

SOUTH WEST WALES CORPORATE JOINT COMMITTEE

Energy Sub-Committee

27th January 2025

Report of the Chief Executive

Report Title: Update on Regional Energy Strategy Delivery

Purpose of Report	To provide Members of South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (SWWCJC) Energy Sub-Committee with an update on the regional delivery for Energy and together with an update on the decision for funding for pilot projects as discussed at the meeting held on 30 th September 2024.
Recommendation(s)	That Members note the progress updates on the Energy workstream and the Solar Group Purchasing initiative (Appendix B Project Outline of the South West Wales Solar Together initiative) subject to the decision made at South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (SWWCJC) 21 st January 2025 for funding.
Report Author	Darren Thomas Head of Infrastructure & Environment Laura Davies Regional Energy Team Manager
Finance Officer	Chris Moore
Legal Officer	Craig Griffiths

1. Introduction & Background

At the South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (“SWWCJC”) held on 15th March 2022, it was resolved that the South West Wales Regional Energy Strategy be adopted as the framework for the SWWCJC’s work programme. At the SWWCJC Energy Subgroup on 30th September 2024 it was noted that the Local Area Energy Plans (LAEP) contain a series of local and regional actions and together with policy changes and legislation at national and UK level will be the framework to deliver the Regional Energy Strategy.

The Energy Core group has taken the role of the role of the Local Area Energy Plans (LAEP) Regional Steering group as identified in the LAEP.



Welsh Government have also funded for 24 months, the appointment of a Regional Energy Team consisting of an Energy Project Manager plus two Energy Project Officer posts. Whilst these posts are employed by Carmarthenshire County Council, they are a regional resource for the four local authorities.

2. Progress

The Regional Energy Team has continued to work across the regional actions: see **Appendix A** for update and since October have been concentrating on the prioritised projects described in more detail below.

The Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) Regional Steering Group has met on several occasions since the last Energy Subgroup to monitor progress on LAEP actions and for more detailed discussions on key topics as follows:

- Developing a strategic approach to managing and financing delivery of the LAEPs and the role of the steering group, and the different options undertaken by other authorities in England, such as working with the UK Investment Bank, private/public partnerships, investment portfolios with City Science (consultants who delivered the recent LAEP reports) and the Welsh Government Energy Service and Local Partnerships.
- Grid capacity and the opportunity for regular input into National Grid Electricity Distribution's (NGED's) Network Development Plan.
- The four Authorities to become members of Net Zero Industry Wales (NZIW) and the role of the Authorities in support strategic industrial projects such as the HyLine planning process, industrial clusters associated with the Freeport with NZIW

Updates on the individual priority schemes are summarised as follows:

- (i) **The promotion and launch of group buying of solar photovoltaic (PV), battery storage and electric vehicle (EV) chargers for 'able to pay' householders across the region (South West Wales Solar Together).**

Appendix B sets out the Project Outline of the South West Wales Solar Together initiative.

The scheme is aimed at homeowners with sufficient funds to make the investment themselves, but who may be concerned about finding a good quality installer on their own. It is expected to add a minimum of 1285 KW of renewable power to the region annually, contributing towards our targets within the LAEPs between now and 2050.

Councils and the selected service provider will work together to target and promote the scheme to residents who are most likely to have the resources and



interest to install solar PV. Residents would be sent a direct mailing, co-badged with the individual Council for which funding is required.

A report however will be brought to the SWWCJC for funding of £27,500 (in 25/26) for the Councils branded Mailshot and £3,000 in 24/25 to cover the costs of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The Project is expected to generate a small revenue for each Local Authority - £80 per private household installation as a rebate which will make the overall scheme cost neutral. This will enable the £27500 to be recycled each year the scheme runs to fund the initial targeting of addresses at the start of each annual scheme.

The procurement route is being managed through Carmarthenshire County Council as lead body with an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with other authorities. A Market Engagement Prior Information Notice (PIN) was activated on 7th January 2025 to establish how many potential service providers of this type of scheme exist and to determine the procurement route and be subject to a future report to the SWWCJC.

(ii) A regional retrofit behavioural change project delivered with community energy groups.

Appendix C provides a project outline of the Behavioural Change project.

A workshop with all participating community energy groups and Local Authorities was held 21 November 2024 to determine the full scope of scheme. Preparatory engagement has been held with communication teams and ECO FLEX funding officers in the four authorities (ECO FLEX is a government scheme which provides funding for energy efficiency improvements in the home). The community energy groups will be funded to deliver household energy assessments and retrofit advice across the region to support households to make informed and supported choices as they decarbonise their homes and make full use of existing grant opportunities.

(iii) Cross-boundary sharing of EV charging infrastructure pilot between LAs and wider public sector (Appendix D).

Appendix D provides an outline of the Cross-boundary EV charging initiative.

Further work has been carried out to map Local Authority chargers that can be easily shared with other LAs and identifying home-to-work staff who live out of authority and can be moved into an EV. Talks have been held with Clenergy, (who currently provide the software used by all four Authorities to manage their EV chargers) on integrating and managing the back of house charging and recharging. It is expected that a pilot will go live with first EV drivers in January 2025. This work will feed into the wider feasibility study on the Public Sector Shared charging network initiated by the PSBs and South Wales Metro.



3. Financial Impacts

The SWWCJC is being asked for £30,500 funding to cover the cost of the South West Wales Solar group-purchasing initiative: £27,500 (in 25/26) for the Councils branded Mailshot and £3,000 in 24/25 to cover the costs of the Memorandum of Understanding.

4. Integrated Impact Assessment

The SWWCJC is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

In recognition of the above duties, the SWWCJC has adopted an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) Tool which allows for a 2 stage approach to be undertaken to measure any potential impact of its decisions. It is not considered that an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) is required for this report as it does not seek a substantive policy decision from Members.

Notwithstanding this the SWWCJC Energy Sub-Committee is actively engaged in the development of the South West Wales Regional Energy Strategy – looking at developing the best way of harnessing the region’s low carbon energy potential across its on and offshore locations. This will deliver a prosperous and equitable net zero carbon economy which enhances the well-being of future generations and the region’s ecosystems, at a pace which delivers against regional and national emissions reduction targets by 2035 and 2050.

5. Workforce Impacts

Welsh Government have funded the recruitment of three new officers to support the development and delivery of the Local Area Energy Plans.



6. Legal Impacts

As indicated above, MOUs will be required to cover the arrangements raised and this will be subject to ongoing legal advice and support.

7. Risk Management Impacts

Risks arising as part of the Local Area Energy Plans (LAEP) process are managed as part of programme delivery by Energy Systems Catapult.

8. Consultation

No formal consultation required for the purpose of this report, though it should be noted a wide range of stakeholders are consulted as part of the development of the LAEP.

9. Reasons for Proposed Decision

That Members note the progress updates on the Energy workstream and the request approval for funding for the Solar Group Purchasing initiative.

10. Implementation of Decision

No decision will be made at this meeting.



11. Appendices

Appendix A Update on Agreed Regional LAEP Actions for Regional Energy Team (RET)

Appendix B Project Outline: South West Wales Solar Together

Appendix C Project Outline: Behavioural change project (Draft)

Appendix D Project Outline: Cross-boundary EV charging (Draft)

12. List of Background Papers

[South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee - Energy Sub-Committee - Monday, 30th September, 2024 2.00 pm](#)

<https://democracy.npt.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=531>

[South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee - Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee - Wednesday, 15th January, 2025 10.00 am](#)

[South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee - Tuesday, 21st January, 2025 10.00 am](#)



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council



Bannau Brycheiniog

Appendix A Agreed Regional Local Area Energy Plans (LAEP) Actions for Regional Energy Team (RET)

	Action	Lead	Priority for RET	Update – Dec 2024
1	Establish a Regional Steering Group to Enable the Delivery of LAEP Outcomes	Energy Core Group	Ongoing	Established with ongoing coordination of group and additional stakeholders
2	Establish a Long-Term Green Skills Programme to Enable the Delivery of Decarbonisation Measures	Regional Skills Partnership	Ongoing	Joint working with RSP, Homes as Power Stations (HAPS), National Net Zero Skills Centre of Excellence (NNZSCoE) and regional colleges delivering green skills.
3	Embed LAEP Learnings into Wider Council Processes and Communications to Enable the Delivery of LAEP Outcomes	LAs/RET	Not currently a priority for RET. Priority for 2025	Regular engagement with individual LA Energy/Decarb teams, sharing best practice and monitoring LAEP LA actions.
4	Facilitate Low and Zero Carbon Vehicle Uptake to Decarbonise Public Fleets	LAs/RET	HIGH priority	Cross-boundary sharing of EV charging infrastructure pilot project which will feed into a wider feasibility study on public sector charging initiated by PSBs. Pilot to go live in early 2025 with first participants.
5	Enhance Active Travel and Public Transport to Reduce Reliance on Personal Motorised Vehicles	Regional Transport Strategy/LAs	Not currently a priority for RET	No update
6	Continue Collaboration with Electricity and Gas Network Operators to Foster a Robust Future Energy System	RET/LA	Ongoing	Contributed to NGED and WWU consultations, engagement with RESP consultations. Attendance at energy steering group from NGED and WWU.
7	Support the Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (ZEVIS) to Address Future Needs of Hydrogen-Fuelled Vehicles in the Region	RET	Not currently a priority for RET	No update on this action.
8	Establish an Industry Engagement Forum to Identify and Progress Energy-Related Opportunities	SWIC/NZIW	Ongoing	Presentation by Ben Burggraaf of Net Zero Industry Wales 6/12/24. SW Wales LAs invited to join NZIW. Further engagement on HyLine and planning process planned.
9	Support the Development of a Retrofit and Low Carbon Heating Local Supply Chain to Enable the Delivery of Decarbonisation Measures	HAPS	HIGH Priority (9, 10 & 11 linked)	Supported by Behavioural change advice and group-purchasing solar project. Developing a local supply chain for decarbonising homes is one of HAPS's specific tasks.
10	Create a Behaviour-Change Campaign to Increase Uptake of Retrofit and Low Carbon Heating	LAs/RET	HIGH Priority (9, 10 & 11 linked)	Supported by Behavioural change advice and group-purchasing solar project



11	Develop a Retrofit and Low Carbon Heating One Stop Shop Service to Decarbonise Private Residences with behavioural change a supporting action.	LAs/RET	HIGH Priority (9, 10 & 11 linked)	Supported by Behavioural change advice and group-purchasing solar project
12	Implement a Retrofit & Heat Bulk Purchasing Scheme to Decarbonise Social Housing	HAPS/RSL/LAs	HIGH Priority	Engagement with HAPS. Planning a hop with LA housing teams and RSLs in new year.



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Appendix B Project Outline: Solar Group Purchasing

PROJECT NAME Group Purchasing Scheme for Solar, Battery and EV Chargers	PROJECT MANAGER Regional Energy Project Manager	PROJECT Officer Regional Energy Project Officer
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PROJECT SUMMARY	Group Purchasing Scheme for Solar, Battery and EV Chargers designed to establish a fixed price with good quality products from reputable installers for private property owners who are 'able to pay' and don't qualify for grant schemes, projected managed by iChoosr.
PROJECT OBJECTIVES	Accelerate the uptake of PV generation, battery storage and EV home charging in the region.
SCOPE OF WORK	Council branded Mailshot to 78,424 properties across region (Experian Mosaic target group) with a conservative conversion estimate of 0.41% or 321 properties per year. Non-targeted addresses can join through website promoted by LAs.
KEY DELIVERABLES	1.3 MWh of Solar Capacity added annually to the grid in the region will contribute towards our targets within the LAEPs and Regional Energy Strategy between now and 2050. Annual CO2 reductions of 302 tons. £27,500 contribution expected to deliver approx. £1.9 m of private investment in rooftop solar per year across region.
PROJECT TIMELINE	Project aiming for a potential Launch in 2025

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS	ORGANISATION NAME	RESPONSIBILITY
	iChoosr	Project Manager
	Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC)	
	Carmarthenshire County Council (CCC)	
	Swansea County Council (SCC)	
	Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (NPTCBC)	
BUDGET	£27,448 – indicative cost of mailshot £3,000 for legal costs for MOU between authorities and CCC as lead purchasing body.	Council revenue -£80 per install £25,691 (based on 0.41% uptake) Scheme almost cost neutral so £27,500 to be recycled each year the



		scheme runs to fund the initial targeting of addresses at the start of each annual scheme.
FUNDING SOURCE	South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee (SWWCJC) – Subject to approval	



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Appendix C Project Outline: Behavioural change project (Draft)

PROJECT NAME SOUTHWEST WALES BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE PROGRAMME	PROJECT MANAGER Regional Energy Project Manager	PROJECT OFFICER Regional Energy Project Officer
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PROJECT SUMMARY	Community based behavioural change programme consisting of a regional a communications/coordination officer and website with advice and sign-posting and retrofit advice delivered by trusted local community groups, to help the public make the energy transition to net zero carbon.
PROJECT OBJECTIVES	Empower the public make the switch from fossil fuels and change how they use energy in their daily life, reducing their carbon emissions and their bills by increasing their energy efficiency in the home, in travel, etc.
SCOPE OF WORK	7 energy/retrofit advisor post funded across 6 community energy groups, part-time communications post within Regional Energy Team based at CCC, part-time traditional build retrofit advisor, standardised training for advisors and volunteers, webpage and social media activity on each authority website promoting scheme.
KEY DELIVERABLES	Increased uptake in household decarbonisation measures, reduced energy bills.
PROJECT TIMELINE	3.5 years from April 2025 if funding bid successful

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS	ORGANISATION NAME
	Ynni Sir Gar, Carmarthenshire County Council (CCC)
	Cwm Arian, Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC)
	Sero/Carmarthen Together, Carmarthenshire County Council (CCC)
	Eco Dewi, Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC)
	Aman Awel Tawe, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (NPTCBC)
	Environment Centre, Swansea
	Tywi Centre, Carmarthenshire County Council (CCC)



BUDGET	£1.3 million
FUNDING SOURCE	Climate Action Fund- Subject to successful bid



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Appendix D Project Outline: Cross-boundary EV charging (Draft)

PROJECT NAME Cross-Boundary EV charging pilot	PROJECT MANAGER Regional Energy Project Manager Project Manager Carbon Reduction Aspland (SCC)	PROJECT OFFICER Regional Energy Project Officer
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PROJECT SUMMARY	Pilot looking at the feasibility of sharing LA depot EV charging infrastructure, particularly for home to work vehicle users working with Welsh Government Energy Service.
PROJECT OBJECTIVES	Pilot to identify the benefits and challenges of sharing EV charging infrastructure ultimately to accelerate the uptake of EV vehicles within the public fleet.
SCOPE OF WORK	Identify depots and staff that can be included in a cross-boundary trial, run pilot with a limited number of staff from across the region.
KEY DELIVERABLES	Proof of concept, LA staff successfully using charging infrastructure of neighbouring authority and costs being re-charged with no additional administrative burden.
PROJECT TIMELINE	Pilot expected to go live January 2025.

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS	ORGANISATION NAME
	Swansea City Council
	Pembrokeshire County Council
	Carmarthenshire County Council
	Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
	Welsh Government Energy Service
BUDGET	No budget required for initial pilot as existing vehicles to be used and costs of additional payment card to be funded by LAs. £25,000 sought for further feasibility work to assess capital works required at depots to open up access in preparation for WGES funding bid.

