

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1** The purpose of this paper is to provide background information in relation to the proposed off shore wind and marine renewable development within Argyll and Bute to allow the CPP thematic groups and Local Area Community Planning Groups to give consideration to the questions that should be asked and issues that should be raised at the CPP Off shore wind renewable consultation event at the beginning of next year. This background paper should be read in conjunction with the report that went before the CPP Management Group on the 8 September.
- 1.2** Argyll and Bute has a significant renewable energy resource which if harnessed and managed correctly could offer significant economic opportunities for some of our more remote and fragile communities. The opportunities offered through manufacturing, research and development and the commercial and community application of a range of technologies including, wind, wave, tidal and biomass to exploit these renewable forms could play a significant role in securing economic development for some of our communities and businesses.
- 1.3** Whilst to date the majority of commercial renewable development has been concentrated on onshore windfarm development that focus is now shifting to other forms of renewables such as off shore wind and marine and tidal development. Recent studies have highlighted that the west coast of Argyll offer some of the best tidal resource within Scotland after the Pentland Firth. It is imperative that we ensure that our communities are in a position to take advantage of this and to realise local economic benefit from these.
- 1.4** In relation to offshore wind and marine renewable developments it is recognised that many of these developments could be described as transformational however it is also recognised that there could well be implications on public sector resources from the on shore requirements associated with these off shore wind and marine renewable developments. It was for this reason that the CPP sub group was formed to look at this issue and to bring partners in the public sector together to seek to address this issue.
- 1.5** In February 2009 the Crown Estate granting exclusivity to two

separate developers (Scottish and Southern Energy Renewables and Scottish Power Renewable) to take forward the development of three off shore wind farm wind sites in Argyll and Bute. These sites are of a significant scale with the site off Tiree (the Argyll Array) being the largest sites and could generate enough power for 300,000 and 1,000,000 households. These sites will have a 5 – 8 year project development and a 15 – 20 operational life span.

Kintyre

Location: 3km from the coastline of the Kintyre Peninsula (west of Machrihanish)

Approx area: 70 km²

Capacity: up to 378MW

Approx no. of turbines: 126 (3MW each)

Islay

Location: 13km off the Rhinns of Islay

Approx area: 93 km²

Capacity: up to 690MW

Approx no. of turbines: 138 (5MW each)

Tiree (Argyll Array)

Approx area 361.00 kmsq

Capacity: up to 1,500MW

Approx no of turbines: 200+

- 1.6** The potential economic impact of the development of these sites, in terms of construction, installation and maintenance will be significant. In addition the impact of this development on our communities could be significant. It is estimated that the Tiree development, depending on the project model adopted, could bring with it the need to provide some 100 additional homes on the island, upgraded/new infrastructure, and will impact on educational and healthcare needs on the island. There is a need to ensure that CPP partners properly plan for these requirements through the development plan process, REAP action plan and that we work closely with the Community and the developers.
- 1.7** The capital expenditure of these 3 off shore wind farm sites is estimated to be in the region of £7.7 billion, £3,000 per kW. The operational expenditure is estimated at £115 million per year, £40-50 per kW/year. Supply chain and employment opportunities to our businesses and communities could be significant.
- 1.8** Since the granting of the exclusivity awards for these three sites Marine Scotland has issued a draft Off Shore Wind Plan within Scottish Territorial Waters (STW) for consultation. This draft Plan identifies the above three sites as short term options. In addition a further four sites are identified as medium term options within the Argyll and Bute area. In addition the recent Scottish Government Saltire announcement in September also proposed a number of wave and tidal sites within Argyll and Bute which may well form

part of a future Scottish commercial wave and tidal leasing rounds by the Crown Estate. In addition we have the existing Wavegen 500kW site on Islay (Limpit) and a 10MW tidal site planned in the Sound of Islay by Scottish Power Renewables.

- 1.9** It is important to remember that there is still time to work with partners, the developers and key stakeholders in the development of these transformational projects as it is not anticipated that construction will start until 2015 at the earliest. There is therefore still an opportunity to proactively engage with the developers and to discuss the implications and influence the outcome. It was for this reason that the CPP sub group was established. In order to achieve this outcome, there is a need for co-ordinated partner action at the local and national levels hence the decision by the CPP management Committee to arrange an off shore renewable event at which the key developers and Marine Scotland, the consenting authority for these developments, will be asked along . The input of the CPP thematic groups in identifying key questions that partners would like addressed at this event is a critical element of ensuring that we get the best output from this event.

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