
The Argyll and Bute Renewable Alliance – Progress Report

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1** The Renewable Energy sector has the potential to fundamentally and positively transform the economy and communities of Argyll and Bute. In order to achieve this outcome the Renewable Energy Action Plan (REAP), approved by the CPP 16th June 2010, was developed from a key action in the Argyll and Bute Community Plan 2009-2013, to facilitate a co-ordinated partnership approach to renewable development in Argyll and Bute. One of the key actions identified within the REAP to facilitate this co-ordinated approach, was the establishment of the Argyll and Bute Renewable Alliance (ABRA).
- 1.2** ABRA has now held all three meetings proposed for 2011 – the inaugural meeting 18th March and subsequently 22nd June and 28th October 2011. The next meeting of the alliance is proposed 2nd March 2012.
- 1.3** It was recognised by partners at the meeting 28th October the significant progress made by ABRA in this short period of time. Work is now underway to address the key priorities identified by the alliance, which will aim to resolve the barriers and maximise the opportunities presented by this industry for everyone involved, not least the communities within Argyll and Bute and Scotland.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1** The Management Committee note the progress of ABRA to date, including the key topics and issues identified throughout the meetings to date and the actions resultantly being progressed.

3. DETAIL

- 3.1** ABRA brings together key partners from within the public and private sector, under the auspices of Community Planning, ensuring a strategic overview and holistic approach to assist in realising the vision for the development of the renewables industry in Argyll and Bute, as outlined in the Argyll and Bute Renewable Energy Action Plan.

Partners include Argyll and Bute Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Scottish Government, Marine Scotland, Scottish Power Renewables, Scottish and Southern Energy, Crown Estate

- 3.2** As noted in the progress report to the Management Committee 24th August 2011, partners agreed at the meeting 22nd June to: consider the role of ABRA in developing a common position towards key renewable developments and issues, such as transmission and distribution; that there is a need for more coordinated and joined up discussions to ensure a common understanding of needs and challenges, which supports coordination of partner planning and investment, in particular with respect of port and harbour infrastructure requirements for offshore and marine renewables; and to identify key priorities which will inform the forthcoming review of the REAP, in order to produce a plan which is focused and based on collective outcomes.
- 3.3** Partners agreed the need to ensure the alliance is outcome driven. As such following the second meeting partners have been involved in a number of key projects for our area and have taken forward the areas of work highlighted in close partnership, prior to the meeting of the alliance 28th October 2011, as outlined below:
- 3.31** A review of the REAP has been commenced by lead partners Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Argyll and Bute Council, with input from key partners and informed by discussions at ABRA. This is ongoing, the product of which will be reviewed at the meeting of the alliance proposed 2nd March 2012, and subsequently presented to the CPP for approval.
- 3.32** As part of the ongoing commitment to the provision of infrastructure to facilitate the growth of renewable opportunities, partners worked together to ensure the inclusion of Campbeltown/Machrihanish as a priority manufacturing site in the 'National Renewables Infrastructure Plan (N-RIP) West Coast Cluster', and the success of the recently announced 'Lorn Arc Project'. Following discussions 22nd June partners worked closely to identify port and harbour requirements for manufacturing, construction and operations & maintenance to support the offshore and marine renewables industry.
- 3.33** Partners developed options for the future role and coordination of ABRA in developing a common position towards key issues and developments, and ABRA priorities.
- 3.34** Following discussions at the inaugural meeting partners developed proposals for frameworks which seek to identify ways in which to secure potential benefits and facilitate sustainable economic development from the development of the renewables industry in our area, for local communities, Argyll and Bute and the Scottish economy.
- 3.4** Progress with these actions and areas of work were considered at the

third meeting of the alliance 28th October 2011, were the agenda items focused on skills, port and harbour infrastructure for renewable energy, communications and socio-economic benefit.

- 3.5** Partners reiterated the importance of ensuring a holistic approach through the alliance, and agreed with proposals to further develop key ABRA messages and the coordination of ABRA in developing a common position towards key issues and developments, and as a source of balanced and accurate information for communities and stakeholders.
- 3.6** The critical role of future skills development in order to realise the vision as outlined in the REAP was highlighted by partners. Key priorities were agreed in this regard which will be underpinned by the proposal for the formation of a skills subgroup, comprising key ABRA, public sector and industry partners, to address these. The first meeting in order to scope out the role and key areas of work of the skills sub group was held 22nd November 2011.
- 3.6** Partners endorsed the key requirements identified in respect of port and harbour infrastructure and will now work closely to inform future investment priorities. Similarly, partners agreed with the proposals outlined and to further develop frameworks which will seek to ensure potential benefits are realised for communities, Argyll and Bute and Scotland from the future development of this industry.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1** Progress with the actions agreed by the alliance 28th October will be reviewed at the next meeting of the alliance proposed 2nd March 2011, where the topics for discussion will include Skills Development, the REAP review, Community Policy, Port and Harbour Infrastructure Investment and Communications.
- 4.2** The next progress report will be submitted to the subsequent CPP Management Committee following the first meeting of ABRA in 2012.

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