

Meeting: Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board

Date: 17 November 2022



National Grid Capacity

Purpose of report

For information

Summary

The Board have been keen to explore further how councils can support the development of local electricity grid capacity to drive economic growth and decarbonisation, building relationships with Distribution Network Operators and other crucial partners.

At this meeting you will hear from and question Paul Jewell, System Development Manager at [National Grid](#), the energy company responsible, for amongst other things, the distribution network previously known as Western Power Distribution.

Recommendation

That the Board consider the National Grid presentation and explore how we can work together and with other critical partners to support the future grid to enable local growth and decarbonisation.

Contact details

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National Grid Capacity



Background

1. The LGA has recently [submitted evidence](#) to the Governments Review of Net Zero policy, [responded](#) to the Review of Electricity Market Arrangements Consultation and [responded to](#) the Ofgem call for input into future local energy institutions and governance. Within these submissions the LGA stress the importance of councils, in the transition to net zero, as whole place leaders responsible for housing, planning, transport and economic growth. The LGA is also leading a project working with the Energy Systems Catapult on establishing a deliverable plan for decarbonising heat and buildings by 2050.
2. Accelerating the transition to net zero and energy independence by electrifying heat and transport and increasing renewable energy generation brings with it significant opportunities and challenge. As well as reforming the Electricity Market Arrangements the UK also needs significant investment in a planned expansion of the electricity distribution grid. The enormity of the transition and the multitude of interventions required understandably interests local government as place shapers. Some councils in England are already experiencing development delays due to local electricity grid capacity and as more vehicles turn to electric and more homes install heat pumps, the demands will only increase.
3. Councils need to play a pivotal role in effective energy system planning and operation at the sub national level. Councils, as planning authorities, shape place through the Local Plan making process and through location specific masterplans. These plan making processes shape future land use and with that comes future energy demand. Councils will also play a leading role in retrofitting properties and enabling the delivery of renewable technologies in homes and buildings.
4. Many councils are now looking to develop Local Area Energy Plans and are considering how best to shape places given the likely largescale shift to the electrification of buildings and transport. Councils have been working with Energy Systems Catapult on the development of Guidance on Creating Local Area Energy Plans to ensure plans are deliverable and meet Ofgem's regulatory standards. Councils, as community leaders, can be positive and influential partners when taking this agenda forward.
5. However, many councils do not have the resources and technical skills required for detailed energy planning and therefore a far more joined up partnership approach to delivery needs to be considered. One option would be for Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) and Future Systems Operators (FSOs) to place technically competent resources in councils to work with environment policy and planning teams to upskill the authorities and provide a communication link between the bodies.
6. As the nation moves towards an increasingly electrified and decentralised energy system, local energy generation, energy storage and local area energy planning will

become increasingly important in the energy management system, with councils taking a more prominent role both in strategic and spatial energy planning.

7. The National Grid is creaking and at capacity in many places around the country, blocking local authority ability to deliver economic development, housing, and net zero targets. At this meeting you will be able to hear from and question Paul Jewell, System Development Manager at [National Grid](#), the energy company responsible, for amongst other things, the distribution network previously known as Western Power Distribution.

Implications for Wales

8. Energy and climate change are devolved functions and therefore there are no implications for Welsh local authorities.

Financial Implications

9. There are no immediate financial implications for the LGA

Equalities implications

10. Access to an affordable and reliable energy supply is a basic human need and where energy supply is not affordable, reliable, or fit for purpose it can have significant equalities issues.
11. The LGA will continue to consider EDI in its environment programme and particularly in relation to energy and climate change matters where impacts can be greater for some communities.

Next steps

12. That the board note this item and provide comments on specific issues and officers will ensure they are taken forward in the work programme