The Independent Assurance Provider will act as a critical friend to both the Council and commercial partner to ensure the financial sustainability of the partnership on an ongoing basis.

### **Organisational sustainability**

Through the GND principles that are at the core of how Oldham Council functions, the work that will be developed and undertaken in Phase 2 will further support and strengthen the organisational sustainability long-term.

The Phase 2 work will support the Council to put down strong foundations in how to work effectively, smart and collaboratively across all the departments as one cohesive local authority organisation. It is for this reason that Phase 2 also includes a work package specific to training officers, in the CLEP toolkit and on Carbon literacy (to support making decisions) to strengthen the Council's position in leading Net Zero transition.

Investing in training to build knowledge, skills and confidence across the whole Council will ensure that coordination of discussions, agreements, permissions and problem-solving will happen smoothly and effectively as Net Zero projects will cross over departments multiple times: from planning policy, development control, highways, environmental, in turn supporting effective leadership with all external stakeholders.

## 4.0 Oldham GND Delivery Partnership Stakeholders

### 4.1 Community Engagement Approach

Our community engagement approach aims to promote inclusivity, collaboration and active participation for local people in Community-Led Energy Planning to address climate justice and the need for a ‘just’ energy transition. Our plan is to develop a process that identifies and delivers social value, community wealth building and community action priorities, fostering local support and helping de-risk Net Zero project delivery.

**In Phase 2, the Community-Led Energy Planning (CLEP) methodology** we will develop will promote meaningful community engagement, identifying who should be involved, in what way and at what point in the energy transition. During this phase, we will carry out various community-based activities across three wards in Oldham to test and refine this methodology, including:

- Stakeholder and vulnerability mapping;
- Focus group discussions (face to face);
- Local mapping and data sharing (face to face and online);
- Spatial energy planning workshops (face to face and online); and
- Surveys (face to face and online), designed to accommodate various schedules and accessibility needs.

Our methodology will carefully consider the inclusion of ‘at risk’ communities, primarily those from lower socio-economic backgrounds and protected characteristics. We will build on established Oldham Energy Futures (OEF)<sup>11</sup> contacts in Westwood and Sholver and utilise key research insights, such as a recent Citizens Advice study<sup>12</sup> on community engagement in Local Area Energy Plans and Net Zero projects. We will use best practices from Neon Anti-oppressive facilitation training and EDI practices and that we will stay up to date with these evolving practices.

We will design processes to capture the needs of people with challenging socio-economic circumstances and protected characteristics. This will inform our Phase 2 engagements and in the long-term, Oldham Council’s future engagement processes. All partners will continue to embed just-transition principles that address the needs identified.

We will include training, capacity building and knowledge exchange sessions to enhance community members’ understanding of the energy transition process and its implications. This will foster more meaningful participation in the future delivery of new energy infrastructure projects. We also plan to collaborate with a wider set of community organisations and groups including local businesses to

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<sup>11</sup> [www.oldhamenergyfutures.carbon.coop](http://www.oldhamenergyfutures.carbon.coop)

<sup>12</sup> [Close to home: How to engage local communities in the development of Local Area Energy Plans \(LAEPs\) \[ 3.3 mb\]](#)

identify potential engagement activities that can facilitate outreach and increase community awareness and participation in the energy transition process.

When considering the broader energy transition, our **strategic outputs from Phase 2 will consider how communities can be involved in the wider partnership engagement activities as projects are planned and delivered**. In this way, we aim to ensure that as projects are conceived and delivered, they are rooted in the aspirations and realities of the surrounding communities. **The outcome of this will also be projects delivered with more support and buy-in from local communities and thus giving confidence to the delivery partners of their projects benefiting from this de-risk.**

Throughout Phase 2 we will integrate active reflection and feedback mechanisms, establishing clear channels for feedback and open communication about how community input has influenced phase 2 outcomes. The reflection sessions will provide an opportunity for the involved community members to offer feedback and suggest improvements to the engagement process, ensuring our outputs accurately reflect their inputs.

In summary, our community engagement approach seeks to drive the energy transition in a way that reflects the diversity of our community members, their unique socio-economic and local context and their experiences. We believe that the success of this transition depends on a well-considered engagement approach where the communities are not just consulted once projects are fully conceived but are engaged in shaping them in a way that maximises local benefits to their areas, which in turn will offer more robust confidence to the Delivery Partnership about successfully delivering projects on the ground.

## 4.2 Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholders will be engaged in three separate categories:

- Organisations directly involved in the delivery partnership governance
- Organisations involved in a consultee capacity (mechanism for engagement TBC)
- Strategic engagement with policymaking organisations

The first category will be engaged as part of the process to design the partnership governance structure and function - in scoping the requirements for partnership governance it will need to establish who the 'permanent' members of the partnership are. These could include organisations<sup>13</sup> such as:

- Oldham Council (officers / members)
- Commercial investment / delivery partner
- Independent Assurance Provider
- Independent LEM / Flexibility providers
- Carbon Co-op
- Electricity North West

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<sup>13</sup> Personnel in the Delivery Partnership will need to reflect the diversity of Oldham and have a gender balance alongside being senior decision-makers. We will find a mechanism for ensuring they will be paid, if it's not in their day job, and receive training.

- Green Economy (GM Growth Hub)
- Oldham Chamber of Commerce
- First Choice Homes Oldham
- The Oldham College
- Citizens Advice / Action Together

The second category will be involved in the delivery partnership in a supporter capacity and will receive regular communications from the partnership with news, updates and opportunities to respond / engage. The second category could include organisations such as:

- Local / ward community energy planning groups
- Oldham Green Technology & Services businesses
- Oldham land and property owners
- NHS / Northern Care Alliance
- Action Together
- Northern Roots
- GM Energy Innovation Agency
- Universities
- Transport for Greater Manchester
- GM Chamber of Commerce
- Community Energy England
- Oldham schools network
- Oldham Youth Council
- CLES
- Oldham residents (via a dedicated Communications Strategy led by Oldham Council Communications Team)

Organisations in this second category may attend the Delivery Partnership Board meetings from time to time to discuss specific issues / projects. They will also be able to engage with the Council and the partnership board in other ways e.g. written communications, to ensure their views are taken into account.

Stakeholders in the third category will be engaged on an ongoing basis to ensure that the Delivery Partnership remains current in terms of horizon scanning for opportunities and threats and developments in innovation and strategic policymaking. Organisations in this category may include:

- Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
- Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
- GM Combined Authority
- OFGEM

## 4.3 Dissemination of Learning

In order to share the knowledge and outcomes from Phase 2 activities, various methods and tools can be utilised to relay this information to a diverse set of audiences. Listed below are the tools considered for the proposed Phase 2 work.

### **Comprehensive internal reports**

**(Carbon Coop lead)** Comprehensive internal reports, through creative practice, for example inclusion of animation/storytelling, will be important in documenting the learning and development processes in the creation of the OGND Delivery Partnership and the roll-out of ward Community-Led Energy Planning. These documents will be vital for maintaining a consistent understanding of how the solutions have worked to address the barriers identified in this feasibility study.

### **Regular updates and newsletters**

**(Oldham Council lead)** A structure for regular project reporting will be important to integrate into Phase 2, dedicating updates specifically to sharing lessons learned and resolutions to challenges. This could be part of a newsletter email or updated on a dedicated project website / webpage.

### **Case Studies**

**(Carbon Coop lead with Oldham & FCHO input)** Phase 2 will also provide the opportunity to develop case studies derived from each workstream activities that identify innovative results or pose significant challenges. These case studies could offer a deep-dive into the project's work and can be disseminated through various channels such as newsletters, social media channels, the press and the project website. Stories from the people in the community that have emerged thanks to the CLEP programme will further enhance the case studies.

### **Dedicated Project Website**

**(Oldham Council lead)** A dedicated Oldham Green New Deal Partnership project page on the Oldham Council website will be set up to host project updates from Phase 2 and will become a space to share resources developed as part of the Phase 2, and post opportunities for collaboration with the partnership. The website will also feature a section that provides details on Community-Led Energy Planning for engagement best practice integrated with Local Area Energy Planning.

The project website could also become a space to share data and information in an open-source format while tailoring the presentation of this data for specific audiences. This website will be managed carefully to host data in an open-source manner, in compliance with GDPR regulations, guaranteeing that open-source data sharing won't compromise personal or sensitive data.

The website may also function as a contact platform to facilitate communication and collaboration between the Oldham GND partnership and wider national stakeholder audiences.

### **Data-dashboard**

**(Oldham Council lead)** The Oldham Energy Futures 'data-dashboard' may be integrated into the website, forming a larger OGND Partnership data dashboard platform. This platform will provide an accessible, interactive, spatial and visually readable data platform that integrates and interprets relevant Local Area Energy Planning (LAEP) data.

## **Findings reports**

**(Carbon Coop lead)** In conjunction with the data dashboard, findings report(s) will be published, providing insights into the data and sharing relevant findings as the partnership reflects on its impact. These reports will be customised to the audience, varying the technical language as necessary, and a series of infographics will be created to visually represent the data, ideal for social media or newsletter sharing.

The project's findings can be disseminated to other local authorities beyond Oldham Council, as well as organisations like Greater Manchester Combined Authority, the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), Ofgem and Code Administrators. There is an opportunity to engage in multi-agency meetings with representatives from these entities to facilitate open communication, coordination and mutual learning.

## **Beyond Phase 2**

**(Oldham Council lead)** Beyond Phase 2 the project could explore cross-boundary collaborations on energy infrastructure between local authorities within Greater Manchester to leverage the GMCA network for knowledge sharing and dissemination through its communication channels and networking events.

Policy briefings may also be developed for local authorities and organisations to provide them with updates about the Phase 2 project and its outputs and potentially influence policy development, such as providing lessons learnt and a model for the development of a local authority-led GND partnership or providing a roadmap for how Community-Led Energy Planning can be integrated into Local Area Energy Planning and planning policy. We will reach out to TCPA<sup>14</sup> on planning events and planning guidance.

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<sup>14</sup> Town and Country Planning Association <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/>

## 5. Conclusion & Next Steps

The objective of this Phase 1 Feasibility Study was to identify innovative approaches to unlock non-technical systemic barriers to the delivery of Net Zero targets. Oldham Council, Carbon Coop and CLES set out to deep dive into understanding specific non-technical barriers and possible solutions that can unlock a robust and effective model to implement the infrastructure in the Oldham LAEP, based on the principles set out in the Oldham Green New Deal Strategy 2020-2025.

The feasibility study has been framed around the knowledge of Oldham's LAEP which suggests an investment of £5.6bn (including business-as-usual investment) is required in low carbon infrastructure to take the borough to Net Zero.

Oldham Council has identified that establishing the Oldham Green New Deal Delivery Partnership model can offer the solution to unlock the delivery of projects to decarbonise the local energy system, together with the development of an effective methodology to integrate Community-Led Energy Planning with Oldham's local area energy plan (LAEP) to demonstrate the importance of bottom up, at granular-scale, knowledge and energy transition strategies complementing high level strategies as set out in the LAEP, at borough scale.

Through this Phase 1 study we have identified, captured under 6 themes, 10 key non-technical barriers, and possible solutions. These are:

11. Finance
12. Viability
13. Capacity and knowledge
14. Strategy
15. Democracy
16. Economy
17. Legitimacy
18. Timing
19. Retrofit
20. Cross-organisational decarbonisation opportunities

The 6 themes are:

- Social
- Governance
- Procurement
- Finance
- Skills, capabilities and capacity
- Regulator

The feasibility study has enabled us to identify actions Oldham Council can take to implement solutions to these non-technical barriers, and we have distilled these actions into clear work packages for Phase 2.



Alongside our own Phase 1 feasibility study, we have had the opportunity to collaborate and share knowledge with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Manchester City Council - thanks to having been all successful in their Phase 1 bids to the Innovate UK Net Zero Living Pathfinder Places programme.

We recognised how these three projects are important steps in our respective and collective journeys to Net Zero, and form part of our active delivery of ambitious Net Zero plans across the city region. Moreover we recognise collectively the opportunity to create synergies between the three local authorities' approaches for replicability and scalability as well as maximise the opportunities to unlock non-technical, as well as related technical, barriers. We have worked in co-operation throughout delivery of Phase 1, recognising that these three approaches provide complementary learnings and insights.

Each project is taking a systems-based approach to Net Zero and adopting different innovative solutions to non-technical barriers at differing geographical scales:

- Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) at city-region level
- Oldham Council at local authority/district level and via a community-led approach
- Manchester City Council at neighbourhood level (Wythenshawe) and via a blended investment/pipeline approach

This collaboration has led to the co-development of an overall Phase 2 programme which allows us to design, challenge, test, and validate three different scales and types of place-based, Net Zero delivery. This approach creates economies of scale and enables real-time cross fertilisation of learnings and an acceleration of replicable opportunities.

The Phase 2 programme will be led by GMCA. In our programme, we will lead work packages that focus on establishing the OGND Partnership, including a commercial JV, and the development of a refined CLEP methodology. Our main work packages are:

- Design of CLEP 2.0 methodology & implementation
- Design of the OGND Delivery Partnership operating and governance model
- Confirmation of project pipeline for procurement of strategic partner
- Procurement
- Establishment of the OGND Delivery Partnership governance and initial operations
- Training + Capacity Building Oldham officers
- FCHO overcoming non-technical barriers: retrofit & heat network
- Communications & Risk Management Strategy

GMCA will also lead a series of work packages that explore cross-cutting non-technical barriers (investment models, pipeline development and governance structures); scale enablers/accelerators (grid access coordination, local energy market optimisation and policy levers); and learning, evaluation, and dissemination (carbon measurement and community engagement) which we will contribute to as part of sub-groups to ensure the learnings.