

## ROCP 33, Electric Vehicle Association (EVA) Cymru

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Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

### **Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd, yr Amgylchedd a Seilwaith | Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee**

Adolygiad o flaenoriaethau'r Pwyllgor ar gyfer y Chwedd Senedd | Review of the Committee's priorities for the Sixth Senedd

Ymateb gan Cymdeithas Cerbydau Trydan Cymru | Evidence from Electric Vehicle Association (EVA) Cymru

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### **Your views**

#### **1. What are your views on the Committee's three strategic priorities: Climate Change; Sustainable Communities; and Protecting and enhancing the natural environment?**

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We support the three strategic priorities, acknowledging as the Committee does the interlinkages between them.

#### **2. To what extent are the Committee's three strategic priorities still relevant, reflecting on social, economic and environmental developments since they were set at the start of the Sixth Senedd?**

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We agree that the three strategic priorities remain relevant although as noted in our response to (1), there are many linkages between the three priority headings. The transition to Electric Vehicles, for example, being clearly central to the first two (Climate Change, Sustainable Communities) and a systemic lever for supporting the third (Protecting and enhancing the natural environment).

#### **3. What are your view on the Committee's detailed priorities/outline programme of work for Years 3 to 5 of the Sixth Senedd (set out in its report, Priorities for the Sixth Senedd?)**

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The committee's remit is acknowledged as being broad, reflecting the scale of the challenges presented by Climate Change and we feel that it is important that the committee continues to follow key areas of work (including Electric Vehicle Charging) throughout the Senedd term as well as maintaining scrutiny across the whole of the committee's remit.

In 2023, the committee undertook scrutiny of the Welsh Government's progress

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against the EV Charging Infrastructure Strategy and Action Plan. In the subsequent report, and as highlighted by many respondents including EVA Cymru, it was made clear that progress in delivering the action plan was not in line with either Welsh Government's own timetable or the rapid increase in the Electrification of transport.

Of the 21 recommendations made by the committee, Welsh Government accepted 17 and rejected 4. This included accepting the need to review the action plan, as recommended by the committee (Recommendation 6), however the Welsh Government rejected Recommendation 7 (a firm timeline) and has not committed to a timeline for reviewing the Action Plan and publishing the outcomes of this review. We feel that on this basis the work of the committee is vital in ensuring that the Action Plan remains fit for purpose.

Since that report there has been further progress in Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure in Wales, and we are aware of significant plans for investment by Local Authorities, Transport for Wales, and the Private sector (often in collaboration). However we continue to see Wales lagging behind the wider-UK in terms of the number of essential higher-capacity, higher-density, charging 'hubs' and a lack of coherency in plans for on-street charging across Wales (for both commercial and personal vehicles), and for the decarbonisation of commercial vehicles and freight.

We would emphasise that it is not the expectation of most EV Drivers that Welsh Government or Transport for Wales will be responsible for the delivery of the vast majority of this infrastructure, and a market-led approach to EV infrastructure deployment is seen as both desirable and essential. Rather, we suggest that scrutiny would best focus on their progress in marshalling, co-ordinating, and motivating the market, infrastructure providers, local authorities, Corporate Joint Committees, and other stakeholders towards the aims of the strategy.

In addition to the committee's formal monitoring of the outcomes of this report, we would also encourage the committee to give time during the remainder of the Senedd term to look holistically at the electrification of transport in Wales to assure itself that the policies and interventions in place are coherent and aligned.

In particular we would encourage the committee to consider whether Welsh Government's policies and interventions are aligned towards producing a decarbonised multi-modal transport system for all of Wales (including for commercial vehicles, taxis, electric cars, and ebikes) as well as publicly contracted

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transport and active travel. Crucially, we would ask whether Welsh Government is messaging its support for Electric Vehicles clearly enough to encourage businesses and individuals to invest in transitioning their vehicles.

We would also welcome the committee considering a cross-cutting review of the systemic barriers to electrification of both transport and energy, focused on the future of the energy system. We believe this would provide valuable insight into the barriers and opportunities surrounding electrification, situate the work of Ynni Cymru alongside large scale commercial renewable projects. and ensure that Wales can be confident that we are not held back from our decarbonisation goals by the core grid, local, and street-level infrastructure.

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#### **4. To what extent are the Committee's detailed priorities/outline programme of work still relevant, reflecting on social, economic and environmental developments since they were set at the start of the Sixth Senedd?**

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As outlined above, we feel that it is essential that the decarbonisation of transport through Electric Vehicles is given due focus during the remainder of the Senedd term. The uptake of Electric Vehicles in Wales is growing rapidly, with a 47.3% increase from Q1 2022 - Q1 2023 and the linked reduction in transport emissions makes EVs one of the key environmental opportunities of today.

Whilst we recognise the importance of the priorities identified for years 3-5 of the Senedd term, we would encourage the committee to also keep focus on rapid changes which require ongoing focus such as Electric Vehicles.

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#### **5. Are there any other matters related to the Committee's priorities/work programme/ways of working that you would like to comment on?**

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In its Priorities for the Sixth Senedd, the committee identifies the need to work strategically, with agility, and flexibly in order to cover the broad remit as well as an intent to "follow up on our work to ensure it is having the impact we expect". With this in mind we would encourage the Committee to also include progress on Electric Vehicle infrastructure, uptake, and communication as part of its regular scrutiny of Ministers, Transport for Wales, and for other public bodies in terms of both their own fleet and private vehicle usage.

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#### **6. Other information**

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No response.

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