



Report of the Director of Place

Climate Change & Nature Recovery Service Transformation Committee –
11 December 2023

Swansea Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP)

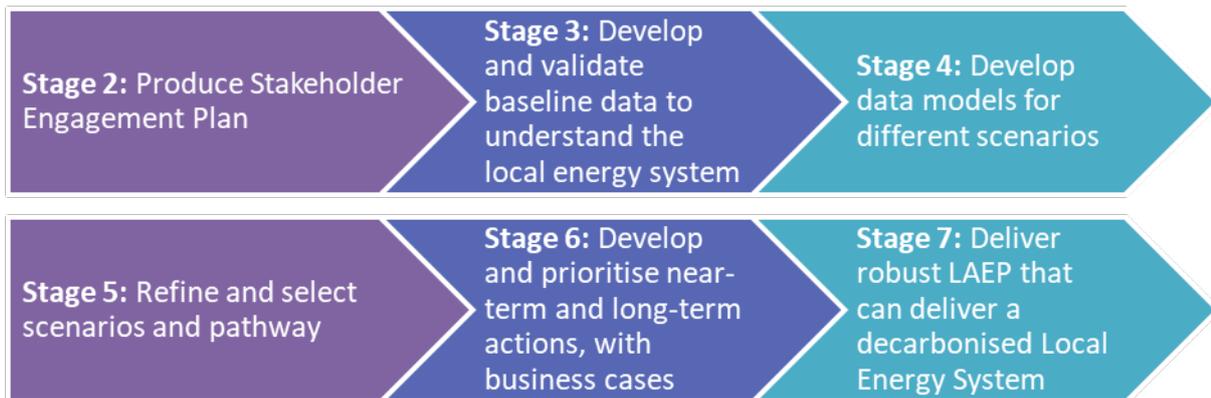
Purpose:	To advise the Committee of the development of Swansea's Local Area Energy Plan.
Policy Framework:	Climate Change & Nature Recovery Strategy
Consultation:	Access to Services, Finance, Legal.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that:- 1) The Committee notes the development of Swansea's Local Area Energy Plan.
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1 Background

- 1.1 A Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) is the strategic plan, within a defined geographic area, for how the energy systems will be decarbonised. It results in a fully costed plan that identifies the change that needs to happen, detailing 'what, where, when and by whom'. The aim is to achieve Net Zero by 2050.
- 1.2 A LAEP addresses 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.
- 1.3 Welsh Government have split councils into 4 regions, to work together while producing their own plans. Swansea is part of the South West Wales region, along with Neath Port Talbot, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire.
- 1.4 Welsh Government have appointed a specialist company to work with each region, and the individual councils, to produce their LAEPs. City Science have been appointed to work with the South West Wales region.
- 1.5 These locally developed plans will feed into the regional and national energy strategies.

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- 1.6 The difficulty of developing a long-term plan is that there will always be a wide range of variables that, at the commencement of the process, will be uncertain and uncontrollable.
- 1.7 In the case of our Local Area Energy Plan, future Central & Welsh Government decisions with relation to energy – its production, supply, and deployment (industry, commercial and domestic) – will shape the path we take.
- 1.8 However, it is important not to wait for every critical decision to be made before we start preparing the plan because there will always be another decision pending.
- 1.9 To address this conundrum, City Science have followed the process below. Working with Swansea Council, and a wide range of stakeholders, they began this process in February 2023 with a view to producing a first draft of the plan in December. The final document is due to be signed off in March 2024.
(Stage 1: Preparation)



(Fig. 1)

- 1.10 The development of Swansea’s LAEP has considered a number of likely scenarios and modelled them to identify a pathway we may be able to follow to achieve our aim of Net Zero Swansea by 2050. The scenarios considered the importance that hydrogen may or may not play in the energy network, the degree of electrification that will be required and the likely engagement of the public with the proposed transition.
- 1.11 From those scenarios, a range of possible actions were identified (some of which are already being undertaken) that would be required for Swansea to achieve its plans. These were then prioritised within specific categories:
- Transport
 - Retrofit & Heat
 - Industry
 - Generation & Networks
 - Enabling Factors

- 1.12 A total of 15 priority actions have been identified. These have been further explored within a series of focus groups made up of relevant stakeholders drawn from the public, private and third sectors, and including Swansea cabinet members whose portfolios intersect with the LAEP. These focus groups have been working on the following points for each action:
- Implementation Steps
 - Short, Medium and Long Term
 - Funding
 - Governance
 - Owner
 - Champion
 - Participant
 - Risks, Dependencies and Challenges
- 1.13 A community focus group, with representation from a wide range of communities (those working in the community energy field, including those with lived experience of poverty) will have input into these agreed actions and their implementation.
- 1.14 The first draft of the LAEP will be finalised in mid-December. This will then be reviewed with the final plan to be presented to Cabinet in March 2024.

2 Implementation

- 2.1 As previously stated, many of the actions are dependent on decision making processes outside of our control. It is therefore vital that the governance arrangements for the plan and its actions remain robust.
- 2.2 To facilitate this, the South West region has received Welsh Government funding to employ a Project Manager and two Project Officers to oversee the initial implementation of the individual LAEPs and their integration into the Regional Energy Strategy.
- 2.3 These officers will be employed by Carmarthenshire Council but will work with across the region, until November 2025.
- 2.4 Each action will have its own governance arrangements and the overarching governance arrangements for implementing the LAEP will be outlined within the final plan. Governance will cascade down from the South West Wales CJC.

3 Integrated Assessment Implications

- 3.1 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 2011, 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.

3.2 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'.

3.3 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.

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

3.5 Summary of impacts identified and mitigation needed - If we move in the right direction and bring citizens along with us then all benefits could and should be very positive, e.g. reduction in fuel poverty, local food supply, improved health and well-being, reduced fire, flooding to name but a few.

- Summary of involvement - The initial survey provided very positive feedback, we will be continuing with more general engagement but will also looking to use partners to reach out to specific communities, schools, businesses etc.
- WFG considerations- To note the Well-being of Future Generations is a pivotal part of our project governance structure.
- Any risks identified - Risks are medium - financially we will need to continue to lobby WG to ensure funding is available to make such changes – e.g. decarbonisation of homes, transportation, active travel.
- Cumulative impact - A brilliant and exciting opportunity to maximise the wellbeing of future generations and equality plan principles to make for a better Swansea by 2050.

3.6 This report does not make a commitment to specific actions but is indicative of the progress made so far and the direction of travel with regard to producing a Local Area Energy Plan for Swansea.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. However, it is clear that 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.

5 Legal Implications

5.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

Background Papers: None.

Appendices: Appendix A – Swansea LAEP STC Report – IIA.
Appendix B – Overview of LAEP Development Stages.