

Senedd Cymru
Pwyllgor yr Economi, Masnach a Materion Gwledig
Economi Gwyrdd
GE39
Ymateb gan: Cyngor Sir Ynys Môn

Welsh Parliament
Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee
Green Economy
GE39
Evidence from: Isle of Anglesey County Council





CYNGOR SIR
YNYS MÔN
ISLE OF ANGLESEY
COUNTY COUNCIL

DYLAN J. WILLIAMS BA (Hons), MSc, MA, M.R.T.P.I.
Prif Weithredwr
Chief Executive

CYNGOR SIR YNYS MÔN
ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL
Swyddfa'r Sir
LLANGEFNI
Ynys Môn - Anglesey
LL77 7TW

Gofynnwch am - Please ask for:

☎ [REDACTED]

E-Bost-E-mail: [REDACTED]

Ein Cyf - Our Ref.
Eich Cyf - Your Ref.

07 June, 2024

The Council welcomes the opportunity to respond to the call for written evidence by the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee to its inquiry into the Green Economy.

The Council considers that it is uniquely placed to provide evidence to this inquiry. It has a strong commitment to promoting, supporting and facilitating the green economy on Ynys Môn, in particular through its Energy Island Programme.

The green economy has been identified as being critical to improving the long-term prosperity and well-being of the Island's communities.

A number of strategies have also been implemented to ensure the opportunities arising from the green economy can be capitalised upon to maximise local benefits.

The 2023 -2028 Council Plan¹ commits us to '*increasing and encouraging the development of low carbon projects and to work with all key stakeholders to influence new energy developments and capitalise on opportunities to invest in low carbon energy as well as supporting sustainable and green opportunities in our communities*'.

Alongside this, the Council's 'Towards Net Zero Plan' (2022-2025) provides a coordinated response to climate change whilst promoting a cultural shift to ensure that greenhouse gas emissions are minimised as far as possible and an endeavour to ensure that wider strategic energy investments will generate local employment, as well as economic and community benefits.

The Energy Island Programme and the Ynys Mon Freeport status are both significant interventions, to secure transformational low carbon socio-economic opportunities for the Island and the North Wales region. Both are aligned with UK Government and Welsh Government economic development and climate change policies, focussing on delivery, and creating global and regional benefits.

Under its Energy Island Programme, the development portfolio is wide ranging and includes tidal, hydrogen, solar, onshore and offshore wind, batter storage and potential a new nuclear development at the Wylfa site (further details in relation to these projects is provided in our response to Q2).

¹ [Council Plan 2023 to 2028 \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales/council-plan-2023-to-2028)

The Council is confident that the Freeport status, a joint bid between Stena Line and the Council, through its anticipated economic facilitations and regulatory easements, will create a business environment that is appealing for potential investors and businesses within the low carbon energy sector.

We hope that our evidence demonstrates the scale and scope of the opportunities and challenges that the green economy provides to Ynys Môn.

Please do not hesitate to contact if can provide any further information or clarity.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dylan J. Williams', with a stylized flourish at the end.

DYLAN J. WILLIAMS
Prif Weithredwr
Chief Executive

OFFICIAL



**The Welsh Parliament
Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee**

Isle of Anglesey County Council's Written Evidence

OFFICIAL

June 2024

Q1. The local authority's ambitions for the transition to a greener economy, and the actions it would like the Welsh and UK governments to prioritise in progressing this.

1. The Isle of Anglesey County Council in its Council Plan 2023 – 2028¹ clearly sets out its ambitions to transition to a greener economy and a Net Zero Council by 2030. The plan commits to “increasing and encouraging the development of low carbon projects and to work with all key stakeholders to influence new energy developments and capitalise on opportunities to invest in low carbon energy as well as supporting sustainable and green opportunities in our communities’.
2. Alongside this, the Councils’ Towards Net Zero Plan 2022-2025² provides a coordinated Council response to climate change whilst promoting a cultural shift to ensure that greenhouse gas emissions are minimised as far as possible and an endeavour to ensure that wider strategic energy investments will generate local employment, as well as economic and community benefits.
3. The Energy Island Programme and the recent Ynys Mon Freeport status³, are both efforts progressed by the Council to secure transformational low carbon socio-economic opportunities for the Island and the North Wales region. Both are aligned with UK Government and Welsh Government economic development and climate change policies, focussing on delivery, and creating global and regional benefits.
4. Under its Energy Island Programme, the development portfolio is wide ranging and includes tidal, hydrogen, solar, onshore and offshore wind, batter storage and potential a new nuclear development at the Wylfa site (further details in relation to these projects is provided in Q2).
5. The Council is confident that the Freeport status, a joint bid between Stena Line and the Council, through its anticipated economic facilitations and regulatory easements, will create a business environment that is appealing for potential investors and businesses within the energy sector.
6. As part of the Outline Business Case for the Freeport, the supporting information has demonstrated that the opportunity could lead to :
 - a) Increasing the volume of trade through the Port of Holyhead (Britain’s second largest roll on/roll off port) and revitalising the “GB Landbridge” – connecting the island of Ireland to mainland Europe; and
 - b) Attracting regional, national and global investment into the Freeport’s key tax and custom sites, in particular from the low carbon energy sector, aligning with the existing County Council Energy Island Programme.
7. Under both ambitions, the Council is engaging with a range of developers and key stakeholders to ensure that projects are developed in a manner that secure long term and worthwhile socio-economic benefits for the Island and the wider North Wales region.

¹ [Council Plan 2023 to 2028 \(gov.wales\)](https://www.gov.wales/council-plan-2023-to-2028)

² [Climate change \(gov.wales\)](https://www.gov.wales/climate-change)

³ [Home-E – Anglesey Freeport](https://www.gov.wales/home-e-anglesey-freeport)

8. The Council confirms that it adopts the proximity principle in its approach to major projects. This ensures that focus in relation to securing maximum local benefits as well as securing mitigation to minimise impact of developments is focused on those communities located nearest to the development.

9. In relation to Welsh and UK Governments, the Council confirms that it wishes both Governments to prioritise the following to secure the greatest benefits as we transition to a green economy.
 - a) To make it a requirement for green projects to secure a percentage of local job and supply chain opportunities and to secure this as part of the planning process. This is to ensure that those communities hosting energy developments secure the greatest benefits.
 - b) For both governments to be clear, consistent, and aligned in relation to its green vision and ambitions to give developers confidence to invest in Wales.
 - c) The green economy is a sector where skills can be transferred between projects and therefore it is crucial that there is clarity around the timescale of projects, in particular where our young people are engaged in apprenticeship schemes and need sight of a clear career pathway and progression.
 - d) Ensuring that there is enough information available in relation to careers, career pathways and job profiles within the green economic sector to attract the interest of our young people
 - e) Ensuring that the provision of courses and apprenticeship frameworks in Wales that align with to priority occupations and work with education providers to ensure that there is alignment in the training provision to deliver these
 - f) Ensure that Local Authorities are adequately resourced to engage with major projects. This includes in providing pre-application advice to influence the project design and also to fully participate in the examination process and the process of discharging conditions.
 - g) That there is a consistent approach from Government in relation to the requirement for major energy projects to provide community benefit and local ownership in order to acknowledge that local communities are hosting major projects.
 - h) Consider how planning legislation and guidance can be strengthened to place greater prominence and emphasis on 'cumulative impacts' of developments within a spatial area (such as Anglesey).
 - i) To take a strategic and holistic approach in relation to grid infrastructure requirements.
 - j) To advocate and facilitate integrated strategic planning to ensure potential developers, regulators, and governments collaborate to ensure there are positive legacies to areas such as Anglesey from the plethora of potential strategic infrastructure investments (for example, the 3rd Menai crossing).

Q2. The latest position in relation to the various green economy projects on Ynys Mon, and any priority areas where they would like the WG/UKG to take action in relation to specific projects.

1. As identified above, through both its Energy Island Programme and recent designation of the Ynys Mon Freeport status there are a wide range of green economy projects happening on the Island which are all at a different stage in terms of their development and delivery. A summary of these projects is provided below;



Datblygiadau Ynys Ynni / Energy Island Developments



Mai / May 2024

2. In addition to the matters identified in our response to Q1 the following additional priority areas are identified by the Council where the WG/UKG should take action in relation to the projects identified.
 - a) Looking at the electricity distribution capacity and infrastructure in a strategic manner
 - b) To ensure a policy framework that any requires project to secure local benefits including jobs, skills, supply chain as well as a form of community benefit
 - c) To look at the cumulative impacts of projects, in particular in relation to solar farms and their proposed cumulative impact with respect to landscape and visual impact, impact on the agricultural sector etc. This might need new legislation and/ or greater prominence in documents such as Planning Policy Wales
 - d) For UK Government at the earliest convenience to confirm how and when a development at Wylfa forms part of its nuclear ambitions. Clarity and certainty is required so that the Council can plan at a strategic level and that engagement can take place directly with the developer in order to ensure early awareness of the sense of place and to confirm the skills and supply chains requirements of a project. This will ensure that early interventions can take place to secure that maximum local opportunities are secured in relation use of both local skills and supply chain.
 - e) Support the investment in Holyhead Port to ensure that it can capitalise upon the opportunity presented by the green energy sector and be able to increase the ports capacity and capability to support the sector

Q3. Information on local work being undertaken to develop a skilled workforce for the transition to a greener economy, and to support the development of a local supply chain.

1. With respect to developing a skilled workforce for the transition to a greener economy, this work is led by the North Wales Regional Skill Partnership⁴ in which the Council plays an active role.
2. The North Wales Regional Skills Partnership is one of four partnerships across Wales, bringing together employers, skills providers and key local stakeholders to better understand employer skills needs at a local and regional level. It drives the transformative power of training and upskilling of new and existing staff to drive business growth. Working with, and alongside, employers it forge a path which aligns provision seamlessly with business needs. Its role also includes producing and analysing North Wales Labour Market Intelligence - reporting our findings to Welsh Government to advise on skills provision based on employer-led insights.
3. The contract schedule from Welsh Government contains requirements for the RSP to focus on key policy areas including Net Zero skills, The Skills and Employment Plan 2023-2025 recognises low carbon skills as being one of the region's principal skills gaps which need addressing with 43% of respondents in its Employer Skills Survey anticipating some new job roles and/or skills within their organisation over the next three years to be considered as 'green jobs' and aligned to Net Zero.

⁴ [Home - North Wales Economic Observatory \(rspnorth.wales\)](https://rspnorth.wales)

Q4. How the local authority is working with partners, for example those who are giving evidence to us, to deliver projects.

1. The Local Authority is working proactively and closely with its partners including those that are giving evidence to influence development proposals on the Island to ensure that the Council can support such projects on the basis that they are a sustainable for of development, with impacts removed or minimized and the local social and economic opportunities maximized and secured. The approach is driven by the four Council core values – respect, collaboration, honesty, and championing the Council and the Island.
2. Through the provision of Planning Performance Agreements (PPA) between the Council and developers we can secure the capacity and resource that we require to engage with major projects throughout their phases. This allows for us to identify potential impacts and benefits early and to secure measures to mitigate the impacts and for local social and economic benefits to be maximized in line with the application of the proximity principle.
3. Throughout our engagement with developers, we also encourage early and meaningful engagement with the local communities likely to be directly impacted and key stakeholders to secure local benefits including employment, skills and supply chain opportunities.
4. As part of the Energy Island Forum a quarterly Energy Island Forum takes place where approximately 70 partners and stakeholders from all sectors are invited. The meeting allows for updates to be provided directly from both Governments (including Great British Nuclear), from the Council and from the developers themselves. The Council considers the Forum to be an effective means of engaging, updating, and for opportunities, barriers and risks associated with projects to be discussed in an open forum.
5. Membership of the Forum is wide ranging and includes elected members, parliamentary representation, officers from both Governments including DESNZ, Unions, North Wales Authorities representation, Ambition North Wales, local education providers including Grwp Llandrillo Menai and Bangor University, Menter Mon, M-sparc, Natural Resources Wales as well as all the developers which the programme is engaging with.
6. Anglesey Freeport is a powerful partnership between the Isle of Anglesey County Council (IACC) and Stena Line – one which spans nearly three decades. As the Freeport developed, it is anticipated the partnership will broaden to include other key land owners as well as local organisations such as Bangor University, Grep Llandrillo Menai, M-Sparc and others who can assist and promote the development of local skill, innovation and the development of local supply chains to service and support businesses coming to designated Freeport sites.
7. As Anglesey Freeport proposals now move towards development of the Full Business Case, partners will work together to ensure that the Net Zero and Low Carbon expectations of Government are delivered in full. These include:

Net Zero

- a) A high-level draft decarbonisation plan which will be developed fully at FBC stage.
- b) The relationship between the Freeport activity and just transition to net zero.
- c) How the Freeport aligns with relevant local or national carbon policies and strategies, such as accordance with a local authority net zero target date and the principles described in the Net Zero Wales Plan (drawing links to other relevant sections of the OBC as appropriate, such as fair work and skills, innovation etc).

Carbon Emissions Impact Appraisal

- a) The whole life Carbon Emissions Impact associated with the option, including embodied carbon from construction, has been estimated in tonnes CO₂e over the economic appraisal period
- b) The Carbon Emissions Impact has been assigned an economic value using the BEIS carbon values (£/tonne per year, with workings appended) and included in the cost / benefit calculations
- c) Whole life carbon has been used as a differentiating factor in options appraisal