

Item: 18a
Title: Net Zero Reporting

Gweithredu / Action required	For information
Amseru / Timing	Routine
Argymhelliad / Recommendation	Note
Risg / Risk	<p>While participation in the Net Zero scheme is voluntary, there are several risks to Llais if we do not engage with this initiative:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reputational Risk: As other public bodies in Wales commit to achieving Net Zero, Llais may be perceived as lagging behind on sustainability if we choose not to participate. This could affect our reputation among stakeholders and the public, who increasingly expect organisations to act on climate change. 2. Regulatory Risk: Although the scheme is currently voluntary, future regulations may make participation or compliance with Net Zero targets mandatory. Llais would be better positioned to adapt to any such regulatory shifts by participating early. 3. Operational Risk: Failing to track and reduce our carbon footprint could lead to inefficiencies in resource management (e.g., energy use and travel), which could result in higher operational costs over time. The delay in addressing

	<p>this may result in higher future costs and more significant organisational disruption when compliance becomes essential.</p>
Cyllid / Finance	<p>There may be some short-term financial outlays involved in adopting the Welsh Government Net Zero scheme however the long-term benefits and potential cost savings make it a financially sensible choice.</p>
Amcan Cynllun Corfforaethol / Corporate Plan Objective	<p>5. Grow and improve as an organisation.</p> <p>5.6 Create our Net Zero Aim</p>
Ecwiti, Amrywiaeth a Chynhwysiant / Equity, Diversity & Inclusion	<p>Llais's approach to Net Zero will be aligned with our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion. The transition to more sustainable practices should benefit all communities in Wales, and we will ensure that any environmental initiatives we undertake are fair and inclusive through the completion of an Integrated Impact Assessment.</p>
Cyfathrebu / Communications	<p>Please tick one of the following boxes if this activity will have an impact on:</p> <p>Internal: our people <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>External: our customers/partners/stakeholders <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>External: our organisation's reputation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
Cymeradwyaeth / Approval/Clearance	<p>Ben Eaton, Strategic Director of Organisational Strategy and Engagement</p>
Trafodaethau/ Penderfyniadau Blaenorol / Previous discussions/decisions	<p>Tîm Arwain and Audit and Risk Assurance Committee have discussed our commitment to creating a Net Zero Aim and</p>

	reporting structure and some principles that would support our Net Zero aims have already featured in updated policies.
Awdur/ Cyflwyno / Author/presenting	Ben Eaton, Strategic Director of Organisational Strategy and Engagement
Dyddiad / Date	18/09/2024
Cefndir / Background	
<p>Purpose of the Paper This paper provides the Board with an overview of Llais’s approach to the Welsh Government’s Net Zero initiative. It aims to inform the board of current developments and outline potential next steps for Llais in aligning with the ambition of achieving Net Zero carbon emissions by 2030 in the public sector and by 2050 across Wales.</p> <p>Context Welsh Government has launched a Net Zero scheme to reduce carbon emissions across the public sector, with a target for Net Zero by 2030. While participation is not mandatory for Llais, over 85 public bodies have already voluntarily signed up. Although not a legal obligation, Welsh Government Ministers strongly support the initiative, encouraging all public sector bodies to participate. In contrast, similar schemes in England are statutory.</p> <p>As a newly established organisation, this presents an opportunity for us to embed sustainability early in our establishment and supporting the broader environmental agenda.</p>	
Manylion / Detail	
<p>Key Elements of the WG Net Zero Scheme</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Reporting Requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each participating organisation must report its carbon emissions retrospectively for the previous financial year. This includes emissions associated with all services delivered by the organisation. Reporting is conducted through a form provided by the WG, with submissions required between April and September annually. Data is assessed by a third-party contractor, contributing to an all-Wales report. Each organisation also receives a 	

detailed report with trends and improvement recommendations.

2. **Support for Organisations:**

- Welsh Government offers training and guidance to help public bodies navigate the substantial reporting process.
- There is no requirement to have a formal Net Zero policy in place, though most organisations that participate develop a strategy and action plan post-assessment.

3. **Llais's Approach**

Given our current position, Llais has the flexibility to strategically plan our entry into the Net Zero initiative. Below are some key considerations for the board's awareness:

Initial Reporting:

Llais can sign up for the scheme and submit its first report for the 2024/25 period. This timeline allows us to prepare adequately.

It's worth noting that as some of our regional offices may operate within Welsh Government or other public sector buildings, emissions from these locations will be covered in Welsh Government's report, thus simplifying our reporting.

Location Strategy:

Our location strategy will play a crucial role in managing Llais's carbon footprint. If our teams are based in shared public sector spaces, our emissions will differ significantly compared to having independent offices. This is due to start development towards the end of the financial year 2024/2025.

Collaboration and Benchmarking:

We intend to collaborate with Natural Resources Wales (NRW), who have set a high standard in their Net Zero strategy, to learn from their experience and refine our approach.

Additionally, we will monitor best practices across other public sector bodies to ensure we are aligned.

4. **Next Steps and Recommendations**

Sign Up for WG Net Zero Scheme:

To signal our commitment to sustainability, it is recommended that Llais voluntarily signs up for the Welsh Government Net Zero scheme, with a view to submitting our first emissions report in 2025.

Establish Data Collection Processes:

In preparation for reporting, we will establish internal processes to gather the necessary data on emissions, focusing initially on services that directly generate a carbon footprint (e.g., office energy use, travel).

A cross-departmental working group will be set up to oversee this process, ensuring data is accurate and complete. This may require third party provider involvement.

Development of a Sustainability Strategy:

Post-reporting (Sep 2025), we will develop a comprehensive Net Zero policy, strategy, and action plan. This will be informed by the assessment of our 2024/25 emissions and will guide our journey to Net Zero by 2030.

This strategy should be aligned with Llais's broader operational and strategic goals and include actions to reduce emissions and enhance our sustainability efforts.

Explore External Expertise:

Given the technical nature of emissions reporting, we may consider engaging external consultants or utilising Welsh Government's training and support to ensure our reporting is efficient and accurate.

Conclusion

We have a unique opportunity as a new organisation to build sustainability into our operations from the ground up. By participating in the Welsh Government Net Zero scheme, we can ensure that Llais is not only compliant with emerging environmental standards but also a leader in the public sector's transition to Net Zero.

The board is invited to note the contents of this paper and provide any initial feedback on the proposed next steps.

[welsh-public-sector-net-zero-carbon-reporting-guide.pdf](#)