Tackling the climate emergency in a post-pandemic era

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NFLA – at the heart of climate policy

- NFLA has advocated low carbon local energy since the early 1990s
- Look at national / international LA low carbon best practice
- A large suite of reports on decentralized energy
- Calls for more powers and central resource to Councils
- Also advocates Councils to look and follow best practice
- Renewables, battery storage, smart energy, local energy and energy efficiency – our energy policy
- Recent reports Green recovery, 100% renewables and White Paper reports
- New report on LA climate emergency plans in a post-pandemic era
Green recovery – build back better

- Around the world $12tn committed to recover from the pandemic - Bloomberg 0.2% of it for low carbon work
- Strong green stimulus could help net zero plans
- A ‘green recovery’ could deliver new jobs, empower citizens, improve public health & drive innovation
- Local & Combined Authorities are critical to provide a local lead to such positive policies
- LA’s need to develop partnerships with energy networks
Lack of LA powers being seen as a real barrier to creating transition

Even UK Energy White Paper acknowledges this!

Polly Billington, UK 100 – Councils cannot reach net zero without more local devolution of powers

Pandemic has also decimated LA budgets

Green Alliance report recommends new framework –
- agreed methodology on emissions reporting
- single contact in central govt for LA decarbonisation
- strategic approach to gaps and national green jobs strategy
- stable funding and reforms to planning for sustainable needs
Moving on to the hard bits of decarbonisation

- Progress on decarbonising electricity very successful – large amount of renewables on grid
- Decarbonising heating & transport much harder
- Local knowledge essential – local transport patterns, housing stock, pockets of fuel poverty
- Next phase of decarbonisation needs to be consumer and local-friendly
- It will have to be FAIR
- It will need the devolving of power within it
Why Councils are good for green recovery

- More than 10,000 Councils have committed to climate action
- 60% of over 1,000 European cities are on track to meet climate targets
- Over 320 UK & Irish Councils have climate emergency resolution plans
- All target net zero between 2035 - 2050
Devolving power

- Market reform – e.g. removing VAT from energy saving equipment, incentivise carbon reduction
- Enable local government to deliver & support heat decarbonisation – give residents a share
- Ask your residents what they want – citizens assemblies – discussing with them how to live
- Reports from such bodies have been far more radical than expected
- Give local government a local target as part of real devolution
Over 75% of UK & Irish local government made them
Need to include Local Area Energy Plans
CCC report welcome this and recommends LAs to:
- develop energy efficiency & heat strategy and act in 2020s
- update carbon reduction plans for council estate
- talk and engage with residents on these matters
- identify areas for low carbon heat clusters
- deal with 5% of homes off gas grid as such heating will be phased out
- support smart meter roll out
- implement planning policies on new build that encourage net zero
CCC LA report and transport

- Promote walking, cycling and public transport plans
- LAs need a good Local Walking & Cycling Plan
- Work with bus companies on low carbon buses with fair fares structure
- Promote EV uptake
- Use traffic powers to reduce HGV emissions
- Work with other LAs and network providers on local area energy plans that quantify transport / heat needs
Local Area Energy Plans (LAEP)

- LAEP should be used to build a map of the current energy system, model future transition pathways, work with local stakeholders and identify priority projects
- See report from Energy Systems Catapult
- Combine it with transport, food and biodiversity plans can create a local target to the national Net Zero plan
Examples of Community-led LAEPs

- Local Energy Scotland case studies in Highlands and Islands outlines community involvement
- Energy Systems Catapult pilots in Bridgend, Bury and Newcastle – created planning network for LA, energy providers & local stakeholders
- Fife Council’s Burntisland Community Energy Masterplan to reduce carbon footprint by 80%
- Bristol City LEAP procuring funds for a £875m investment in low carbon energy improvements
Support from central government

- Welsh Government has net zero public sector target by 2030
- All Welsh Councils need Net Zero Action Plans in place by March 2021
- Technical, commercial and financial support being offered as part of this from WG
- Net Zero Reporting Guide
- WLGA providing training for good practice
- 4 regional strategies developed with further work with LAs planned
Group of 24 Mayors and local leaders set up a Resilient Recovery Taskforce

Recommended:
- Net Zero Development Bank to work with Las
- Renew grid for smart decentralised energy
- Huge retrofit programme
- Speed up low carbon transport schemes
- Expand local powers to take action through an enhanced devolution settlement
Finding the money

- In past decade LA budget has dropped by up to 38%
- CCC say decarbonisation cost £50bn a year
- Fivefold increase of funds required
- Abundance Investments – raised £100m with Las through green municipal bonds
- Bring in strategic partners to attract investment
- See LGA advice for grants, borrowing / Salix finance
- Community energy co-ops can also help and create good partnerships
Conclusions

- Devolution to local government of powers and responsibilities on climate action is urgently required
- Councils will need adequate funding to meet climate objectives
- Still ways to fund transformation via grants, borrowing and investing, and new vehicles like Municipal Bonds and energy co-ops
- Key start is a good plan worked on with partners and the local community – the people need to be brought with you!