



**Leeds 2050 Study – Final Report
Executive Summary**

Yorkshire Forward and Leeds City Council

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Executive Summary

1.1 Context

"In a global economy, wealthy urban centres get much of their supply from far away. They depend on ecosystems they have never seen. Hence, overused and failing ecosystems, even if distant, become a threat to the well-being of these very urban centres." (Georgina M. Mace, Director of Science, Zoological Society of London)

1.1.1 Leeds is the regional capital of Yorkshire and Humberside and the Core City within the 'Leeds City Region'. There is a clear need – and opportunity - to promote sustainability as a strategic response to development pressures in Leeds and to ensure that Leeds performs its role as the Core City within the Leeds City Region in a way that aligns with the principles of sustainable development. Significant economic growth has already been achieved with major regeneration initiatives securing increases in employment; private-sector investment; a thriving city centre; and a growing business and residential population. Leeds is currently experiencing a renaissance fuelled by economic growth and prosperity in a manner not witnessed since the industrial revolution. The city is now overwhelmingly the dominant regional centre in economic terms. The renaissance of Leeds provides an unparalleled opportunity to ensure that as the city is rebuilt, we build a city that will last and will be fit for a more resource efficient future. If we get this wrong and build the 'wrong' city the consequences could be disastrous for the future prosperity of the city.

1.1.2 Moving towards One Planet Living will be critical if Leeds is to maintain its current role as a Regional Centre and also fulfil its full potential. All of the features outlined in this report that will help move towards One Planet Living are also critical to maintaining the City's attractiveness as a place for people to live, work, shop and play; they will also help maintain it as an attractive place for businesses to locate and invest in. For example, improving the transport infrastructure within the City Region and the City to provide enhanced capacity and alternatives to the car is consistent with One Planet principles but also vital to maintaining the attractiveness of the city as a place to work and invest in.


1.1.3 Leeds City Council and Yorkshire Forward have appointed WSP Environmental in association with Regeneris, Joe Ravetz Associates and Marilyn Taylor Associates to explore the future development of the city and how this can take place in line with the principles of sustainable development and of One Planet Living.

1.1.4 The recent growth and economic success of Leeds needs to be squared with its aspirations and goals for sustainability. These goals are summed up by the 'One Planet' concept – that each person in Leeds should be able to live on their share of the resources of 1 planet, instead of the 3 or 4 planets used at present. These goals are now backed up by daily evidence on climate change, by the Stern Review, the IPCC report, the Millenium Eco-systems Assessment, and many others.

1.1.5 This report has been prepared during an unprecedented level of activity in relation to the development of policy at the city, city region, regional and national levels. Relevant documents are identified in Section 2 of the Main Report. The outcome of these reviews will heavily influence what the City can do but at the same time they also provide a window for the City to review policy and re-align it where necessary with the One Planet Living Concept whilst achieving broader environmental, social and economic objectives that are consistent with the concept of sustainable development.

1.1.6 The baseline and policy review identified a number of key issues, perhaps the most challenging is for the development of a coherent strategy for the growth of Leeds and its position within the Leeds City Region. This is a challenge highlighted in the report of the Panel on the RSS. Understanding the scale of growth that the City can accommodate and the optimum balance between homes and employment in the City will be critical. A holistic approach to the capacity of the City is required; looking at the future need for employment land and the suitability of redundant employment land for alternative uses (including housing).

1.1.7 A number of considerations must be addressed to ensure that future growth contributes towards a high quality of life for residents and is consistent with sustainable development principles; these include accessibility to greenspace and other facilities, adequacy and availability of housing, flood risk. The ability of existing residential areas to accommodate growth will also be important. Improvements to transport infrastructure into and within the City will also be critical if it is to fulfil its role as the capital of the City Region.



1.1.8 Leeds is the economic success story of the north of England: a booming financial services centre, with a diverse employment base, contributes to a dynamic regional hub and gateway. However there are continuing problems and conflicts – structural deprivation, low skills levels, ethnic tension, and poor quality living environments.

1.1.9 There is a strong environmental theme underlying this. There are now clusters of environmental technologies around the city-region – Leeds was one of the first ‘Environment cities’ in the 1990s, and takes the agenda very seriously. However, the transport conundrum remains unsolved, the inefficient building stock continues, and there is little sign yet of meeting energy and emissions targets, apart from those gained by out-sourcing heavy industry.

1.1.10 Meanwhile the indirect impacts of Leeds continue to grow, from the globalized supply chains which reach businesses and consumers. Many of these are outside the conventional scope of local or regional government, and there are few policy ‘levers’ to pull. But if Leeds, and all of its partners and stakeholders, are serious about their aspirations, these issues must be grasped.

1.1.11 The scale of the challenge should not be under-estimated. To achieve the goals for a One Planet Leeds, we need to raise eco-efficiency by about 3.5% per year (as measured by the total ecological or carbon footprint): and ‘decouple’ economic growth from eco-efficiency at 6% per year (or 7.5% per year if we take the Leeds City-Region growth targets).

1.1.12 This will need new thinking, new ways of governance, and new ways to channel costs and benefits. There is a far-reaching agenda for ‘transformation’ – of markets, infrastructure and public policy – and this is the focus of the recommendations to follow.

1.2 KEY SECTORS


1.2.1 We cover a wider range of ‘key sectors’ than is usual in local authority strategies, for the above reason – that the aspiration and responsibility for a One Planet city covers all forms of resource consumption. So, where there are policy or market gaps, they will need to be filled - at local, regional or national level – by public, private or community sectors. In each key sector, we summarize here the implications for the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS): Local Development Framework Core Strategy (LDF/CS): Local Area Agreement (LAA): and Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). These are focused at the city level, but in many cases there will be greater scope at the level of the Leeds City-Region (LCR), or Yorkshire Forward (YF). Further details of the policies and programmes are in the main report.

FOOD & AGRICULTURE

1.2.2 We need to transform the food system at each stage of the supply chain, from farming, processing, distribution, packaging, to the catering and retail sectors. For Leeds the agenda is mainly on the consumption side, although there is very productive farming to the north and east of the city. There are big issues – in CAP reform, marginal land, tourism, and public health – and some alternative directions on both supply sides and demand sides.

1.2.3 Implications for Leeds policies and programmes:

- SCS: high level goals for the food chain: allocation of multi-level responsibility: public investment and procurement strategy: in-house and public estate strategy.
- LDF / CS: this would provide the spatial policy framework focus on the food agenda, which covers agricultural stewardship and diversification: retail and distribution: targeting of investment and subsidy for regeneration.
- In particular, the CS would look at the higher level of the city-region of 11 authorities: within Leeds it would focus on the main agricultural areas to the North and East of the city: the mixed town and country areas to the south and West: and the many green fingers and vacant land in and around the urban area. For each of these there is an agenda for sustainable food cultivation, through business or community partnerships. On the demand side the CS should target areas of public health types, cultural diet types, availability of retail services, and fit these with education and health services.
- LAA: the main agenda is the incorporation of the food chain issues into the central / local contract: analysis, monitoring and benchmarks as appropriate.

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- LSP: the partnership's main role will be to convene a food / agriculture forum of producers, suppliers, retailers, procurers, education/ health professionals and others (in collaboration with the Leeds Initiative). This is to be supported by an active research and evidence base.

CONSTRUCTION & BUILT ENVIRONMENT

1.2.4 While new housing is now headed for 'carbon neutral' policies by 2016, a much larger issue is the residual building stock, and the many barriers to improvement. A Factor 4 efficiency transformation in the built environment is a challenge – at present, most 'sustainable construction' activity is tinkering at the margins. But there is potential at each stage of the chain: low impact materials, strategic management of the building stock, energy upgrading, and demand side management in households and organizations. There are examples of near zero-carbon and zero-waste buildings, and the future property market needs to provide the right incentives to encourage these.

1.2.5 Implications for Leeds policies and programmes:


- SCS: high level goals for the built environment & construction sector: allocation of multi-level responsibility: public investment and procurement strategy: in-house and public estate strategy.
- LDF / CS: strategic framework for improving the sustainability of the built environment and construction sectors.
- The CS should focus on area types and their improvement potential: housing markets and providers, and their improvement potential: property markets and their providers: energy markets distributors, consumers and investors.
- The largest improvement potential is likely to be in the major regeneration areas, such as East & South East Leeds. For this and others the sustainable built environment agenda should be incorporated on a life-cycle costing basis into regeneration programmes.
- LAA: the central / local service agreement should specify the fiscal flows both public and quasi-public, and the performance targets for each.
- LSP: the main role is to convene a multi-level series of stakeholder forums, including investors and financiers, developers, landowners, builders, energy suppliers, agents, and occupiers.

TRANSPORT & COMMUNICATIONS

1.2.6 Transport is a key to economic growth and social welfare – but also the fastest growing source of climate and resource impacts. On the supply side, there is an EU agenda for vehicle efficiency, and the possibility of hydrogen or renewable bio-fuels. On the infrastructure side there is scope to improve the life cycle of vehicle manufacture – again a national / EU level agenda, where the role of Leeds is mainly to promote and facilitate. On the demand side there are many local possibilities – increasing occupancy, reducing unnecessary trips, shifting to low-impact modes, encouraging walking and cycling through urban planning etc. The One Planet Leeds transport agenda combines these with a radical approach. It promotes major vehicle efficiency changes, with a next-generation IT-enabled responsive public transport, with a range of 'soft' incentives for lifestyle and community. The key priorities for the public sector are for procurement for innovation: extended business rates and infrastructure charging for re-investment: carbon markets coupled with local incentives.

1.2.7 Implications for Leeds policies and programmes:

- SCS: high level goals for the transport and communications sector: allocation of multi-level responsibility: public investment and procurement strategy: in-house and public estate strategy.
- LDF / CS: strategic framework for improving the sustainability of the transport system, in coordination with physical and economic development.
- The CS should focus on 'accessibility types' and their improvement potential for sustainable transport. It should provide a long term framework of strategic infrastructure, to increase the certainty for public and private investment in both transport and related development.
- At the city-region level the strategic works in the LCR development framework need to be appraised in the light of a sustainable transport strategy. At the local level, neighbourhood greening and car-free access to will help to



revitalize local centres and services. Public investment would focus on reducing travel demand and its impacts, including parking, cycling, tele-working, employment exchanges, on-line services etc.

- The CS physical improvement potential is likely to focus on the major regeneration areas, where the sustainable transport agenda should be incorporated on a life-cycle basis into regeneration programmes.
- LAA: the central / local service agreement should specify the fiscal flows both public and quasi-public, and the performance targets for each.
- LSP: main role is to convene a multi-level series of stakeholder forums, including investors and financiers, developers, landowners, builders, energy suppliers, agents, and occupiers.

MANUFACTURING & CONSUMER PRODUCTS

1.2.8 Local manufacturing and its impacts are much reduced, but in reality the problem is out-sourced and displaced to overseas. In a One Planet Leeds, the average product will be longer life and adaptable, designed for re-use and reconditioning, from lower-impact materials with higher efficiency, sourced locally or with low impact distribution. The future of economic development in many sectors and clusters lies in low-carbon / high value added; likewise there is an agenda for social enterprise, as an alternative to private consumption. Leeds needs to look closely at the potential for investment for market transformation, and link this to future carbon markets and other incentives.

1.2.9 Implications for Leeds policies and programmes:

- SCS: should set high level goals for the manufacturing and retail sectors, with allocation of multi-level responsibility. This will focus on the potential of public investment and procurement strategy: together with the public in-house and public estate strategy.
- LDF / CS: the spatial development strategy has less direct leverage on manufacturing than on other sectors, particularly when much industry is intensive of capital not labour. However there are questions of location and infrastructure, discussed in the LDF section below.
- LAA: the sustainability performance of both the production and the consumption economic sectors should be benchmarked in terms of the One Planet agenda, as part of the LAA.
- LSP: there is scope for a range of forums and networking initiatives along the lines of the Foresight initiative, as outlined at the end of Section 4.

COMMERCIAL & PUBLIC SERVICES

1.2.10 Now that services generate the majority of GVA and employment, the One Planet targets need to focus on this more complex agenda, where the impacts are often 'upstream' and indirect. Public services are the first priority for a One Planet procurement strategy, which should use its £1.2 billion spend in Leeds, to target key sectors for innovation / transformation strategies. Another priority is the financial services and real estate sector, with the largest turnovers of all, for their crucial role in providing incentives for all other sectors. Likewise, retail and distribution sectors dominate the supply chains for most types of products.

1.2.11 Implications for Leeds policies and programmes:

- SCS: this should set the overall framework for public services, in terms of their supply chain impacts, spatial locations, and service levels. For commercial services there are possible incentives such as business improvement levies, preferential procurement, local skills access and so on.
- LDF / CS: the spatial strategy should aim to direct employment and services locations to more sustainable patterns. For large service organizations, there is potential for low impact travel planning, distributed heat, waste recycling and others. For SMEs there is potential for using the above incentives.
- LAA: a performance framework for sustainable public services should be included in the agreement. For private services there are a range of business and consumer benchmarks.
- LSP: a range of forums and networking initiatives would promote the CSR agenda in financial services, real estate, retail and distribution and particularly public services.



ENERGY & EMISSIONS

1.2.12 The One Planet energy strategy needs to work through the many uncertainties of emissions trading, technology innovation and so on, towards low risk and low impact infrastructure and technologies. On the demand side there is accelerated energy efficiency and affordable warmth: on the supply side there is a new agenda for micro-generation and renewable sources on the regional scale. The contribution of Leeds and its public sector partners needs to keep up with emerging UK and EU policy – there are high expectations in the draft Climate Change Bill 2007, while the actions are as yet unclear. This suggests a rapid rate of policy innovation over the next few years, which should aim to combine emissions trading, micro-generation incentives, and distribution / generation partnerships.

1.2.13 Implications for Leeds policies and programmes:

- SCS: energy and climate strategy should be a central strand of the SCS: more than marginal add-ons, this requires a longer term strategy for the re-engineering of the physical form and functioning of the city.
- LDF / CS: the spatial implications of climate adaptation and mitigation are now becoming clear, as in the section below on Core Strategy.
- LAA: the multi-level governance of energy and climate strategy, and the fiscal / investment structures which are needed, should be a key part of the agreement.
- LSP: all this requires coordination and consensus between all LSP stakeholders; this will lead to a series of forums, networks, action groups, partnerships and so on.

WASTE & RESOURCES

1.2.14 A One Planet 'resource economy' would see the most material flows as 're-circulation' – recycled, re-manufactured and re-used materials and products would become the default, and virgin inputs much reduced. The One Planet approach aims at transformation in all resource-intensive sectors: combining product design, material sources, logistics networks, consumer services, and fiscal incentives. This also involves different levels of public policy – from the macro and top-down, to the community scale and bottom up. The contribution of Leeds should focus on procurement, local incentives, tax and investment programmes at the sub/regional level for 'market transformation' in key sectors.

1.2.15 Implications for Leeds policies and programmes:

- Sustainable Community Strategy: this should place the question of resource use and waste management as an integral part of the strategy, and look for ways of extending the remit of local government to achieve it.
- Local Development Framework / Sustainable Community Strategy: the spatial development issues in resource / waste management look beyond the conventional 'landfill location', to take on the whole agenda of material and product recirculation. This will need an extended network of storage, distribution, transfer, reprocessing, and at the neighbourhood scale a network of social enterprise locations.
- Local Area Agreement: the multi-level governance of resources / waste strategy, and the fiscal / investment structures which are needed, should be a key part of the agreement.
- Local Strategic Partnership: all this requires coordination and consensus between all LSP stakeholders; this will lead to a series of forums, networks, action groups, partnerships and so on.

1.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CORE STRATEGY

1.3.1 The Core Strategy for the City is currently at the early stages of preparation. The main report outlines the work that has been done on spatial development options to date. Key recommendations from our report are set out below.

1.3.2 The Core Strategy development would work in 3 parallel strands, focusing on key development issues and sectors in a rolling programme:

- **Future trends, visions and opportunities:** improving the evidence and monitoring basis: horizon scanning for trends and opportunities: scenario and visioning processes to establish the future integrated vision for a One Planet Leeds: policy options modelling & evaluation.
- **Networking & capacity building:** stakeholder partnerships and collaborative schemes for key development sectors including transport, regeneration, housing, services and environment: access to intelligence on opportunities & contacts;
- **Strategic planning:** application of the above to a rolling programme from short to long term, cascaded from city-region to local neighbourhood levels, and applied to key sectors including transport, regeneration, housing, services and environment. This needs to be orientated to cross-sectoral linkages and opportunities.

1.3.3 In terms of getting started, there are some immediate steps to take:

- Develop a hierarchy of 'performance specifications' for the Core Strategy – outlining approach, scope and content, likely targets, and the study process, e.g. in relation to energy, waste, transport etc;
- Discuss the performance specification with Government Office and the Planning Inspectorate to make sure they are fully on board. There is a potential risk here because the scope and content of Core Strategies is still evolving across the country so this will be a difficult environment in which to introduce a radical document. Another way of looking at this is that the Core Strategy for Leeds is likely to be a ground breaking document;
- Ensure the methodology for the next stages of the SA/SEA includes consideration of One Planet principles;
- Supplement the evidence base for the Core Strategy, where necessary, e.g. physical capacity of the rim or brownfield land;
- Investigate the move towards tariff based system for planning obligations, (using Milton Keynes as a model). Consider rolling this upwards to a city region wide approach for transport infrastructure.
- Dissemination and briefing programme with interactive workshops, to key members and officers: LSP and Leeds Initiative: developers, landowners and investors: infrastructure and service providers.

1.4 POLICY AND GOVERNANCE


1.4.1 Leeds highlights the need for more sustainable development in its Vision statement, the UDP and many other documents. But to make real progress in each of the key sectors above, raises big questions -

- What are the powers and resources of **Leeds**, as distinct from the city-region, region, UK or EU? i.e. what is its **competence** and **mandate**;
- What is the scope for local fiscal (taxation) powers, or real spending and investment, which can be decided locally, and not simply delegated from above?
- How can elected local government work most effectively with the many agencies, quangos, partnerships, and social enterprises?
- A particular challenge for Leeds, is in how to mobilize the immense resources of the financial services sector, which is often footloose and driven by global markets.

What can Leeds do?

1.4.2 The One Planet agenda involves a wide-ranging and innovative set of policies and investments, at every level – local, regional, national and global. It places local authorities and the public sector in the pole position:

- As leaders of the agenda;
- As stewards of environmental assets and values;
- As managers of markets in environmental assets;
- As direct purchasers and clients;

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- As operators of direct public services and (some) infrastructure; and,
 - As enablers & sponsors of 'market transformation.

1.4.3 There is certainly a need for coordination with the regional bodies, UK government, the EU and international bodies. But Leeds with its many initiatives and partnerships also needs to take the lead – to promote, facilitate, innovate, and generally *make things happen* at the city-region level.

Multi-level & multi-lateral governance

1.4.4 Leeds on its own, in the foreseeable future, is unlikely to move any great distance from the UK economy. So the 'One Planet Leeds' agenda in many cases may simply aim to facilitate UK / EU policy, and enable or mobilize producers and consumers at the local level.

1.4.5 The agenda for increasing delegated authority at the local level, as in the forthcoming Local Government White Paper, may be one step on a long journey. We cannot pre-judge these issues in this report, but whichever the outcome, we can advocate practical ways forward.

1.4.6 Some of these ways forward are very exciting – focusing on new forms of 'distributed intelligence', as enabled by IT. We see huge potential for 'next generation' web services on the model of eBay, MySpace and so on. These could facilitate a next generation of business and social activity in a One Planet Economy:

- On-line trading, for re-use and recycling;
- digital democracy and participative decision-making;
- responsive urban planning & management;
- consumer profiling, for public service delivery;
- virtual social spaces for community networks, and so on.

Fiscal & investment issues

1.4.7 Whichever the devolution path taken by Leeds and the wider public sector, we need to bring to the One Planet agenda every kind of financial power available to the public sector. There are many possibilities to be explored by Leeds and its public sector partners:

- Carbon emissions trading and quota schemes: tax neutral and progressive wherever possible;
- Eco-systems 'lifetime credit' schemes: e.g. product impact charging;
- Activity / infrastructure levies: e.g. congestion charging with re-investment in public transport;
- Each of these is to be combined with regulation and behaviour incentives; subsidiarized to the most local level; and combined in each key sector for long term investment in strategic market transformation.


1.5 CONCLUSIONS & NEXT STEPS

1.5.1 This report has shown an outline of the 'transformation' of Leeds towards a One Planet city-region. We take the measures of this as ecological and carbon footprint, together with climate emissions: we take the target as the 4-fold increase in resource efficiency needed, to live on a fair share of the resources of One Planet by 2050.

1.5.2 This report can only provide a sketch of such issues, but it can point to the process of strategic 'business planning', in the short, medium and longer term: on the 'demand side' and 'supply side': and for both 'physical' and 'human' actions. We put the case that Leeds and the wider public sector should take forward this process, with a multi-level programme of evidence gathering, policy development, consultation and capacity building.

1.5.3 Many sustainability strategies look at the physical form and its improvement: here we start with the economy, and the pivotal role of the public sector in steering or enabling alternative directions for economic activity. The overall recommendations to the Leeds public sector include:

- Set 'One Planet' resource targets, with a monitoring and benchmarking framework;
- Use public procurement to foster business innovation;

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- Use public investment partnerships to invest in low-impact infrastructure;
 - Promote innovation and supply chain partnerships for 'market transformation' in key sectors;
 - Promote social enterprise as the way towards sustainable consumption.
 - Ensure that these priorities are reflected in the SCS, LDF-CS, LAA and LSP

1.5.4 Each of these recommendations can be used as the basis for strategic planning – with actions on the supply side and demand side, for physical, economic and social issues:

- Short term – enabling and capacity building, pilots and demonstration, developing the evidence base.
- Medium term – new infrastructure, new types of supply chains, policy frameworks,
- Longer term – full market transformation across all sectors.

NEXT STEPS

1.5.5 Each of the above is a direction of travel from the short to the long term. The question is how to mobilize and implement this, with many stakeholders and with many barriers and incentives? One approach is the Foresight process, widespread in economic development and innovation policy in the EU and OECD. We recommend a 'One Planet Leeds' Foresight programme, working in three strands with priority sectors in a rolling programme:

- Future trends and opportunities: horizon scanning and trend monitoring: policy options analysis and evaluation;
- Networking & capacity building: stakeholder forums for key sectors, supported by on-line resources;
- Strategic planning: rolling programme of One Planet 'prospectives' in key sectors, as inputs to statutory programmes;

1.5.6 In order to lay the groundwork for such a far-reaching programme, there are various 'horizontal' actions within the Leeds Initiative and related partnerships, forums and networks:

- Development of a common evidence base for the city, with the Leeds Initiative as its custodian: LAA 'refresh' arrangements to prioritize issues of sustainable development and climate change
- Leeds Initiative restructuring for a more strategic and high-level Board, to improve capacity and get beyond 'silo' barriers, leading to shared actions such as procurement, facilities management and carbon trading.
- A more active collaboration of the Leeds Initiative in the LDF process, with shared approaches to stakeholder involvement across the SCS (LAA) and LDF.
- Related agendas on economic development and managing deprivation: collaboration with the Narrowing the Gap Executive or the Going up a League Executive Group, for example, to understand the potential linkage with sustainable development.
- Underlying the whole agenda is the challenge of 'sustainable growth' – physical and population growth of the city, or economic and employment growth, or increasing the quality of life – within the context of rapidly improved eco-efficiency and de-materialization. This suggests a rethinking of many conventional issues, and the restructuring of partnerships and forums to enable that.