

SP Energy Networks holding capital roundtable event

Tomorrow SP Energy Networks will convene Edinburgh councillors, public transport operators and business leaders to lay out the issues around preparing Scotland's capital city for the electric revolution ahead.

The electricity network operator – which transmits and distributes electricity across central and southern Scotland as well as Merseyside, Cheshire, North Wales and North Shropshire – is leading the way in preparing urban and rural areas for the advent of electric cars and low carbon district heating schemes.

At “Empowering Smart Cities” SP Energy Networks chief executive Frank Mitchell will lay out the challenges ahead to the electric grid which delivers the safe and secure supply of people's electricity. It is predicted that the growth in electric vehicles will accelerate, but if investment is not made in local electricity grids ahead of this growth, the Scottish Government's low carbon ambitions could grind to a halt.

The meeting follows similar events held by SP Energy Networks in Glasgow and Liverpool earlier this year.

Mr Mitchell said: “The Scottish Government has set ambitious targets for transitioning to a low carbon economy and has pledged millions for electric car chargers in people's homes, businesses and council premises with the aim of making our country cleaner and greener.

“As the electricity network operator for southern and central Scotland, we want to deliver that better future, quicker. But the stumbling block lies in our regulation. Ofgem will not allow investment in infrastructure before the consumer demand

exists. That could leave cities like Edinburgh without the resilient infrastructure it needs to meet people's demands for electric cars – in today's terms it would be like getting to the petrol station on an empty tank and finding the pump is dry.

“It is vital that energy network companies like SP Energy Networks, are able to invest in the required smart-enabled infrastructure, ahead of consumer demand, so that people can be confident that they will be able to charge their cars when they need to.

“We are keen to work with the City of Edinburgh Council and others to ensure we can meet targets on emissions and deliver that greener, cleaner future for us all – with no one being left behind.”