

Meeting Title

Meeting Between the Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs, the Net Zero 2035 Challenge Group and Sian Gwenllian.

Date

10 July 2024 at 10.30 – 11.15

Attendees

Huw Irranca-Davies, Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs (HID)

Sian Gwenllian, Plaid Cymru and former Cooperation Agreement Designated Member (SG)

Jane Davidson, Wales Net Zero 2035 Challenge Group Chair (JD)

Wales Net Zero 2035 Challenge Group Members:

- Stan Townsend
- Karen Morrow
- Sarah Dickins
- Eurgain Powell
- Andy Regan
- Jennifer Rudd
- Rachel Sharp
- Luke Penny

Agenda

Item	
1	Introductions
2	Pathway Advice Presentations: - Enablers; - Food; - Buildings; - Energy; - Connections; - Education;
3	Discussion

Meeting Note

Item 1 - Introductions

Brief introductions were undertaken.

Item 2 - Pathway Advice Presentations

Five-minute presentations were given to HID and SG by each of the sub-groups. Key points were:

Enablers – Silo working will inhibit progress. Blending public investments with private finance is crucial. The public sector needs to work together to common aims and a cross-party approach is required in the Senedd.

Food – A Wellbeing of Future Generations approach needs to be adopted in the food system. Long-term support and policy landscape is required for producer. The market is changing and there are big opportunities for Welsh producers.

Buildings – The Welsh Government's recently published heat strategy is a positive step in creating market certainty. Heat pump adoption is going to dominate emissions reductions with insulation as appropriate to make the heat pumps effective and cheap to run. The Welsh Government should focus on clear guidance, enabling the fuel poor to be heat pump ready, better leverage UK Government investment, coordinate skills development and whole community approaches.

Energy – The Welsh Government should accelerate existing plans, and work with the consenting regime, Ofgem and the Crown Estate to streamline decision-making and investment. Regional approaches to industrial decarbonisation are required. Enhanced community approaches to renewables are also required.

Connections – The proposals to be made will focus upon: using digital solutions to reduce avoidable transport movements; shifting transport movements to public transport and active travel; and improving the availability of solutions which allow the shift.

Education – The recommendations include the need for a National Green Skilling Scheme, sustainability champions and better preparing school-leavers for the challenges and opportunities that will emerge in the transition to the new economy.

Item 3 - Discussion

HID thanked the group for their work, which is extensive and impressive. HID commented that a balance needed to be struck. The work of the group contains proposals which are quite directive, whilst others recognised the need to explain to communities and businesses where costs and benefits will occur to build support for action. HID asked that the final report consider explaining which the proposals were assumed by the group to be essential, or rather, are the proposals a menu to select from?

JD highlighted this was a point in time and cross-party support for action over an extended period was required.

SG also thanked the group and asked that the final report consider the work which would need to follow and to what extent, the changes suggested would accelerate decarbonisation. SG also asked to what extent Trydan Gwyrdd Cymru, Ynni Cymru and Great British Energy play into the proposals.

JD responded stating that the group had not been able to model the emissions savings and this would be something the Welsh Government would need to do.

The CS closed by restating his thanks. He is looking forward to seeing the final output, which the Welsh Government will carefully consider.