

## South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee - Energy Sub-Committee

(Via Microsoft Teams)

**Members Present:**

**30 September 2024**

**Chairperson:** Councillor J.Harvey

**Councillors:** P.Miller, A.Owen, A.Lewis and J.Hurley

**Officers In Attendance** D.Thomas, G.Bacon, A.Moss, R.Griffiths, S.Aldred-Jones, B.Suddell, S.Brennan, C.Jones, K.Tillman, L.Davies and C.Plowman

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### 1. **Welcome and Chairs Announcements**

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### 2. **Declarations of Interests**

The following declaration of interest was received at the start of Agenda Item 4:

Cllr Andrea Lewis	Re Agenda Item 4 as she is a Board Member of the Swansea Community Energy and Enterprise Scheme
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### 3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting, held on 13 May 2024, were approved as an accurate record.

### 4. **Update on Regional Energy Strategy Delivery**

Members were provided with a progress update in terms of regional delivery for Energy; in accordance with the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (SWWCJC) commitment, as outlined within the Well-being Objectives of the Corporate Plan, with emphasis on Regional Energy.

It was noted that the three proposed projects, detailed within the appendices of the circulated report, were for information and will be subject to development, prior to seeking endorsement from a future meeting of the SWWCJC Energy Sub Committee.

The Committee was informed that the SWWCJC had been mandated to implement a Regional Energy Strategy for the region by Welsh Government; and on 15 March 2022, it was resolved that the South West Wales Regional Energy Strategy be adopted as the framework for the SWWCJC's work programme. It was explained that as part of that commitment, the Corporate Plan encompassed several wellbeing objectives; Well-being Objective 1 was to collaboratively deliver the Regional Economic Delivery Plan and Regional Energy Strategy.

Officers acknowledged that there had been concerns relating to the Local Area Energy Plans (LAEPs) and how they were a tool for local delivery; however, it was stated that the LAEPs were fulfilling the work of the Regional Energy Strategy and the delivery of actions for Well-being Objective 1. In conclusion, there was a strong synergy and overlap between the Regional Energy Strategy and LAEPs; both of which will inform the national picture.

It was highlighted that all four LAEP reports were now complete; Pembrokeshire's LAEP had been completed in 2022, and now the other three Local Authorities had theirs completed. As previously mentioned, these reports will form the Regional Energy Strategy; Welsh Government were currently aggregating this data to form a regional and then national picture.

Members were informed that the LAEPs had been developed based on the circumstances and priorities of each Local Authority. It was noted that the LAEPs for Swansea, Neath Port Talbot and Carmarthenshire were currently being translated into Welsh, and the next step following this would be publication.

Officers provided an example of one of the action plans and explained that the key actions and themes were a replication of what was in the Regional Energy Strategy; this was because many of the actions within the LAEPs were regional actions. It was highlighted that there were 67 actions within the existing Regional Energy Strategy, which formed part of the SWWCJC Corporate Plan; 51 of which were directly covered by the LAEPs, and those that weren't needed to be dealt with at a national level.

It was noted that over the summer, Officers had reviewed the actions highlighted by City Science. It was recognised that there were a number of actions regarding retrofit and the implementation of local carbon heating that hadn't been flagged as regional actions; even though these actions were either covered by more than one Local Authority LAs or had some elements that needed to be dealt with at a regional level.

Following on from the above, it was confirmed that Officers had started to prioritise the actions for the Regional Energy Team; this list could be found at Appendix A of the circulated report. It was mentioned that the actions in yellow were ongoing work that needed coordination and engagement; and the actions in red were projects that were being developed.

Officers explained that the first actions of the most recent LAEPs was to formulate the governance process; instead of creating a further steering group for the regional coordination of the LAEPs, it had been agreed that the existing energy core group would serve that function. It was added that this would enable stakeholders, regional energy teams and Local Authority energy and sustainability teams to feed into the process.

A discussion took place in regard to the Regional Energy Team Work Programme and the projects; this included Solar Together by iChoosr, Regional Retrofit Behavioural Change Programme and Cross-Boundary EV charging pilot. The detail of each project was outlined in Appendices B, C and D of the circulated report.

The Committee were provided with a scenario of the level of change and transformation that will occur across the region; these figures highlighted the importance of the small projects and schemes that were taking place in peoples homes and businesses. It was expressed that the combination of these smaller projects and the main projects will be how to achieve Net Zero; consumer transformation had high levels of decarbonisation and societal change.

Reference was made to the Cross-boundary EV charging pilot, detailed in Appendix D of the circulated report; Members asked if there was opportunity to share networks with Public Service Board (PSB) partners and the like. It was confirmed that Officers were starting discussions with partners such as National Parks and Health

Boards, as there was a clear opportunity for collaboration. It was added that this could also include local businesses as well.

Following on from the question above, it was noted that Carmarthenshire Council had been undertaking a piece of work over the past four months with PSB partners relating to this matter and had found the discussions and information shared to be very supportive. The Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability at Carmarthenshire Council suggested that it would be useful to share the contacts details of the Officers that had been leading on that piece of work.

In relation to the Solar Together by iChoosr project, it was queried if the letters being sent out to the properties will be branded by the relevant Local Authority; in addition, it was asked if there were any lessons learned or risks to note from other Authorities that had undertaken this project. It was noted that the several Local Authorities that Officers had spoken to in England were very complimentary of the project; and in some years had even made a small profit from the project. Although the project would be organised regionally, it was stated that targeted letters would be sent out with the relevant Local Authority branding; this would help to provide residents with confidence in the project.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

5. **Forward Work Programme**

The Energy Sub Committee Forward Work Programme was noted.

6. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

**CHAIRPERSON**