



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNCIL

Environment, Regeneration and Streetscene Services Cabinet Board

19th April 2024

Report of

Head of Property & Regeneration - Simon Brennan

Matter for Information

Wards Affected: All Wards

Report Title: Neath Port Talbot Council Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) Completion Report

Purpose of Report

1.0 To inform members of the completion of the Neath Port Talbot (NPT) Council's Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP).

Background

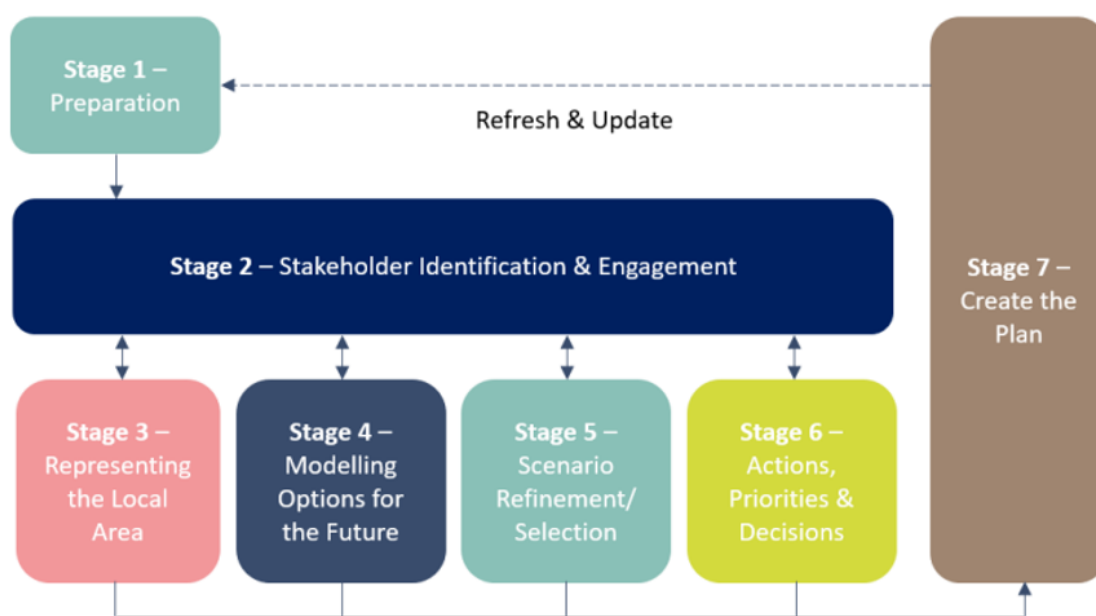
2.0 Welsh Government (WG) wrote to all Local Authorities (LAs) in Wales with a request to work in collaboration with WG to design an approach to develop a locally led, pan-Wales understanding of the net zero energy system.

2.1 Welsh Government have funded the development of local area energy plans (LAEPs) for every local authority in Wales. This follows several local authorities being pilot locations, plus Pembrokeshire, which produced a LAEP in 2022 as a condition of funding for the Milford Haven: Energy Kingdom project. The South-West Wales Region's LAEPs are being delivered by City Science for Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, and Carmarthenshire.

Local Area Energy Planning is a detailed, comprehensive process designed to identify the most effective pathway(s) to decarbonising the local energy system by 2050. The process is led by Local Government, Welsh Government and developed collaboratively with defined stakeholders. Although produced separately and tailored to the local landscape, the three LAEPs will be aligned regionally to help ensure consistency.

2.2 The LAEP for NPT (Refer to Appendices 1 and 2) sets out a vision for what a zero carbon energy system could possibly look like in 2050, and describes key immediate actions for the Council to support the journey.

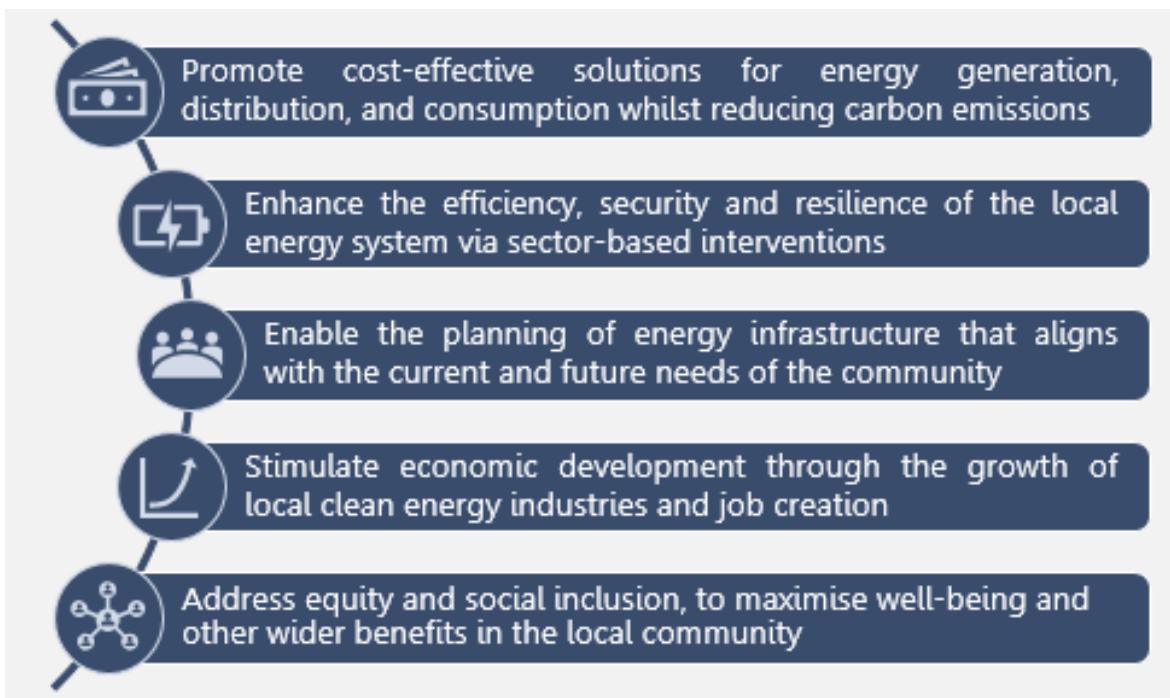
2.3 NPT Council's LAEP programme commenced in February 2023 and concludes at the end of March 2024. It consists of 7 main stages enclosed below concluding with corporate and Council briefing:



2.4 NPT Council's LAEP adheres to both the Energy Systems Catapult and Ofgem guidance. The LAEP is categorised in the following key areas:

- a. Provides a comprehensive overview of the current energy system in Neath Port Talbot.
- b. Considers multiple prospective future energy scenarios and the nature of the potential energy system changes required to reach targets.
- c. Identifies and provides actionable steps with the primary goal of achieving net zero by 2050.

2.4 The key objectives of the LAEP are:



- 2.5 Draft LAEPs have been produced and are currently being internally reviewed by each local authority, with the technical modelling being reviewed by National Grid Energy Distribution (electricity network) and Wales and West Utilities (gas network). Final LAEPs will be delivered for Local Authority members to note in April 2024.
- 2.6 Following completion of all the individual LAEPs there will be an exercise undertaken by the technical advisors to Welsh Government to align and consolidate the findings. This will then

inform the further development and strategic direction of regional actions, and lead to the creation of a Wales-wide Energy Plan.

Governance & Resource

- 3.0 It is proposed that the governance structure arrangement of the South West Wales Region LAEPs will be discussed at the Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) Lead and Energy sub-groups.
- 3.1 To support with the implementation of the LAEP and Regional Energy Strategy the Welsh Government have 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.

Conclusion

- 4.0 The LAEP recognises that net zero is a challenge that cannot be completed by the Council alone. There are fundamental changes that are needed in funding, resourcing, skills & training, infrastructure and policy if Neath Port Talbot is to have any chance of becoming net zero by 2050 across all sectors. There are major community and private sector actions that need to be taken. The LAEP identifies what needs to be done based on the best available evidence at this moment in time.
- 4.1 The LAEP improvement action programmes are categorised into the following delivery areas:
- Crosscutting enabling actions
 - Buildings efficiency, retrofit and heat actions
 - Transport actions
 - Generation and network actions

4.2 Within the delivery areas the following **improvement programme actions** have been created, there are 9 actions common across the regional councils and 6 unique to NPT and their status is identified within the table accordingly:

Action 1	Establish a Regional LAEP Steering Group - Regional.
Action 2	Support Long-Term Green Skills Programme - Regional.
Action 3	Embed LAEP Learnings into Wider Council Processes & Communications - Regional.
Action 4	Create a Retrofit & Low Carbon Heating Behaviour- Change Campaign - Regional.
Action 5	Develop a Fuel Poverty Programme - NPT.
Action 6	Develop a Programme to Electrify Public Sector Owned Non-gas Properties - NPT.
Action 7	Develop Holistic Community Transport Provision in Valley Areas - NPT.
Action 8	Increase Low & Zero Carbon Vehicle Public Fleet Uptake - Regional.
Action 9	Enhance Active Travel & Public Transport - Regional.
Action 10	Strengthen collaboration with National Grid & NGED - Regional.
Action 11	Address Future Needs of Hydrogen-Fuelled Vehicles - Regional.
Action 12	Develop a Support Programme for Community Energy Microgrid Projects - NPT.
Action 13	Develop a Storage and Flexibility Financial Incentives Programme - NPT.
Action 14	Establish an Industry Engagement Forum - Regional.
Action 15	Encourage the Uptake of Industry Decarbonisation Support - NPT.

4.3 Following the completion of all the individual LAEPs there will be an exercise undertaken by the technical advisors to Welsh Government to align and consolidate the findings. This will then inform the further development and strategic direction of regional actions, and lead to the creation of a Wales-wide Energy Plan.

4.4 To successfully deliver the LAEP roles and responsibilities of the implementation programme and projects will have to be clearly defined and that NPT Council will collaborate in a facilitation role with Welsh Government taking a lead role in the LAEP delivery within NPT and the Region.

4.5 NPT Council will note the LAEP plan on the understanding that Welsh Government will provide further detail on the implementation mechanisms, resource capacity, funding and governance arrangements.

Next Steps

4.6 Within 2024, it is anticipated that the 15 LAEP action programmes will be developed ready for approval with roles, responsibilities, resource and funding identified.

4.7 Further engagement with Welsh Government on the delivery mechanisms for the LAEP centred on the following considerations governance, resource and funding.

Financial Appraisal

5.0 The costs of developing the LAEP report has been fully funded by Welsh Government.

5.1 A combination of capital and revenue spend will be needed to implement the LAEP programme actions required to deliver the plans output targets. Funding support, resource and expertise from Welsh Government will be needed to deliver the LAEP delivery programmes in addition to external funding identified within the on-going challenging financial context.

5.2 Projects emerging from the LAEP where NPT Council is lead or requested to contribute funding, will be developed in line with usual processes and procedures with business cases being developed and funding sought to deliver the project programmes.

Integrated Impact Assessment

6.0 In line with corporate guidance, there is no requirement to undertake an Integrated Impact Assessment on this report.

Valleys Communities Impact

7.0 There are no valley community impacts associated with this report.

Workforce Impact

8.0 There are no workforce impacts associated with this report.

Legal Impact

9.0 It is noted that the report is for information and update at this stage. Individual actions may need to revert for formal approval/agreement where appropriate.

Risk Management

10.0 There are no risk management implications from this report. However, risk management assessments will be undertaken for the respective delivery programmes that the Council leads on.

Consultation

11.0 There is no requirement at this point in the project for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations

12.0 For Members to note the Council's completion of the Welsh Government funded local area energy plan report.

The LAEP will provide a framework for the council to work with partners and stakeholders to deliver on a zero-carbon local energy system by 2050 for the whole Authority across all sectors.

Reason for Proposed Decision

13.0 To inform and invite Members to provide feedback on the completed LAEP reports contained within the Appendices.

Implementation of Decision

14.0 The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

Appendices

15.0 Appendices:

- A. Neath Port Talbot Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) 2024 – Main Report (Draft) **Final report will be issued w/c 25th March 2024****
- B. Neath Port Talbot Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) 2024 – Technical Annex Report (Draft) **Final report will be issued w/c 25th March 2024****

List of Background Papers

16.0 Welsh Government's Net Zero Wales Plan (2021-25). [Wales Low Carbon Delivery Plan \(2021-2025\) \(gov.wales\)](#)

Officer Contact

Christopher Jones

Energy Manager

Email: c.r.jones1@npt.gov.uk