

RENEWABLE ENERGY UPDATE

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This paper is intended to update the group on renewables work and developments currently ongoing within MAKI / Argyll and Bute, including ongoing delivery of the Argyll and Bute Renewable Energy Action Plan.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Committee are asked to note the contents of this report.

3. DETAIL

3.1 Argyll and Bute Renewable Energy Action Plan (REAP)

- 3.11 The REAP is currently undergoing a review by lead partners Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) and Argyll and Bute Council, in close consultation with the CPP and Argyll and Bute Renewables Alliance (ABRA) members, in order to identify key priorities and provide a plan which is focused on collective outcomes. A draft updated action plan was considered by ABRA member's at the most recent meeting of the alliance, held 2nd March 2012. Following feedback from members, this will be finalised and similarly endorsed by the CPP.

3.2 Argyll and Bute Renewables Alliance (ABRA)

- 3.21 ABRA brings together key partners including Argyll and Bute Council, Highlands and Island Enterprise, Scottish Government, Marine Scotland, Scottish Power Renewables, Scottish and Southern Energy, The Crown Estate, Scottish Natural Heritage and Skills Development Scotland. The alliance facilitates a co-ordinated partnership approach to assist with ongoing implementation and development of the REAP.
- 3.22 ABRA has now held four meetings since March 2011. The first meeting of the ABRA for 2012 was held 2nd March, at the Scottish Marine Institute, Dunstaffnage, by Oban. Topics for discussion included the review of the Argyll and Bute REAP, Skills Development, Community Policy, Encouraging Business Growth Opportunities and the Tiree Onshore Scenario Mapping study.
- 3.23 Key areas of work were agreed, and will now be progressed by ARBA members:
- Partners will now review the draft REAP presented at the meeting, as detailed above.

- Following the meeting of the ABRA 28th October 2011 a skills sub group was formed to help address skills development, a key priority identified by the alliance in order to realise opportunities for sustainable economic development. The skills sub group, including the council, together with Skills Development Scotland, HIE and the industry will now look at the needs of the industry moving forward, and identify opportunities for skills and training, through a skills demand mapping exercise – in order to better understand the requirements and maximise the opportunities presented. Funding has also been secured for the development of an ‘Argyll College Engineering Facility’, providing both general engineering and specific renewables training across Argyll and Bute.
- Partners agreed to recommendations which will form a review of the existing onshore windfarm community benefit policy.
- The Tiree Onshore Scenario Mapping study draft report is now complete and will be open for a six week consultation period through 16 March – 27 April 2012. The draft report and comment forms will be available throughout this time from www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/tireeconsultation, as well as available in hard copy on Tiree.

3.3 Interactive Community Benefit Map

- 3.31 An ‘Interactive Community Benefit Map’ has been developed and is live on the Council’s Renewable Energy webpage at <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/community-windfarm-benefits>. This quantifies the community benefit funds received from operational onshore windfarm developments in Argyll and Bute by relevant community benefit area – currently totaling £161,184 as of February 2012. There will be ongoing development of this as funds are received, utilised and come on stream.

3.4 Renewables Procurement Strategy

- 3.41 Initial options appraisal work has been undertaken with regard to developing a ‘strategic approach to renewable procurement’ with regard to council properties / land. This identifies the most appropriate technologies to consider in the short term and recommends options for an approach to further develop the strategy.

3.5 ‘EU Offshore Wind and Marine Energy Seminar’

- 3.51 An ‘EU Offshore Wind and Marine Energy Seminar’ was held 2nd March 2012, at the Scottish Marine Institute, Dunstaffnage. This considered offshore wind and marine energy opportunities in the west coast highlands and islands, the related infrastructure and skills requirements, and the role of European policy and funding to maximise opportunities for sustainable economic growth. The presentations provided on the day and outputs of this seminar are available to view at <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/renewable-energy>.

For further information please contact:

Audrey Martin

Projects and Renewables Manager
01546 604180