

Chairman's Announcement

Subject	Wiltshire Energy Resilience Plan and Proposed Energy Resilience Board
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Background

Following the resolution by Council on 21 October 2014, to report on progress in engaging with public and private sector partners to determine the viability of establishing a Wiltshire Energy Resilience Board, and to recommend a way forward on this matter, a report is being taken to Cabinet on 21 April.

The council is currently developing an Energy Resilience Plan (ERP) for the county which sets out its approach to maximising energy resilience in Wiltshire. Part of the development of the plan is an engagement programme with communities and local businesses through the area boards. As of 21 April 2015, fifteen interactive presentations highlighting local achievements and the local opportunities through the development of the Energy Resilience Plan will have been given to the Area Boards. In February 2015, the draft Energy Resilience Plan and the engagement plan for external stakeholders was agreed by the Energy, Change and Opportunity (ECO) Board. It was agreed that the businesses, agencies, groups and public bodies listed in Appendix 1 provided a broad representation and geographical range for developing the Plan.

The ERP incorporates two action plans previously established by the ECO strategy (low carbon transition and renewable energy), and will cover outward-facing activities within four action areas:

- renewable and low carbon energy,
- energy efficiency,
- sustainable transport and
- affordable warmth.

The plan aims to identify and address the current opportunities and barriers to developing energy resilience within Wiltshire i.e. securing efficient, affordable and sustainable energy. For the actions identified, there is an emphasis on capturing the wider benefits of the low carbon transition for businesses and communities.

The actions defined will be short to medium term i.e. up to 3 years, and the intention is to produce a flexible plan which can be periodically reviewed and updated.

Stakeholder engagement

External stakeholder engagement was completed between February and April. This has involved gaining input from the public sector, local businesses, community energy groups and third sector organisations. The engagement meetings have provided an opportunity to capture the activity already happening in the county and enable it to be reflected in the emerging ERP.

Those stakeholders approached to contribute have been selected because of the energy intensive nature of their operations, their specialist role within the energy sector and/or role in developing sustainable energy projects. An attempt has been made to get a representative spread of businesses across the county. In total, 26 organisations were contacted; resulting in 14 meetings and a further 4 interested parties. Those who have been successfully engaged are included in Appendix 1.

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Through these conversations, consideration has been given to the priorities and challenges of the county's larger energy users and those engaged in the energy sector. Using the draft energy resilience plan as a framework, discussions have focused on capturing existing plans and best practice from the stakeholder organisations and identifying opportunities for future work and collaboration. It has also provided the opportunity to test the appetite for a cross-sector board for energy issues.

Proposal for an Energy Resilience Board

The consistent response from asking the question, "Would you be interested in being part of a Wiltshire Energy Resilience Board?" has been an enthusiasm and interest for learning from others on this topic, coupled with a concern about the number of boards already in existence.

Public sector partners have varying levels of experience in implementing energy management programmes and the benefit of sharing knowledge between organisations has been acknowledged. The council is well placed, through the experience gained with its own carbon management plan and invest to save programme, to facilitate this knowledge exchange. Some energy forums are already in existence, for example, Salisbury NHS Trust attend a specialist health sector forum for facilities managers in the south west.

Business sector stakeholders generally had well advanced energy reduction plans and had explored a number of options for reducing costs in the past. There was an interest from the sector to participate in ongoing communications about energy resilience and share best practice. Opportunities for business to business knowledge exchange in particular were welcomed; in some cases this may be extended to a mentoring role for those SME businesses without an internal resource for energy management. The sector experiences challenges around finding trusted and experienced consultants and contractors with which to progress low carbon projects.

A number of the businesses have utilised support organisations and initiatives to engage externally on energy issues e.g. West of England Carbon Challenge. There is however a time constraint which often prevents participation in these kinds of activities.

Opportunities were also identified to share the council's experience of low carbon projects with the community sector. There was also an interest from groups as to how the council can facilitate greater community energy activity at a practical and policy level. The role the council can have in this regard will be considered by the ECO board in October.

Through the discussions, it has become clear that there is a real appetite for businesses, public bodies and organisations to play their part in Wiltshire's low carbon future and engage with the ERP. There is a desire to ensure that ongoing communications will disseminate information efficiently, promote ongoing engagement and not replicate existing activities. There is an opportunity to set up a mechanism for engaging partners on the topic of Energy Resilience as part of developing the first Wiltshire Energy Resilience Plan, and partners are enthusiastic. However, due to resource implications, a standalone Board does not appear to be the preferred mechanism, and therefore existing partnerships could be used instead.

It will be proposed to Cabinet that the Wiltshire Assembly hold a meeting on the theme of Energy Resilience within the next twelve months, to bring partners together, make connections and exchange learning. As part of this meeting, partners will

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agree a light touch approach to keeping in contact, either virtually or through an annual event.

Development of the ERP

A vision and broad aims have been set and shared with stakeholders to support communication and engagement with the plan. Alongside this, the available data and research have been collated to set the current context and gain a better understanding of energy resilience in Wiltshire.

Internal stakeholders have been consulted to capture their existing work plans where relevant. The majority of work streams within the affordable warmth and sustainable transport areas will be led by the public health and sustainable transport teams respectively. Consultation with these teams will continue as the format and content of the plan is finalised.

The green economy team has been engaged in mapping out existing work streams and identifying areas for development, where significant policy drivers, barriers/opportunities and potential funding sources are known. The ERP outline is currently being refined into action plans. Considered alongside this will be low carbon innovation opportunities, which could link into the developing ESIF programme. The action plans comprising the ERP will provide a description of each measure/project, timescale, ownership, identified resources and measures of success or milestones.

Timescales

Activity	By when?
Complete stakeholder engagement	end of April
Action plans drafted	end of April
Supporting content drafted	end of May
Consultation on draft	end of July
Document amended in light of consultation	end of September
Adoption by ECO Board	October

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Appendix 1: Partners consulted February-April 2015

Public sector:

- Salisbury NHS foundation Trust
- Wiltshire Police (PCC)

Private sector:

- Dyson Ltd (Malmesbury)
- IXYS (Chippenham)
- Wavin Ltd (Chippenham)
- Green Square housing (Chippenham)
- Good Energy Ltd (Chippenham)
- Apetito Ltd (Trowbridge)
- Aster Housing (Devizes)
- Chemring countermeasures (nr Amesbury)
- Dstl (Porton Down)
- Nicholas & Harris (Salisbury) tba
- SSE

Community sector:

- Kennet Community Energy
- Wiltshire Community Land Trust