

# **Regional Groups Initiative: Liverpool City Region Summary Project Plan**

**March 2010**



## **Introduction**

The Liverpool City Region group is led by Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council. The application for the RGI included the following partners:

- Liverpool City Council
- Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
- St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council
- Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council
- Halton Borough Council
- MerseyTravel

Since the award of funding has been announced, the group has received interest from the following additional local authorities:

- Warrington
- Cheshire East
- Cheshire West and Chester
- West Lancashire District Council

The Regional Champion for the group is Gary Mahoney, Principal Officer Environment (Sefton Council).

The Liverpool City Region seeks to raise the level of awareness and readiness amongst partner organisations regarding Low Emission Strategies, and in doing so, maximise co-operation between local authorities and accelerate the deployment and penetration of low emission transport fuels and technologies.

**Long Term Aims (beyond 2010)**

1. To integrate low emission strategies into mainstream policy development for transport and planning within the Liverpool City Region
2. To increase the uptake of low emission vehicles within regional local authority fleets and other large fleet operators

**Objectives for 2010**

1. Raise the level of awareness and 'readiness' amongst partners of the Regional Group regarding Low Emission Strategies
2. Secure commitment to adopt or a timeline/action plan for adoption of Low Emission Strategies from the partner local authorities
3. Maximise co-operation between local authorities in the geographical area of Merseyside
4. Accelerate the deployment and penetration of low emission transport fuels and technologies.

**Key Deliverables Targeted for 2010**

1. Core Output: A Merseyside RGI planning policy note for development control purposes, with the potential for developing into and SPD in the future
2. Core Output: Inclusion of LES within LTP3
3. Additional Output: Model scheme for using offset contributions received in lieu of LES actions to support low emission buses
4. Additional Output: Investigate use of LES to control construction emissions
5. Additional Output: Investigate use of LES in taxi licensing
6. Additional Output: Investigate use of LES principles in developing a Sustainable Procurement Strategy

## Communications

The Liverpool City Region Group has the backing and co-operation of a number of existing Merseyside partnerships and network ‘groups’ covering the fields of planning, transport and the environment. These groups have an important role in offering their support to the RGI in helping to deliver on RGI objectives and to contribute through its members on the agreed outputs. The ‘groups’ provide an important reporting back / consultation mechanism on agreed milestones.

The following networks are supporting the Liverpool RGI:

Who	Involvement
District Planning Officers Group (DPOG Minutes 21 <sup>st</sup> Jan 09) (Director Level)	As High Level Champions
Merseyside Chief Environmental Health Officers Group (Director Level)	As High Level Champions
Merseyside Senior Transport Engineers Group	As High Level Champions
DPO Working Group	Output 1
Development Control Managers Group (DCMG Minutes 29 <sup>th</sup> Jan 09)	Output 1
Local Transport Plan Support Unit (Climate Change Officer will support LES RGI)	Output 2
Mersey Travel (Lead)	Output 3
Merseyside Air Quality Management Group (MAQMG)	Outputs 1 - 6
Local Transport Plan Environment and Sustainability Task Group (LEAST)	Output 2&3
Liverpool City Region Climate Change Group (attended by RGI Champion)	interested partners
Merseyside Pollution Group	Interested partners

The advantage of dovetailing into these groups is that it is an efficient use of valuable staff time, compared with the alternative of setting up a bespoke steering group. Crucially though, we recognise that it is through these existing networks where the knowledge base exists, helping to steer the project and make the RGI a success. All these groups are considered to be part of the overall (email) steering group.

The Regional Group will also consult with other organisations over the course of the initiative, who are interested in participating.

There will be a number of workshops, that will be topic based, planned around the key outputs. Attendees at the workshops are expected to involve a range of professional disciplines (planning, transport and environment), depending on the outputs that are looking to be developed or discussed.

It is envisaged that Output 1 ‘planning policy note for DC purposes’ can be developed through the DPOWG and the Merseyside DCMG with input from the MAQMG helping to facilitate adequate progress between workshops.

Output 2 will be delivered principally through the LEAST Group but will also involve discussions with the Local Transport Plan Support Unit (LSU) and close working with the LSU Climate Change Officer.

Output 3 will be developed in conjunction with Merseytravel. There will be close liaison with the sub group working on the development of the planning policy note and, at various stages of their development, proposals will be circulated to the DCMG, LEAST and MAQMG Groups for comment.

Outputs 4 – 6 will be progressed by small task and finish groups, probably working mostly from e-mail, that will be composed of members from partner organisations with an interest in the project area.

## **Annex 1: Additional information on delivery of outputs**

### **Output 1: A Merseyside RGI planning policy note for development control purposes, with the potential for developing into and SPD in the future.**

The Sefton Planning Department, have developed with key officers an early draft of a policy guidance note, with the aim that this could be supported by its planning committee for Development Control purposes. However this proposal and other ideas or approaches need to be developed further, so that any final guidance note is capable of standing up to the closest scrutiny.

As the policy guidance note is intended to be used for development control purposes, any sub group of the steering group must include DC colleagues. The sub group will need to either include or provide the opportunity for transport colleagues, air quality officers and policy planners to contribute to the process in developing the guidance. The sub group will use email exchange for consulting and seeking support on aspects of the guidance note as it develops.

The success of the LES toolkit commissioned by LESP Partnership in terms of how it is used will need to be tested by planning and transport practitioners against proposals to develop planning policy in this area. Adequate progress on both of these important pieces of work will be dependent on information sharing and joint development. This RGI provides the forum for that activity.

In using the planning system to lower transport emissions, the work of the sub group will need to consider and research the following;

- That there is adequate policy justification through the National and Regional (planning and transport) policy context, that will underpin action at the local planning level.
- Understanding what already exists or emerging (e.g SPDs) aimed at supporting air quality and lower carbon emissions.
- How the Local Development Framework can best support lower transport emissions (e.g development of Core Strategy policies or Development Control DPD).
- Understanding and possible implications as a result of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) approach
- Does the technology exist for public EVR infrastructure and who will be accountable in the long term for their management. Are Electric vehicles definitely the way to go in the long term.
- Is it realistic to set carbon reduction targets for large and major developments based on thresholds defined in the Ensuring Choice of Travel SPD. Is it reasonable to set targets in addition to what is already required from developers to limit car journeys set out in the Ensuring Choice of Travel SPD.
- A formulae for developer contributions where carbon reduction targets cannot be met.

### **Output 2: Inclusion of LES within LTP3**

Key questions with regard to how LTP3 can contribute to reducing emissions from transport in the City Region are: which emerging technologies are likely to be sustainable in the longer term, what is a realistic estimation of the rate at which new technologies will penetrate the market and how will this relate to changes in transport and the demand for transport. Following on from this what will need to be the balance between securing emissions reductions through supporting existing low emissions technologies and encouraging the uptake of new technologies and how will this balance change over the lifetime of the LTP.

The partners will work with the LSU and the consultancy support provided through the RGI to research these questions. The Low Emissions Toolkit, which is currently under development, will be used to identify available new technologies and the potential scale of reductions that could be achieved.

As part of the development of LTP3 a workshop bringing together air quality and transportation officers is to be organised. This workshop will be used to begin the discussion of including LES in the LTP with a wider audience.

A proposal for consideration by the LTP3 Coordination Group for a sustainable emissions reduction strategy for LTP3 will be developed.

### **Output 3: Model scheme for using offset contributions received in lieu of LES actions to support low emission buses**

The aim is determine if a practicable scheme for using offset contributions, received through the adoption of LES in planning policies, to support low emissions buses can be developed. In order to do this consideration will need to be given to the following points:

- What technologies would be supported
- Whether demonstrator projects or actual services should be supported
- Could this be used to support / promote Quality Bus Partnerships
- The legal / financial aspects of using offset contributions in this way
- Would local authorities support this approach

Close liaison will be maintained with the group working on Output 1 to ensure that the development of each project is informed by the development of the other. As proposals are developed the wider steering group will be periodically circulated, particularly with regard to whether authorities would be prepared to engage with such a process.

Merseytravel have considerable experience in the deployment of alternatively fuelled public transport and they will lead this project.

### **Output 4: Investigate use of LES to control construction emissions**

Emissions from demolition and construction activities can have significant effects on the local environment. There are existing codes of practice concerning construction and demolition and accreditation schemes for plant. A sub group will be formed to examine what is currently available and develop a bespoke scheme that can be recommended for adoption in the City Region.

### **Output 5: Investigate use of LES in taxi licensing**

A sub group will be formed to explore how LES principles could be included in the taxi licensing regime and possible funding sources, including the use of offset contributions, that could be used to encourage the use of low emissions vehicles as taxis.

### **Output 6: Investigate use of LES principles in developing a Sustainable Procurement Strategy**

Partners who wish to progress this element will work with each other and their colleagues in procurement to explore how LES principles could be included in sustainable procurement policies. Using the RGI support a presentation on LES will be given to the Merseyside Sustainable Procurement Group.