

Local Authority LAEP Engagement

Spring/Summer 2020

Objective

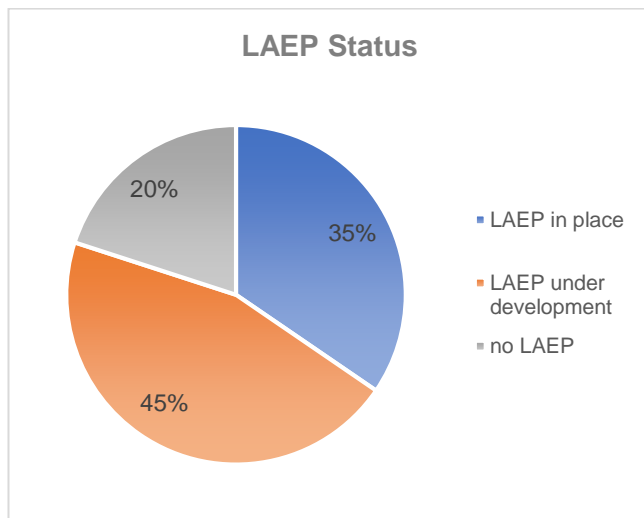
WPD invited all 130 Local Authority(LA) stakeholders covered by the WPD area to participate in a meeting with them and offer feedback that they might work together to build a joined-up energy plan and work towards delivering Net Zero Carbon emissions targets.

WPD sought the following data from the LAs:

- General data based around a local energy strategy, declaration of a climate emergency and setting a target date to reach net zero.
- Availability and comparison of data sets.
- Technology projections for EVs, heat pumps, new industrial, commercial and domestic developments, generation including solar, wind and battery storage.

Feedback

Through this process, WPD have successfully received some level of DFES Engagement Feedback response from all 130 LAs.



Generally the feedback responses were useful, but the quality and quantity was variable. This wasn't necessarily aligned to the size of the city or town, but the size of a LA's ambition. Almost universally, this engagement was welcomed by LAs and there was strong feedback that LAs should be able to liaise with WPD at an earlier stage of their planning cycles.

Recommendation: WPD to publish the timetable for engagement touch points through the DFES cycle.

Some LAs had very specific data in comparable units to DFES, some had very detailed documentation on strategies and others had very sparse data. Local

Authorities who demonstrate significant mobilisation towards Net Zero through high quality LAEPs, included Nottingham City Council, Devon County Council, and Rhondda Cynon Taf District Council. Many of the LAs who are developing their LAEPs are continuing to have strong engagement with WPD and we welcome this to continue through our 'Net Zero Surgery' route, which enables bespoke access for relevant stakeholders to WPD's local planning teams. The LEPs we engaged with during this process consistently had high quality data and plans, with South East Midlands LEP edging slightly ahead of the pack.

Recommendation: WPD to promote Net Zero surgeries through stakeholder lists and through LEPs.

Recommendation: Feed the confidence of Net Zero data and delivery plans back into WPD to form the ED2 Best View.

Through this process, our expectation from the feedback was that we would be able get hold of specific comparable data to WPD DFES projections from the LAs and use this to inform our best view. What we found out was that whilst some LAs did have that data, the vast majority were not using the same data points as KPIs.

Recommendation: WPD to have a dialogue with Ofgem and other DNOs on standardisation of Net Zero metrics across the industry.

The LA projections received for technology i.e. EVs, heat pumps, industrial, commercial & C, domestic new developments and generation were in many cases either non-specific or the LAs were not in a position to confirm whether or not they agreed with WPD projections at this time.

Where some of the LAs don't have their own comparable data, they commented that WPD's data is helpful for them to base their expectations on. Many of the stakeholders expressed a desire that additional funding is required from central government for EV infrastructure, installation of heat pumps and all types of generation. Examples of detailed projections were received from two LEPs - South East Midlands LEP and Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire LEP.

The majority of data received for EVs and heat pumps related to council owned fleets or buildings with little data offered for privately owned new industrial, commercial or domestic developments. In general terms, the LAs either agreed with WPD DFES projections or offered very little in the way of feedback/projections of their own.

There were a total of nine LAs who challenged WPD projections on domestic housing. All nine LAs including for instance Bath & NE Somerset and East Lyndsey DC stated that their projections were higher than those of WPD.

Recommendation: This information will be fed back to the DFES process to better inform subsequent DFES publications.

Recommendation: WPD to work with Ofgem to develop mechanisms that could guarantee ring-fenced funding for additional capacity for connections at specific locations.

Few of the LAs have a specific organisational structure in place for delivering energy policy/decarbonisation. Most of their expertise in these fields are dissipated within existing structures. Examples of LAs that do have a specific organisational structure in place for energy/decarbonisation include Telford & Wrekin and Cornwall County Council.

Recommendation: LEPs help identify portfolio holders with responsibilities to deliver Net Zero within LAs across their regions.

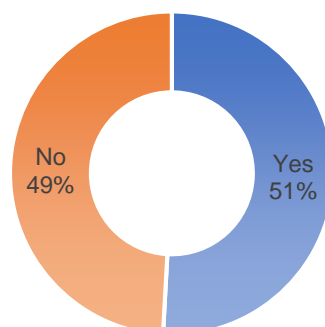
The majority of LAs suggested that there are other Stakeholders who WPD should be engaging with going forward. For example Powys County Council suggested the following Stakeholders:

- Members of Public Service Board.
- Brecon Beacons National Park.
- Growing Mid Wales Partnership
- One Powys Local Action Group
- Welsh Government Energy Service

Recommendation: Use this information to further develop WPD's Net Zero stakeholder list.

According to the feedback received to date WPD's Energy Data Hub (EDH) has been accessed by approximately half of the LAs.

Stakeholders who have used EDH



The EDH has become a useful tool for the LAs to access all kinds of data and information in one location. The WPD mapping data sets have been widely used by the LAs where they have quick concise access to all types of data. A suggestion by some LAs was that WPD publish more of their underpinning data sets in the future.

Recommendation: Inform Net Zero stakeholders of our data and digitalisation strategy.

Although most of the LAs are anticipating a slowing down of planning activities due to Coronavirus (COVID 19) the majority remain positive that any negative impact will only be felt in the short term.

Many LAs commented that where funding hasn't been provided or is less apparent, less progress has been made towards Net Zero. Many respondents felt that funding was required to establish in-house energy structure transition.

Further Consideration

During this process, further options on the role of DNOs facilitating Net Zero were discussed. We will be considering to what extent these are taken forward and would welcome further commentary from stakeholders.

Open Recommendation: What role should WPD provide in catalysing this progress? Should we be more fundamentally supporting LAs and providing funding for analysis, or should WPD be providing more expertise to help LAs develop further? How should we take this forward?

Open Recommendation: How should WPD promote the use of energy efficiency aligned to LAEPs?

Western Power Distribution (East Midlands) plc, No2366923
Western Power Distribution (West Midlands) plc, No3600574
Western Power Distribution (South West) plc, No2366894
Western Power Distribution (South Wales) plc, No2366985
Registered in England and Wales
Registered Office: Avonbank, Feeder Road, Bristol BS2 0TB

wpdnetworkstrategy@westernpower.co.uk

