



## Report of the Director of Place

Climate Change Corporate Delivery Committee – 16 January 2022

### Renewable Energy

<b>Purpose:</b>	To provide the committee with a progress update
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Climate Change & Nature Recovery Strategy
<b>Consultation:</b>	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	It is recommended that:  1) Endorse the direction of travel and make any further suggestions as to the future areas for investigation.
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<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Ben Smith
<b>Legal Officer:</b>	Debbie Smith
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	Rhian Millar

#### 1. Background

- 1.1 Renewable energy is energy derived from natural sources that are replenished at a higher rate than they are consumed.
- 1.2 Fossil fuels - coal, oil and gas - on the other hand, are non-renewable resources that take hundreds of millions of years to form. Fossil fuels, when burned to produce energy, cause harmful greenhouse gas emissions, such as carbon dioxide.
- 1.3 Generating renewable energy creates far lower emissions than burning fossil fuels. Transitioning from fossil fuels, which currently account for the lion's share of emissions, to renewable energy is key to addressing the climate crisis.
- 1.4 For this reason, various schemes have been investigated and implemented to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels. This will form the cornerstone to reducing carbon emissions and enabling the Council to not only achieve its 2030 NZ ambitions but also to achieve the wider 2050 NZ goal.

## 2. Current position

2.1 To date the projects that officers are currently, actively working on include:-

- Retro-fitting- investigating reducing emissions with improved technology and on-site renewables. Specifically referenced in the NZ delivery plan with the aim of reducing emissions by 4,438 tCO<sub>2</sub>(2030)
- Solar Farm- development of 2.4MW solar farm at Tir John plus investigation of other potential development opportunities (2050)
- Blue Eden- integrated renewables project which incorporates the tidal lagoon (2050)
- Wind farm- investigating potential for major developments within the constraints of ownership and planning policy (2050?)
- Housing pilot retrofit project to decarbonise Council owned homes in line with the likely requirements of the Welsh Government's revised Welsh Housing Quality Standard by upgrading insulation and fitting renewable technologies

2.2 With the exception of the Tidal Lagoon all of the above are being undertaken with the support of Welsh Government Energy Services who assist community and public sector organisations in Wales to reduce energy use, generate locally owned renewable energy and cut carbon emissions. Without their expertise these local projects would not have been as successful as they have been to date.

2.3 Beyond specific projects already identified the next major step for the Council will be the formulation of our Local Area Energy Plan. This is a strategic plan, within a defined geographic area, for how the energy systems will be decarbonised. It will result in a fully costed and spatial plan that identifies the change needed to the local energy system and built environment, detailing 'what, where and when and by whom'.

2.4 An LAEP sets out the total costs, changes in energy use and emissions, and sets these out over incremental time periods to meet the UK Government Net Zero targets:

- 2030 - 68% reduction in emissions;
- 2035 - 78% reduction in emissions;
- 2050 – Net Zero.

2.5 It will address electricity, heat, and gas networks, future potential for hydrogen, the built environment (industrial, domestic and commercial) its fabric and systems, flexibility, energy generation and storage, and providing energy to decarbonised transport e.g. electricity to electric vehicles and charging infrastructure.

- 2.6 Four regional stakeholder groups (Cardiff Capital region, Mid Wales, North Wales and Southwest Wales) have been established, by Welsh Government. Swansea is part of the Southwest Wales region, along with Neath Port Talbot, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire.
- 2.7 Welsh Government has appointed a specialist company to work with each region, and the individual councils, to produce LAEPs for each local authority area. City Science have been appointed to work with the Southwest Wales region.
- 2.8 The next steps are “Kick Off” sessions led by the supplier, City Science, which will happen in January 2023. These will start at a regional level and progress to a local authority level. These sessions will establish governance & oversight arrangements; working arrangements; activity alignment; and initial programme timescales.
- 2.9 It is expected that the work around the LAEPs will require considerable resource input and therefore this may become a limiting factor.
- 2.10 This CDC will form part of a stakeholder engagement once City Science have mobilised.

### **3. Summary**

3.1 The majority of the LAEP activity relates to the wider city and county of Swansea and therefore the 2050 NZ project. The importance of activity relating to the 2030 NZ will have to remain a focus of consideration will therefore have to be given to:-

- Future phases of refit and the ability for this to be financed
- Further phases of solar farm developments
- Potential to develop wind farms
- Role of Swansea Council in the Tidal Lagoon project

3.2 Views of CDC are sought around:-

- Issues of Council policy and potential changes
- Local community views and consultation

### **4. Integrated Assessment Implications**

4.1 The Council 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.

4.1.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.

4.1.2 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

4.2 An IIA Screening Form has been completed with the agreed outcome that a full IIA report was not required. This report covers an overarching strategy, each action as and when pursued will be screened independently. The IIA screening form is attached as **Appendix B**.

**Summary of impacts identified and mitigation needed (Q2)** – If we move in the right direction and bring stakeholders along with us then all benefits could and should be very positive

**Summary of involvement (Q3)** The mobilisation of the LAEP process, supported by appointed consultants will drive wider stakeholder engagement

**WFG considerations (Q4)** To note the Well-being of Future Generations is a pivot part of our project governance structure.

**Any risks identified (Q5)** – Risks are medium - financially we will need to continue to lobby WG to ensure funding available to make changes.

**Cumulative impact (Q7)** – A brilliant and exciting opportunity to maximise the wellbeing of future generation and equality plan principles to make for a better Swansea by 2050.

## 5. Financial Implications

5.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. However, it is clear to reach both the 2030 and 2050 targets, significant investment is required and any such decisions would be subject to separate cabinet reports at the time fully outlining the financial implications

with the Council continuing to lobby both Welsh and UK Governments to provide appropriate funding

## **6. Legal Implications**

6.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

**Background Papers:** None.

**Appendices:**  
Appendix A - IIA.