

Julie James AS/MS  
Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd  
Minister for Climate Change



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref NICW/23/JB/IGG  
Ein cyf/Our ref JJ/02250/23

Jenifer Baxter  
Deputy Chair  
National Infrastructure Commission for Wales

[NationalInfrastructureCommissionforWales@gov.wales](mailto:NationalInfrastructureCommissionforWales@gov.wales)

04 September 2023

Dear Jenifer,

Thank you for your letter of 2 August regarding a 4 Nations Intergovernmental Ministerial Working Group on the UK Electricity Grid.

Energy infrastructure is a complex and often emotive area and we have made the point that the current approach is not delivering at the scale or pace necessary for the climate emergency more generally and certainly not for Wales. While we welcome the motivation behind some of the recent proposals to rationalise the system for delivering grid infrastructure, we have concerns that these will not deliver the change needed in what must be a decade of action.

As you are no doubt aware in Wales, we have supported each region to develop Regional Energy Strategies (RES). These identify the scale of change needed to reach a low carbon energy system and establish regional priorities for energy. Further detail on local need is being developed through our Local Area Energy Planning (LAEP), which will identify the changes needed to the local energy system, to decarbonise heat and local transport, support strategic network planning and realise opportunities for local renewable energy production.

At a national level, our [Future Energy Grids for Wales](#) project has worked with Ofgem and the network operators to understand what energy networks Wales needs to support a net zero energy system and best serve the communities and places they support. The report provides a number of recommendations, which inform and support the Welsh Government and networks' future decision making about the gas and electricity networks in Wales.

We will use these local, regional and national insights to develop a National Energy Plan for Wales in 2024. This will provide a blueprint to how we will support coherent action at the local and the national levels. It will also provide a clear steer for what gas and electricity network operators need to deliver to support these plans.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The benefits of our approach are that, while we agree that there is a need for network decisions to be made on a whole system basis, looking across networks of different types, we are generating the evidence basis of such decisions as they are informed by locally developed and evidence-based plans.

We are doing what we can in Wales to analyse and assess what grid infrastructure we will need to deliver our future energy needs and welcome all opportunities to share best practice and discuss strategic direction and implementable solutions that will enable all nations equally to deliver on our shared climate goals.

The grid has been a subject of discussion at recent meetings of the Inter-Ministerial group on Net Zero, Energy and Climate Change. However, the breadth of topic covered by this group is such that I would be supportive of an Interministerial group on this subject and happy to discuss how such a group might operate. Can I please ask you to liaise with my officials who will be able to find a convenient date.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julie James". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Julie James AS/MS**

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