

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

[Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd, yr Amgylchedd a Seilwaith](#) | [Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee](#)

[Datgarboneiddio'r sector cyhoeddus](#) | [Decarbonising the public sector](#)

Ymateb gan ColegauCymru | Evidence from CollegesWales

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Building on Audit Wales' work, the Committee would welcome your views on any or all of the following:

### 1. What are your views on the role of the Welsh Government in supporting public bodies to deliver on the five 'calls for action' identified in the Audit Wales' report?

The target for public sector organisations to reach Net Zero Carbon by 2030 is challenging but colleges are committed to working towards this target. However, organisations cannot deliver on these five action points without the long term support and investment by Welsh Government. We would suggest that further timescales are embedded within the calls for action in order to provide effective, measurable actions.

Achieving Net Zero Carbon cuts across many disciplines within the education sector from curriculum, estate management and capital projects, recycling, waste management to travel and procurement, and colleges welcome further collaboration with Welsh Government and other stakeholders.

### 2. What are your views on the Welsh Government's Net zero carbon status by 2030: A route map for decarbonisation across the Welsh public sector as a means of providing strategic direction to public bodies?

The sector is supportive of the plan in principle; it is ambitious and provides a positive steer for the way forward. The breakdown of the route map into time segments provides a useful guide to monitor organisational progress. However, it is considered that it may be too ambitious given all of the factors that contribute to Net-Zero. A further key consideration has to be the buy in from all companies / individuals who support public sector organisations in their delivery of services, as organisations cannot do this alone.

Some colleges requested further guidance, examples and support on how to achieve the milestones set out in the route map. There needs to be greater emphasis on the FE sector's influence on young people by embedding Net Zero into the curriculum at all levels.

Some colleges suggested there is a need to be realistic about what can be achieved within the timeframe, particularly with increasing energy costs, new build requirements and how best to retrofit existing facilities.

Although the document provides a high-level overview of the strategy, we would like to see more structure around developing operational plans and how to achieve decarbonisation. It is felt that there is little in terms of advice and/or guidance.

### 3. What are your views on the progress made by public bodies in the priority areas for action set out in the route map - Sustainable procurement; Net zero buildings; Mobility and transport, and Land use:

Many colleges are encouraged to see positive progress, but suggest it would be useful to see the current position and progress made by the range of public bodies since 2019. Consistent formats for data presentation would also be helpful for the sector to compare progress.

One college noted that Carbon Net Zero by 2030 is extremely costly and progress is affected by the organisation's other financial priorities. They also noted that some organisations could be looking at offsetting their carbon emissions, and some technologies are in early stages of development.

ColegauCymru is keen to note that there is a variety of work going on across Wales's further education sector in relation to 'green skills'. Not all of this is badged as 'Net Zero' but all will contribute to, or will have the potential to, contribute to this important agenda.

The role of the FE sector more widely is to provide skills and training, working with both employers and individuals. However, there should be potential to go beyond this and help shape understanding of what is meant by Net Zero and green jobs/the green economy, and work with employers and other stakeholders to ensure a shared understanding..

### 4. What are your views on the support provided by the Welsh Government to deliver progress in the priority areas, including any gaps?

Welsh Government has agreed to support a new position within ColegauCymru, to co-ordinate, facilitate and map current green skills provision which will help lay the foundations for an ambitious, but achievable sector response to Net Zero. This work is vital to coordinating the FE sector response to the Net Zero agenda, identifying current provision, assessing the short, medium and long-term future needs and opportunities, and preparing the sector's approach. ColegauCymru is keen to keep the Committee updated with progress.

Colleges welcome funding provided by Welsh Government to support Net Zero buildings, however, support must be ongoing as the Net

Zero agenda becomes a permanent fixture within college budgets.

One college commented that land use and transport and mobility are currently gaps that would present opportunities for development by the Welsh Government in the near future.

There needs to be more done with collaborative working and joint feasibility studies across similar organisations so best practice and lessons learnt are identified at an early stage.

One college noted that there is a significant challenge for Welsh Government in delivering Net Zero public transport solutions to rural and semi-rural areas in Wales.

The new curriculum will provide opportunities to embed the net zero and green skills agenda from a young age.

## 5. Do you have any other points you wish to raise within the scope of this inquiry?

One college noted that the public sector reporting guidelines have been extremely beneficial in improving and standardising carbon emission reporting. However, as part of the public sector reporting guidelines there is no training available. There should be standardised training arranged for reporting and monitoring of carbon emissions data, made available to organisations both in, and working with, the public sector.

Another college noted that many factors are required when thinking about decarbonisation, including partnership and engagement, improving skills, increase carbon literacy development for staff, and possible ring fencing of finances to support strategic targets. However, these are all dependent on policy, funding and industry support.

There is also much to learn from other countries, both within the UK and further afield, and such opportunities should continue to be explored and collaboration encouraged.

The role of language, in both provision and workplaces, is important if we are to make progress towards the Cymraeg 2050 target of a million Welsh speakers.