



CASE STUDIES

Supporting Materials for Establishing a Pilot Community Power Hub

Pilot Community Power Hub Case studies



Hypothetical scenario

The pilot Community Power Hub (CPH) is hosted and led by a local sustainability group who had demonstrated widespread support during the Expression of Interest (EOI) process and have brought together stakeholders from their local community to support their application. Collectively they have selected a network advisory approach to governance and have an advisory committee made up of members who are a local Non -Governmental Organisation (NGO), three local governments, a renewable installer, a business network, a local school, a water authority, a farmer, and a university. They also have a database of members that they regularly engage and communicate with other organisations, businesses and community individuals.

The pilot CPH's first activity was to establish a high level two year plan. The members identified a range of potential Community Energy (CE) projects in their local area that could be innovative or a replication of another successful project. As an innovation project, they are working with a group of farmers and the local council to develop a small scale bioenergy project. The pilot CPH is aiming to deliver this project within the two year allocated period and is actively project managing it through the feasibility process. As a replication project they are applying a successful small scale solar behind-the-meter model across a range of host sites, including council and water authority sites. Within six months they have already delivered the first project. Sustainability Victoria has facilitated training in this model and provided project implementation support, including legal support for reviewing the key contracts and share offer for investment. The pilot CPH is collaborating with a local energy auditing program to audit local host sites that are suitable for behind the meter solar. They have also identified desire for a revolving energy fund and are working to deliver this as an ongoing income and funding stream. Alongside this they are ensuring they monitor their project management contributions so that they can translate to sweat equity in the form of investment in the operating projects.

In addition, the following case studies provide examples of operating versions of pilot CPH's, to give examples for reference.

Case study:

Samsø Island Energy Academy

Samsø renewable energy island¹ started in 1998 as a national project showcasing the successful example of a Danish island's transition to 100% renewable energy in 10 years. Samsø Island is 114km² with a resident population of around 4000. After a few years, visitors were flowing in and they realised they needed a place to welcome them and to prepare for future opportunities. They believed the number of visitors would increase and trusted they could expand from energy projects, to exchange programs and offer courses, workshops and learning processes.

The Academy was originally funded by the European Union regional funding, private funds and local funding from previous investments in offshore wind which produced a profit they could utilise for new developments and a bank loan from a green investment fund.

Today, the Academy is an umbrella for several small NGOs. There were three staff initially in 2006 and today there are eight full time jobs. The income streams are national funds (largely for tourism activities), funds from delivered projects and direct income from consultancy jobs.

The Academy is a non-profit organisation, registered as a company and therefore pays tax. The governance is performed by a steering committee made up of representatives from the local co-op energy utility, the regional authority, a university, the local government (the mayor) and two people from other Samsø interest organisations. The Academy hires a Chief Executive Officer who runs the business and is responsible for the project programs in line with contracts and budgets.

From the start the Academy has tried to balance a focus on both process and projects. Over the years it has moved towards more learning and process. Process being behaviour change such as workshops about fossil free community development, the establishment of a school with courses in any subject related to the transition towards being a 100% fossil free community. Project examples are the establishment of a biogas plant and an increase in electric vehicles. These projects are examples of the practical implementation of technologies and investments due to the transition.

For the future, the Energy Academy see a growing need to educate and inform local communities as well as universities and schools. The Academy believes in local knowledge, local ownership and the importance of small scale. The Academy aims to walk the talk and at the same time showcase that local projects can be for the benefit of local jobs, innovation and a sustainable future.

1 <http://energiakademiet.dk/en/vedvarende-energi-o/>

Case study:

Moreland Energy Foundation

Moreland Energy Foundation Ltd (MEFL)² is an independent not-for-profit organisation and a version of a pilot CPH already working in Victoria, however with a broader scope than the pilot CPH's will have.

MEFL works with households, businesses, community groups and governments on innovative approaches to implement sustainable energy supply and reduce energy use.

MEFL was established in 2000 by the Moreland City Council after the privatisation of the Victorian electricity industry. The initial purpose of MEFL was to continue local action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the entire Moreland community.

MEFL's current scope is:

- › advocacy
- › community engagement
- › consultancy and research
- › energy advisory service
- › professional development
- › sustainability advice

Locally, MEFL provides practical support to the Moreland community to become more energy efficient and take up renewable energy. In 2014 they developed the Zero Carbon Evolution (ZCE) strategy, with the ambitious target to achieve a 22% reduction in carbon emissions across the Moreland community by 2020. In 2014 MEFL set up Positive Charge, a not-for-profit social enterprise. On behalf of subscribing local councils, Positive Charge provides energy expertise and independent advisory services to households, community groups and businesses; delivers community engagement programs; and provides data and shares knowledge to facilitate councils moving to a sustainable energy future.

MEFL has significant experience providing consultancy, research and professional development services in the areas of community engagement, energy efficiency, sustainable energy supply and urban development. They work actively with partners in local and state government and the community sector, and with clients in the development industry to deliver sustainable energy outcomes.

Case study:

Embark Australia

Embark Australia³ was set up in 2010 to catalyse community involvement in renewable energy projects. It is a philanthropically funded, non-profit organisation, governed by an independent board. Embark acts to eliminate the barriers holding back the growth of a powerful, community renewable energy sector in Australia and has worked with dozens of community groups nationwide.

Embark offers effective support to interested communities including:

- › developing a best practice toolkit to help rapidly up-skill communities
- › developing working examples and transferable models for community wind and solar
- › providing coaching in knowledge transfer and expert advice
- › building a network of suppliers, contractors, investors and lenders
- › aggregating services to capture economies of scale
- › identifying and trouble-shooting market failures
- › sourcing and providing feasibility and investment funding
- › attracting large-scale investment for projects, and
- › advocating for policy changes to grow the sector.

Embark has played a critical role for over five years in delivering flagship community renewable projects in both wind and solar PV in Australia. Embark emerged from, and was instrumental in helping Hepburn Wind to deliver Australia's first community wind project. Embark has reached financial close for a pilot community solar project, Sydney Renewable Power Company. To compliment these models, Embark releases its Intellectual Property to communities and coaches them through the process.

Case study:

CARES Scotland

Local Energy Scotland⁴ has been delivering the Scottish Government's Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES) support since August 2013. The support covers technical guidance, administering grants and loans and advice is available face-to-face, online or via the Freephone. Local Energy Scotland has a network of development officers across Scotland to provide regional advice and support.

This support consists of:

- › General Advice and Support
- › Support for Direct Ownership
- › Support for Shared Ownership & Investment
- › Support for Community Benefits
- › Supporting Infrastructure and Innovation

The network of Development Officers provides communities and rural businesses with a high level of advice and support, and is seen as an invaluable resource by those who need the extra support required to see them through the process from start to finish. Development Officers encourage knowledge sharing with other projects by developing case studies and attending events. There is also support available online in the form of toolkits, Frequently Asked Questions and other information on the website.

2 <http://www.mefl.com.au/>

3 www.embark.com.au/

4 <http://www.localenergyscotland.org/who-we-are/about-us/>

OxFutures Low Carbon Hub

The Low Carbon Hub in Oxfordshire, United Kingdom is working on a range of projects in its local area and actively develops community-owned renewable energy and re-invests 100% of their surplus.

One of their activities is a revolving fund which is a partnership with Resonance, Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council for major renewable energy and energy reduction projects across the city and county. The fund enables timely construction of Low Carbon Hub renewable projects with corporate partners, the public sector and communities. The first phase of the fund leveraged investment for renewable installations on public estates and underwrote start-up funding for community energy schemes.

The Hub is also working with corporate partners, schools and communities to develop finance and manage renewable energy schemes for community benefit. The Hub's £12.5 million pipeline of renewable projects includes eight community micro-hydro schemes along the Thames, solar PV projects on community buildings, a cohort of solar schools, as well as 3.5M W of solar PV with local businesses across Oxfordshire.

The Hub has an active 'power down' stream which aims to make domestic energy savings of 19,600MWh over the next two years. One of the key aims of this project is to tackle fuel poverty locally. Oxford City Council and the Low Carbon Hub are currently running a pilot scheme in Barton to improve the energy efficiency of local homes.

Governance Guide for the Pilot Community Power Hub

It will be up to the successful host to establish a governance structure for each pilot Community Power Hub (CPH), inclusive of a wide diversity of local stakeholder (members). Key activities will be partnership brokering and establishing a Charter, Terms of Reference or other similar guidance frameworks. Governance is essential to ensure the pilot CPH:

- › has a clear mission
- › operates ethically and in line with its mission
- › meets its legal and financial obligations
- › monitors and reviews itself regularly.⁵

Governance is not the same as management and is mainly about how an organisation is run. Governance with correct structures and systems to ensure that the pilot CPH makes the right decisions and develop as intended is vital. For the purpose of the pilot CPH it is essential that governance structure allows for the activities to be:

- › inclusive and responsive – everybody with an interest in a decision, or with information or opinions that can influence a decision, should have their say
- › decisive – once everyone has had their say, the right decisions have to be made and implemented across the organisation
- › easy to use – the structure should be open, flexible and straightforward. Stakeholders should know who is responsible for which aspects of governance, and how that responsibility relates to the organisation's mission and operation.

Common approaches in the CE and sustainability sector more broadly are focused on Collaborative Governance. The functionality attached to this can be a Roundtable approach, Network Advisory Committee, Consortia Model etc. All are similar approaches, but slightly different models.

About Collaborative Governance

Collaborative Governance is at the cutting edge of governance theory and practice. It is a voluntary and unincorporated structure, with the binding force being genuine mutual benefits and shared responsibilities throughout the membership.

Both CE and energy more broadly create a culture of collaboration. The national collective impact organisation; Coalition for Community Energy (C4CE) has chosen to utilise a collaborative governance model for the reasons of being able to:

- › leverage greater knowledge, ability and resources and more effectively scan and assess the opportunities to guide and support strategic interventions which are highly adaptable and responsive to what is a complex and emergent space
- › share knowledge, tools, resources and to achieve the greatest possible uptake and impact of CE.

The following appendixes give some templates for pilot CPH governance that can be considered and adapted to purpose.

We recommend using available templates from the Our Community group who provides advice, connections, training and easy-to-use tools for people and organisations working to build stronger communities. Their template bank can be searched at www.ourcommunity.com.au

In particular you may need:

- › a partnerships agreement
- › a Memo Of Understanding
- › an auspice agreement

5 <http://www.embark.com.au/display/public/content/Project+governance>

Tools and templates for Hub Governance

Appendix 1: Governance example I Coalition for Community Energy Collaborative Governance Charter

C4CE Purpose, Vision & Objectives

The Coalition for Community Energy's (C4CE) purpose is to create the conditions which support a vibrant community energy sector and movement right across Australia by leading and facilitating coordination, communication and collaboration. Its unique niche and contribution is to focus on collaborative initiatives which are clearly greater than the sum of their individual parts, and which benefit Members and the wider community energy sector.

C4CE sees community energy as being cooperatively-spirited, commercially-driven and environmentally minded. As such, community energy clearly contributes to a bigger picture of action on climate change, sustainability, social equity, community resilience and self-agency.

C4CE's vision is for community energy to be a significant creator and beneficiary of Australia's renewable and sustainable energy system ~ with community energy groups and projects initiating, developing, owning, operating, implementing and benefiting from renewable and sustainable energy.

C4CE's objectives are to:

- › Guide and support development of the community energy sector
- › Create a coordinated voice to better advocate for the needs of the sector
- › Grow the sector's profile, influence and membership (beyond the 'usual suspects') Facilitate the alignment of efforts by Members with support, systems, tools and training which enable collaboration for collective impact
- › Identify and create strategic opportunities and attract investment for the sector Coordinate strategic initiatives which build the knowledge, know-how and capacity of Members and the sector

C4CE is leading the development of a National Community Energy Strategy, with broad participation by key actors from across the emerging community energy sector.

The purpose of the National Strategy is to identify the most important actions required to bring about the creation of a vibrant community energy sector across Australia. These shared priorities seek to form the basis of collaborative effort by key actors from across the sector.

As a National Strategy, its implementation and success is bigger than C4CE alone. However, as the lead authors of the Strategy, C4CE aims to play a significant part. In this way, the Strategy will inform and guide the strategic initiatives undertaken by C4CE and its Members.

Governance Model

C4CE's Governance Model is depicted above. The purpose of each major part of the model is summarised below and detailed fully later in this document:

- › Members – approved organisations, groups, agencies or projects
- › National CE Strategy – strategic context and priorities for the development of the sector Strategic Initiatives – formally approved C4CE branded initiatives
- › Steering Group – to govern and coordinate C4CE's work and role in the sector Secretariat – providing support for the Steering Group and Strategic Initiatives Agreements – defining the various roles, responsibilities and accountabilities Auspice – the financial and legal structure for C4CE and its Strategic Initiatives
- › Supporting Systems – to enable the collaboration, communication, information sharing, sector analysis, implementation of initiatives, measurement of progress and performance.

Guiding Principles

The below core principles guide the way that C4CE operates and describe the values which will be developed to enhance the effectiveness of the collaboration.

| Principles | Behaviours and Actions |
|--|--|
| Collaboration | Every Member takes on the challenge of working together to build the sector, reduce duplication and competition by creating and implementing the National Strategy, Strategic Initiatives and Supporting Systems. This is about co-creating solutions as new possibilities which can't be arrived at individually and are greater than the sum of their parts. |
| Mutuality of self-interest, benefit and commitment | <p>C4CE aims to create opportunities and initiatives which are mutually beneficial for Members and the sector. The interests of Members – such as their own strategic plans and priorities – are harnessed in areas where they align with the common or collective interests of the greater sector. This is about working to create 'coordinated mutual self-interest' as the best way to secure resources and goals.</p> <p>Members have free choices at all times – through their own governance and decision-making structures – to participate and contribute to C4CE as distinct to, and rather than, having obligations or constraints. In return for these collective opportunities, Members commit to acting in the best interests of C4CE and the sector.</p> |
| Shared leadership, responsibility and accountability | <p>C4CE encourages every Member to consider and commit resources and capacity for the benefit of the sector and implementation of the National Strategy and Strategic Initiatives. Leadership and workload are balanced, shared and aligned with Members' interests, priorities and competencies.</p> <p>Authority and function are distributed to the maximum degree, with the Steering Group and each Strategic Initiative ensuring that action is devolved to the most distributed part of the sector.</p> |
| Adaptability, responsiveness and learning | All Members commit to being open to learning, systematic reflection and improvement as well as the essential need for innovation and experimentation. These are key qualities to be able to effectively work in a dynamic and emerging context of continuous change. |

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|-----------------------------------|--|
| Institutional adaptability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Flexibility to work outside of traditional grant cycles and established internal processes › Ability to be nimble in pursuing opportunities as they arise, without being prescriptive about the outcome › Willingness to learn new skill sets required – including partnering, facilitation, communication, community engagement, and convening |
| Culture shift | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Comfort with uncertainty and adaptability required to engage with community and stakeholders › Awareness of shift in power dynamic among funders, grantees, and other stakeholders › Openness to funding infrastructure, which is often seen as less attractive than funding direct services or interventions |
| Long-term orientation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Commitment to achieving progress on a specific issue, regardless of attribution vs. contribution › Understanding of timespan required for systemic change, making a long-term commitment › Comfort with measuring progress using interim milestones and process measures |

Decision-Making

The overarching intention for all decision-making is to be highly participatory, inclusive and collaborative. This means to at all times be working for consensus, by which is meant decisions which all parties involved can 'live with' without compromising issues of fundamental importance – as distinct to needing to be unanimous.

In the event that consensus cannot be reached after reasonable attempts have been made, then decisions will be made by super-majority (i.e. at least 75%).

This decision-making ethos applies to the Membership, Steering Group and Strategic Initiatives.

Any one of these decision-making bodies within C4CE has the authority to create higher standards of decision-making for areas they identify to be critical – such as policy, advocacy and financial allocations – to uphold the ethos of participatory, inclusive and collaborative decision-making. For example, all Members are given a free choice to sign-on to the final Policy Position Statements (see Rules of Procedure) that are developed.

No Member, or the Delegated Representative, or combination of either or both of these, is able to dominate deliberations or control decisions.

Decisions are also distributed to the greatest degree, with each Strategic Initiative having authority, responsibility and accountability for its defined purpose and objectives.

Being a "participant" for decision-making can be by the following means: face-to-face, by telephone, email, the interweb, video conference or any other practical means determined in advance. A proxy can also be provided for this purpose.

Changes to the Charter

Proposed changes to the Charter require a super-majority vote by Members. Any proposed changes will be provided to Members at least one month in advance of the meeting at which they are to be considered.

The Steering Group may amend the Rules of Procedure at any time by a super-majority vote.

Membership

Membership of C4CE is open, inclusive (non-discriminatory) and voluntary to any organisation, group, agency or project which can demonstrate its genuine involvement with community energy and its commitment to a vibrant community energy sector in Australia.

The minimum number of Members required to participate for decision-making is at least one-quarter of all Members up to a maximum of 25.

The benefits of becoming a Member of C4CE are:

- › Gain in knowledge and capacity for community energy and collaboration Involvement in C4CE Strategic Initiatives and access to C4CE resources
- › Join with a growing and coordinated voice to better advocate for the needs of the sector and have greater influence on the development of the sector
- › Participation in decision-making processes
- › Eligibility to nominate a representative for the Steering Group
- › Utilisation of C4CE branding.

The Membership's functions are to:

- › nominate a Member Representative for C4CE
- › nominate Member Representatives for the Steering Group appoint members to the Steering Group
- › approve changes to the C4CE Collaborative Governance Charter
- › accept the Annual Report

Each Member agrees to:

- › Act in the best interests of C4CE and the sector more generally
- › Actively contribute to the work of C4CE and the sector more generally
- › Explain and promote community energy with their own members, constituents, clients and through their networks
- › Collaborate with C4CE Members when mutually beneficial
- › Avoid duplication of effort with other Members
- › Contribute data and information for analysis of the sector as well as to measure and assess progress and performance of C4CE and any Strategic Initiatives
- › Develop their own capacity for collaboration

Applications for Membership are approved by the Steering Group.

The Steering Group also has the authority to revoke Membership where it is justified to be in the best interests of C4CE and the community energy sector.

Any Member may withdraw from C4CE by notifying the Steering Group.

The Steering Group will determine what membership fees, if any, are payable from time to time.

Steering Group

The Steering Group is accountable to Members for the governance and performance of C4CE to fulfil its purpose and achieve its objectives.

The Steering Group will comprise up to nine Member Representatives plus one Secretariat Representative (who does not have voting rights). Steering Group terms are for two years and are renewable.

The Steering Group will elect a Chair and Vice-Chair for one-year terms, with a maximum of two consecutive terms in the same position. Elections shall be conducted by the Secretariat as a secret ballot.

Participation of more than half of the number of members of the Steering Group is necessary to make decisions.

The Steering Group's functions are to:

- › guide the ongoing development of strategy for the Community Energy, including the National Community Energy Strategy
- › to monitor and analyse the system dynamics of the sector
- › to work with the Secretariat to secure sufficient resources for C4CE share work and enable collaboration between the Members
- › approve the Annual Operations Plan and Annual Report
- › approve Strategic Initiatives and oversee their performance
- › approve Membership applications
- › determine what membership fees, if any, are payable from time to time
- › establish Rules of Procedure for its proper functioning
- › represent C4CE as agreed from time-to-time
- › assess the health and performance of the C4CE collaboration
- › consider other relevant matters submitted by the Secretariat or any Member
- › recruit, select and appoint its own membership based upon their collective ability to bring the required mix of experience, expertise and influence for C4CE's effectiveness

The Steering Group also has the following responsibilities for the Secretariat and Auspice:

- › recruitment, selection, renewal and/or replacement
- › monitor and assess performance provide guidance and direction

Secretariat

The Secretariat is accountable to the Steering Group and is responsible for executive support and the day-to-day coordination and administration of C4CE's Strategic Initiatives and Support Systems. The Secretariat can be a Member.

The Secretariat's functions are to:

- › guide the development of a shared vision and strategy and work with members to align strategic initiatives with the shared strategy
- › work with the Steering Group and Strategic Initiative Working Groups to secure sufficient resources (including funding) for C4CE to support its goals
- › provide coordination support to the governance processes of the C4CE, including preparation of Steering Group meeting agendas, business papers, including performance reporting from Strategic Initiatives, keep minutes, prepare the Annual Operations Plan and Annual Report
- › facilitate the preparation of proposed Strategic Initiatives for the Steering Group and support the set-up and functioning of the Strategic Initiatives Working Groups as needed manage the internal communications channels of C4CE
- › represent C4CE as agreed facilitate the induction of Members
- › coordinate the monitoring and evaluation of C4CE and its impact
- › provide additional administrative services as approved by the Steering Group such as personnel, financial management, legal assistance and development of policy positions.

Six key functions for the Secretariat as a 'backbone' for the C4CE collaboration

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| Guide Vision and Strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Build a common understanding of the problem › Provide strategic guidance to develop a common agenda |
| Support Aligned Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Ensure mutual reinforcing activities take place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Coordinate and facilitate communication and collaboration – Convene partners and key external stakeholders – Catalyze or Incubate new Initiatives or collaborations – Provide technical assistance – Create paths for, and recruit, new partners – Seek opportunities for alignment with other efforts |
| Establish Shared Measurement Practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Collect, analyze, interpret, and report data › Catalyze or develop shared measurement systems › Provide technical assistance for building partners' data capacity |
| Build Public Will | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Build public will, consensus and commitment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Create a sense of urgency and articulate a call to action – Support community member engagement activities – Produce and manage external communications |
| Advance Policy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Advocate for, an aligned policy agenda |
| Mobilize Funding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Mobilize and align public and private funding to support goals |

Agreements

Secretariat

A written agreement will be made for the Secretariat. This agreement will be with the Auspice on behalf of the Steering Group.

The Secretariat is ideally a performance-based, fee-for-service role. That is, remuneration and payments are only made once the agreed deliverables and/or outcomes have been satisfied.

The Secretariat will be reimbursed for expenses and costs reasonably and properly incurred in accordance with the prior approved arrangements by the Steering Group.

Neither the Secretariat, nor any of its officers, personnel, agents, representatives or contractors are to commit the C4CE or its Members to any agreement or expenditure beyond what has been prior approved by the Steering Group.

Auspice

The Auspice is to provide C4CE with a financial and legal structure, noting that C4CE itself is an unincorporated structure.

The Auspice is ideally a performance-based, fee-for-service role – and could be performed by the Secretariat if approved by the Steering Group. That is, remuneration and payments are only made once the agreed deliverables and/or outcomes have been satisfied.

The Auspice functions are to:

- › hold any or all C4CE assets in trust (brand, intellectual property, website, cash, etc.) provide reports to the Steering Group on its performance as required
- › hold any or all Strategic Initiatives assets in trust, as agreed by the Steering Group on an initiative-by-initiative basis
- › manage the dissolution of the C4CE as required by Members

C4CE materials and communications will clearly disclose that C4CE is an unincorporated collaboration and initiative of the Auspice.

Intellectual Property

All intellectual property created through C4CE or its Strategic Initiatives will be made available through Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-Share-Alike license unless otherwise approved by the Steering Group.

Brand Usage

The C4CE brand will be applied to all official activities, including approved Strategic Initiatives.

Approved and current Members are permitted to use the C4CE brand to acknowledge their membership in a manner that supports and enhances the objectives of C4CE.

A written license agreement will be prepared for adoption by the Steering Group for any other usage of the brand to ensure that such usage supports and enhances the objectives of C4CE.

Dissolution

The Members may discontinue the collaboration any time. In this situation the Auspice will arrange for the liquidation of C4CE assets, and so far as practicable, arrange for distribution of any assets or the proceeds from them to another organisation with a similar purpose and objectives.

Rules of Procedure

Steering Group

The Steering Group will meet at least three times per year.

In the event that a Member Representative is unable to participate in the Steering Group for a one-off or short period of time (less than 3 months), the Member may nominate an Alternate Representative.

Nominees for the Steering Group are to detail their:

- › Experience and expertise in community energy and collaboration Leadership position and influence in the sector
- › Commitment to the necessary time to effectively fulfil the role
- › Commitment to act in the best interest of C4CE and the sector (rather than representing their own organisational, sub-sector or personal interests)

Strategic Initiatives

Strategic Initiatives can be created by the Steering Group or proposed by the Secretariat, a Member or group of Members for approval by the Steering Group. They can be formal projects, emergent initiatives or working groups which lead particular aspects of the sector and are clearly better done collaboratively.

Each Strategic Initiative will be coordinated and implemented by a self-governing, activity-based Strategic Initiative Group involving one or more Members, with other Members involved in the Strategic Initiative as required.

Non C4CE Members can also participate in Strategic Initiatives. Each Strategic Initiative Group is required to have a majority of C4CE Members at all times.

Participation of more than half of the number of members of the Strategic Initiative Group is necessary to make decisions.

Each Strategic Initiative Group's functions are to:

- › prepare and propose a policy framework for the Strategic Initiative – such as terms of reference, project plan, scope of work, budget, brief, members involved and their roles, responsibilities and authority – for the consideration of the Steering Group
- › coordinate and implement their Strategic Initiative within this approved policy framework, as may be changed from time-to-time (with Steering Group approval)
- › work in accordance with this C4CE Collaborative Governance Charter
- › work with the Secretariat to secure sufficient resources for their Strategic Initiative
- › prepare agendas, reports and minutes
- › report to the Steering Group – based on the approved policy framework – so that it can play a coordinating role, and work to leverage the skills, assets and expertise of the collaboration for the Initiative's benefit

Strategic Initiatives can either form part of the C4CE Auspice or be under the legal auspice of one of the Members in the Strategic Initiative Group. The exact arrangement will form part of the proposed policy framework.

Each C4CE Strategic Initiative will clearly disclose that C4CE is an unincorporated collaboration and that the Strategic Initiative is an initiative of the Auspice provider.

Any financial remuneration and payments will be performance-based. That is, they are only made once the agreed deliverables and/or outcomes have been satisfied.

Policy Position Statements

C4CE will develop Position Statements on matters of public and political policy as required and possible from time-to-time. These are public in nature and distinct to the Rules of Procedure and other internal policy matters relating to the governance and operations of C4CE itself.

These Statements reflect an agreed policy position at a given point in time, recognising the highly dynamic context for C4CE's work. In this sense the Statements reflect a policy position for a particular purpose more than being a permanent policy.

Once approved, Members are invited to voluntary 'sign on' to Position Statements. The final Position Statement will carry the logos of Members who do sign on.

More work intensive matters of public policy, such as formal submissions to public inquiries, could be organised as a Strategic Initiative in their own right.

The following process will be followed for all Policy Position Statements:

Position Papers will be developed in keeping with the decision-making ethos

Final approval will be either by the Steering Group or an Initiative Group as relevant Every Position Statement will clearly carry the disclaimer that it does not necessarily represent the views of all Members

No Member will take a position regarding issues on behalf of C4CE, or any of its parts, without the consent of the Members.

Conflict of Interest

Every Member agrees to act in the best interests of C4CE and the community energy sector more generally.

C4CE's decision-making ethos ~ of being participatory, inclusive and collaborative ~ depends upon Members being pro-actively transparent and tabling any and all relevant interests they have which may create perceived and/or real conflicts-of-interest.

No individual should obtain a private benefit or advantage by virtue of being part of C4CE in any way. Additionally, no individual should use their position within to unfairly influence or decide a matter where they have a real or perceived private interest. These principles apply to both pecuniary and non-pecuniary conflicts of interest

Each participant in every decision-making forum (e.g. Member, Steering Group and Strategic Initiative Groups) and every decision-making process (e.g. Formation) is required to identify and table all issues in which they hold a relevant interest.

In situations where an interest is disclosed, the participant with that interest may or may not participate in discussions regarding a relevant decision to the extent agreed by the other participants in that decision-making process.

In situations where an interest is disclosed, the participant with that interest may or may not participate in any decision relevant to those interests to the extent agreed by the other participants in that decision-making process.

In cases where there is ambiguity about a particular item, the Chair will rule whether a conflict of interest exists or not.

Interpretation

In the event of any inconsistency between the Rules of Procedure and the Charter, the Charter shall prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

Appendices

Formation

The purpose of this section is to address the requirements for C4CE's transition from its original informal arrangements to the formal creation and implementation of this Governance Charter.

The original idea for C4CE can be traced back to a Community Energy Forum convened by the Total Environment Centre in May 2012. Since that time, it has been led by an informal collaboration between nine of Australia's leading community energy support organisations: Community Power Agency, the Institute for Sustainable Future at UTS, Starfish Initiatives, Embark, NSW Office of Environment & Heritage, Backroad Connection, Sustainable Regional Australia, the Alternative Technology Association and the Total Environment Centre.

Community Power Agency have provided the functions of Secretariat during this time. Starfish Initiatives have provided the functions of Auspice during this time.

The following Strategic Initiatives have been coordinated through these informal arrangements: Advocacy Campaigns (Fund CE, RET Review, Virtual Net Metering, Community Advocacy Strategy) as well as the Congress, National Strategy and Embark WIKI Working Group.

The overwhelming majority of this formative work for C4CE has been done on an unpaid basis. The process for the Formation of C4CE is:

The informal Steering Group

Invites formal Membership Applications, including from its own current members considers each Membership Application, addressing Conflicts of Interest as required requests that the informal Secretariat (Community Power Agency) coordinate a process for the recruitment and selection of the first official Steering Group

The first official Steering Group

Develops the Auspice Agreement then recruits and selects an Auspice
Develops the Secretariat Agreement then recruits and selects a Secretariat
Considers proposals to formally approve the current Strategic Initiatives

Limiting Legal Risks & Liabilities

This document is not legally binding and has no effect as a legal or political precedent. It is subject to the goodwill and effective contributions of Members to C4CE's activities and operations, either financially or through any of the Strategic Initiatives, and is subject to the laws and regulations applicable to the individual Members.

Further, each Member's agreement is voluntary and should not be construed as in any way creating legal obligations or duties.

The strength of this approach is that it upholds the integrity and independence of all Members' governance arrangements, with each being encouraged though ultimately free to choose its own level of commitment to C4CE and its Strategic Initiatives. In this way C4CE creates options and opportunities rather than obligations or restrictions.

The weakness of this approach is that it is non-binding and open. Members are free to renege on their commitment at any time.

Appendix 2: ComMET Terms of Reference Example



What is ComMET?

ComMET is a group of local government, agencies, community groups and individuals supporting development of community energy. ComMET works through a collaborative governance arrangement that enables the interests of stakeholders to be represented in pursuit of our common purpose:

“To support and progress community energy that is strongly governed, financially viable, and socially and environmentally sustainable.”

Our governance arrangements include a core group, functioning as a roundtable, and a number of working groups.

The ComMET Roundtable is currently comprised of representatives from:

- › Bass Coast Shire Council
- › Energy Innovation Co-Op
- › Mirboo North Energy Hub (through Mirboo North Community Shed Co-operative Ltd)
- › South Gippsland Shire Council
- › Westernport Water, and
- › Individual community members.

The current working groups are:

- › Community Engagement Working Group, and
- › Governance and Legal Working Group, with the intention to set up further working groups:
- › Funding and Investment Working Group,
- › Technical and Research & Development Working Group

ComMET is principally concerned with empowering and enabling community organisations and businesses to lead their own approach to community energy. ComMET will provide advice, recommendations and referrals that are well researched, to give the best chance for community energy options to proceed in southern Gippsland.

Collaborative Approach: Why do we operate this way?

A collaborative governance model enables our constituent members to diversify the knowledge base, spread the workload, widen the communication network and involve motivated people in advancing community energy; whilst continuing to represent organisational and individual interests. We have chosen the term 'roundtable' as it represents a forum, where individuals and representatives participate equally in the discussion. This approach models social inclusion and will lead to opportunities for people to build and share capacities in the areas of renewable energy and social enterprise.

Collaborative governance depends on us:

- › Committing to meaningful stakeholder involvement
- › Making a commitment to a new way of working together
- › Understanding trust and what builds and breaks trust
- › Being flexible in our leadership and sharing authority (not power-based relationships)
- › Committing to authentic face to face dialogue
- › Creating a culture of learning
- › Identifying common ground and resolving or accommodating differences
- › Role modelling collaboration

Governance: How do we operate?

Membership of ComMET is drawn from the communities of South Gippsland and Bass Coast shires through an open expression of interest (EOI) process. EOIs are invited from representative groups and from the broader community as positions are vacated, new working groups are established, or gaps in skills or knowledge are identified.

Local government authorities, agencies and community groups may nominate one member to represent their interests at the Roundtable. Individuals can nominate to join ComMET either at the Roundtable or through a working group.

Nominations are accepted or declined by consensus of the Roundtable, based on the need to fill positions and relevant skills and experience considered to be of benefit to ComMET's purpose. Those nominated ought to demonstrate relevant skills or expertise and the ability to work under the collaborative governance model.

All efforts shall be made to achieve a geographical spread across southern Gippsland.

The benefits of becoming a Member of ComMET are:

- › To gain knowledge and capacity in community energy and collaboration;
- › To join with a growing and coordinated voice to better advocate for the needs of the sector and have greater influence on the development of community energy across southern Gippsland;
- › To participate in the decision making process; and
- › To utilise the ComMET branding.

Each Member agrees to:

- › Act in the best interests of ComMET, and the community energy sector more generally;
- › Actively contribute to the work of ComMET;
- › Explain and promote community energy within their own members, constituents, and through their networks;
- › Collaborate with ComMET members when mutually beneficial.
- › To gain knowledge and capacity in community energy and collaboration;
- › To join with a growing and coordinated voice to better advocate for the needs of the sector and have greater influence on the development of community energy across southern Gippsland;
- › To participate in the decision making process; and
- › To utilise the ComMET branding.

Group Structure and Operating Principles

- › ComMET is a collaborative alliance of member groups and individuals and is not an incorporated group in its own right.
- › ComMET does not have a chair, president or official spokesperson.

Auspice

The Auspice arrangement is to provide ComMET with a financial and legal structure, noting that ComMET itself is an un-incorporated structure. ComMET is auspiced by The Energy Innovation Cooperative.

The auspice functions and roles of each group and individual are clearly outlined in the auspice agreement.

ComMET materials and communications will clearly disclose that ComMET is an unincorporate collaboration, and acknowledge the auspicing agreement with the Energy Innovation Cooperative.

ComMET communicates through existing networks or through the Delegation of Authority procedure outlined below.

ComMET will work towards its purpose through:

- › The Roundtable,
- › Working groups - established to address information gaps.
- › Partnerships with constituent organisations and,
- › Community groups or businesses identified as potential partners.

Meeting Procedure

The Roundtable and working groups will meet as required to fulfil their purpose.

The Roundtable and each working group will have a meeting chair elected annually at the Roundtable. Chairs prepare and circulate agendas between five and seven days prior to meetings, with relevant papers attached.

Members provide relevant information to the meeting chair before each ComMET meeting. Meeting chairs are responsible for efficient facilitation of meetings and are not, through this role, the official public spokesperson.

Minutes are shared on a rotating basis and circulated by minute taker to all members of the group as soon as practicable following meetings.

Representatives from constituent organisations and working group chairs will provide minutes of ComMET meetings to their groups after each meeting.

Items arising at meetings, which require input back to ComMET from constituent organisations or working groups will be dealt with promptly between meetings.

A quarterly summary report of key activities, risk management and achievements will be prepared, signed off by the Roundtable and provided to constituent organisations.

Local government authorities and agencies will provide administrative support to the Roundtable at a level to be specified annually.

Meetings alternate between locations in Bass Coast and South Gippsland shires.

Members shall declare any real or perceived conflicts of interest in relation to any matter raised on the agenda at each meeting.

Any member failing to attend meetings repeatedly without apology will be asked to vacate their position, taking into account personal circumstances.

Delegation of Authority

The ComMET Roundtable operates by consensus (100%). Simple decisions are made by consensus at the Roundtable. Decisions that require input from a constituent organisation, working group or community partner will be deferred. If a representative is not present at a meeting, a cautionary principle applies; the decision should be deferred until that representative is contacted for input. Once input has been received, the decision is reviewed for consensus approval again.

A consensus decision may be communicated by all, unless otherwise specified in minutes.

Information may come to the Roundtable from working groups, constituent organisations, ComMET members and external experts. Working groups are a primary means for undertaking research and filling information gaps and are to provide an unbiased summary of findings and a rationale for options to the Roundtable. It is essential that working groups frame their activities as investigative and refrain from entering into negotiations or raising community expectations before options have been assessed by the Roundtable.

Members of the Roundtable work through the task of combining information to come up with recommendations that support and progress community energy. They will follow an agreed Suitability Assessment Procedure (to be determined.)

Changes to the Charter:

It is expected that community energy will evolve over the coming months and years, as will ComMET. This Terms of Reference has no set end date and will be reviewed and updated as required.

Proposed changes to the Terms of Reference require a consensus by the Roundtable. Any proposed changes will be provided to Members at least one month in advance of the meeting at which they are to be considered.

Dispute resolution:

People have diverse views and ways of expressing them. It is incumbent on members to participate in ComMET with a mindset of acceptance and even expectation that differences of opinion will occur.

Research into conflict management tells us that around 70 per cent of organisational disputes are related to task disputes and 30 per cent to personality conflicts. Trust in relationships helps keep the focus on resolution of task disputes; however if matters are not dealt with at this level they can escalate into personality conflict. Sometimes, people can also misread task disputes as personality conflicts and so building trust and applying methods to bring the focus back to the task at hand can be helpful for resolving differences.

Dispute resolution procedure:

ComMET Roundtable will appoint two members with relevant skills and experience as dispute resolution facilitators.

In the case of a dispute arising, ComMET members will attempt to resolve the dispute with the disputed party directly, will listen to and respect differences and apply negotiation and accommodation in order to resolve the matter.

If a dispute is not resolved, ComMET members will approach one of the dispute resolution facilitators to help resolve the dispute; together they will decide on a way to approach resolution. In the case of mediation it would be ideal that both parties and both dispute facilitators are present. In the case of a dispute facilitator being part of a dispute, another person needs to be appointed to help mediate. If internal mediation does not resolve the issue external support may be sought (through local government support process).

One last word:

Members of ComMET will:

- › Operate with Integrity, Boldness, Creativity, Passion and Energy.
- › Celebrate achievements and
- › Enjoy friendships we make along the way.

Appendix 3: Consortium/Partnership Agreement Template from Community Door (extract only)

Adapted from the model developed by Sandy Paton Consulting for the Central Highlands Community Consortium (2007)

This type of agreement is most appropriate for collaborations that are medium to low risk. It can be used where organisations wish to maintain their own legal entities yet still be involved in collaborative activities. It is most effective when supported by:

- › A briefing note that provides information on the background of partnering services, the drivers for collaboration
- › A Memo of Understanding (MOU) that covers how the collaboration was developed, how it will operate and where relevant how it will meet funding support requirements.

For the risk management process use the Protocol Check List for Non – Legally Binding Collaborations to identify applicable risk areas. Develop protocols that mitigate any identified threats and document these in the Partnership Agreement. It is useful to use the term “protocols” in this instance so as to differentiate from the individual organisations’ own policies and procedures. The protocols describe how the partners will work together – individuals involved in the collaboration must still follow the policies and procedures of their own individual organisation.

Complete the Risk Treatment Matrix. There should not be any identified risks that do not have at least one protocol that minimises that risk.

Introduction

Provide a short introduction including noting any funding grants which supported the development of the collaboration.

Partners

List partners by the full names of their legal entities.

Background

- › Discuss the relationships that led to the collaboration.
- › Note why the particular structure selected was chosen
- › List some of the common elements that drew the organisations together

Purpose

List the purpose of the collaboration.

Benefits of the Collaboration

For example:

- › Participating partnering organisations have identified the following benefits as outcomes of the project
- › Agreed procedures proscribing the ways in which organisations will relate to each other in undertaking their separate services i.e. referral protocols
- › Agreement on the sharing of resources and skills that improve efficiency and avoid duplication
- › Commitment to developing joint projects that value add to existing services or fill identified needs gaps
- › Commitment to supporting a continuous strengths based improvement approach to governance, client service delivery, business administration and human resource management within the Consortium and its partner organisations
- › An inclusive approach to service delivery that operates outside the social constructs of disability or ethnic differences
- › Strong multi-tiered relationships between the participating organisations that benefit clients, staff and management
- › Collaborative organisational referral systems and seamless client pathways
- › Unified approaches to key local activities and events including emergencies
- › Improved organisational knowledge and capacity
- › A strong and united voice within (name local region/community) ... enhancing the capacity of this group to advocate on behalf of its services, its client’s, their families and the broader community.

Principles

Participating organisations are committed to the principles of:
List agreed collaboration principles.

Examples:

- › Commitment to cooperation and collaboration
- › Transparency and accountability
- › Focus on service users, their families and quality of life outcomes
- › Social Justice
- › Regular and inclusive communication

Contextual Information

Example.

The Partnership Agreement and MOU between ----- and ----- are both non legally binding documents. Both documents define the intent of the collaborative strategies and processes agreed to by the partners. The documents acknowledge that all partners remain separate legal entities in their own right, with their own constituent legal and fiduciary responsibilities and remain accountable to their own parent bodies and other relevant legal authorities.

Except in the case of willful default or negligence no partner will have any liability to any other failure to perform its obligations under this Partnership Agreement and MOU and the only remedy for such failure is the termination of this Partnership Agreement and MOU.

Partner members are however committed to working in a close collaboration arrangement with each other in the area. This collaboration will involve the sharing of information and knowledge, tools and resources, and personal where appropriate, and form the basis of pro-active partnership approaches to seeking funding and other resources for the area, focused on achieving continuous strengths based improvement for client outcomes, across all services.

EXAMPLE:

| Lead Agency | Steering Group/Collective Managers | Individual Partner Organisations | Collaboration/Consortium Manager |
|---|---|---|--|
| Liaise with funding body | Oversee operational matters | Enable manger or organisational representative involvement in steering committee or collective manager’s meetings | Monitor outputs of partners via monthly reports and forms |
| Employ and manage employees of the collaboration project | Accept or reject new partners Share best practice | Recruit, employ, supervise, train and dismiss staff | Provide input to assist lead agency to monitor the performance of collaboration partners |
| Subcontract to partners, distribute funding, manage contracts | Provide relevant strategic information | Maintain a high quality of service delivery | Liaise with funding and reporting bodies to ensure accuracy of information provide – if not don through lead agency/manager; i.e. – online reporting |
| Disseminate information to each partner | Be involved in the renegotiation of funding agreement | Work within the boundaries of their own organisational polices and procedures | Submit reports required by the service agreement |
| Clarify funding agreement guidelines | Develop terms of reference for annual evaluation | Comply with funding body requirements | Develop draft documents including policies and procedures, contracts, reports for lead agency and committee/managers. (If there is no manager policy and procedure development would sit best with the Steering Committee/Collective Managers) |
| Meet with steering group/ managers annually to provide an update on the collaboration | | Complete relevant documentation in set timeframe | |
| Manage the performance of the collaboration partners and if necessary terminate contracts | | Provide audited financial reports – state when | |
| Consult with partners on negotiation of funding agreements | | Meet service agreement targets | |
| Ensure formal evaluation takes place. | | Provide service in --- areas | Ensure effective communication between all key stakeholders |
| | | | Assist in planning, coordination and delivery of annual evaluation. |

Role of Legal Entities

The role of the legal Entities is to support its service in collaborating with other collaboration partners. This support does not include the commitment of any additional financial resources, unless agreed in writing.

Collaboration Policy Objective.

Example.

The overarching policy of collaboration is that, whilst retaining organisational independence, partnering services commit to a policy of collaboration where-ever collaborative approaches can offer:

- Improved service delivery for clients; and/or
- Improved service outcomes or cost or administrative efficiencies for individual partnering organisations and/or
- More effective and strategic use of Departmental funding.

Roles and Responsibilities

It can be useful to demonstrate roles and responsibilities within the partnership with a Roles and Responsibilities Table. How this is set up will depend on the complexity of the collaboration. Where there is no special collaboration/consortium manager these responsibilities would normally sit with the lead agency unless there is a documented delegation to other partners.

Appendix 3: Project Assessment Guide (extract only)

This project assessment guide for community owned renewable energy projects has been taken from Hicks and Ison (2016). The following seven features are recommended as a framework for the Hubs to assess potential projects:

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| 1 Actors | 3 Project foundation | 5 Scale | 7 Partnerships, contributions from local businesses, contractors, organisations |
| 2 Ownership and decision making | 4 Surplus | 6 Community engagement practices | |

1 Actors

The actors who drive forward a community renewable energy project play a critical role in determining its 'community' nature. The following two spectrums get to the heart of the community in a community renewable energy (CRE) project:

Spectrum 1: Who are the actors that comprise the desired 'community' of a CE project?



In this spectrum we suggest that a community of locality more strongly embodies a CE project than a community of interest and that individuals rather than organisations are slightly more critical to the community aspect.

Spectrum 2: How many local actors are involved (e.g. as shareholders, members and active volunteers/staff)?

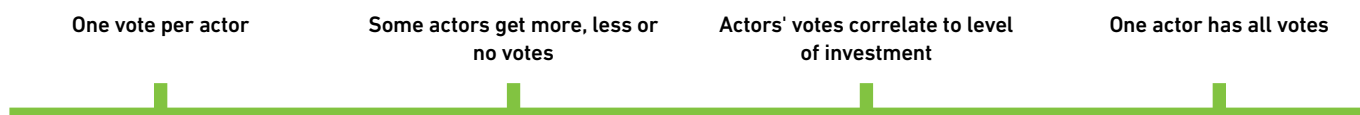


In this spectrum we suggest that community energy projects are stronger the more local actors they have involved, as this increases the reach of the project and its potential to act as a genuine means of involving and benefiting local people in renewable energy development (Hicks 2016).

2 Ownership & Decision-making

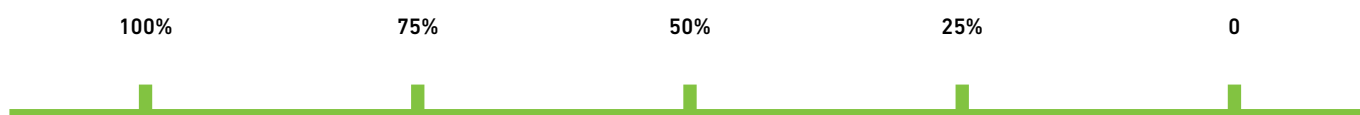
Who is involved in decision-making, and which group of actors hold a controlling interest, are fundamental aspects of a CRE project's ownership and governance structure. In particular, they are critical to understanding how much community control is embedded within a CRE project.

Spectrum 3: Distribution of voting rights & balance of decision-making power.



In this spectrum it is suggested that democratic decision making associated with one vote per actor is more strongly community oriented than one vote per share or one actor having all the decision making power.

Spectrum 4: Percentage of local ownership / investment



In this spectrum we suggest that a higher percentage of local ownership/investment constitutes a stronger approach to CRE.

3 Project foundation

How the renewable energy project started, who drove it forward in the early stages and for what reasons forms the foundation of a project and becomes embedded in how a project develops.

Spectrum 5: Who drove the initial stages of the project's development?

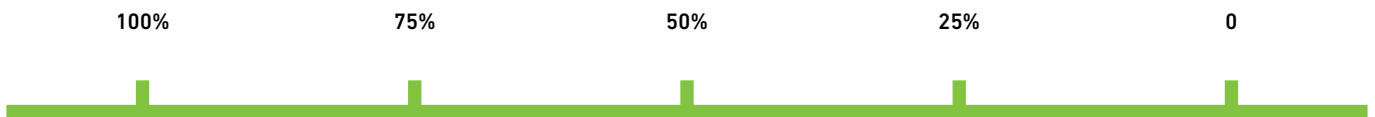


In this spectrum we suggest a project initiated by a group or individual local to the project location is more strongly a community approach than an outsider developer or business proposing a project.

4 Surplus

There are two types of surplus that can be created in a CRE project - electricity and money. A fundamental question for a CRE project is who benefits from this surplus.

Spectrum 6: Percentage of surplus going to community benefit (e.g. as cheaper electricity, community grants). Note that this spectrum does not include the surplus going to shareholders (local or otherwise).



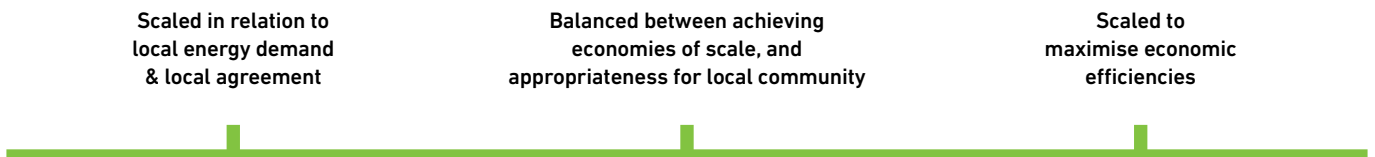
In this spectrum we suggest that a higher percentage going to wider community benefit the more strongly community the renewable energy project. It is important to note, however, that not all CRE projects generate a financial surplus, and such project must not be penalised for this.

The distribution of surplus and who it benefits from it is closely related to ownership (features #2 above), as one of the forms of distributing surplus is providing a dividend or bill credit to the owner/members of a project. We consider this to be covered in Spectrum 4.

5 Scale

How the size and scale of the project is integrated with local aspirations and local landscape/ streetscape is an important consideration. One thing to consider is how the generation capacity of the technology compares to local electricity demand (e.g. an aspiration to be a zero net energy town or 100% renewable energy). Here, the community of locality is of particular importance, as they are the hosts of the technology.

Spectrum 7: This spectrum represents choices around the scale of the project and how this relates to the local community and to their motivations

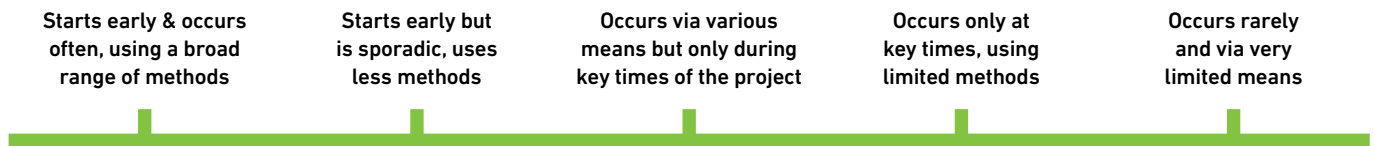


In this spectrum we suggest that to be a CRE project, the scale needs to be matched with local views on what is appropriate and desirable.

6 Community engagement practice

Community engagement is crucial to the process element of CRE as it is a key means through which members of the project community are involved in the initiation, development and operation of a project.

Spectrum 8: Levels of engagement - diversity, consistency & longevity of community engagement practices.



In this spectrum we suggest that a renewable energy project that employs a diverse range of community engagement methods, does engagement consistently and often throughout the life of the project, and starts early on in the project is more strongly a community energy project than one that engages with the community infrequently and using a limited set of methods (Hicks 2016). Many of the social benefits from CRE are built up over time as opportunities are provided for people to form relationships with each other and the technology.

7 Partnerships, contributions from local businesses, contractors, organisations

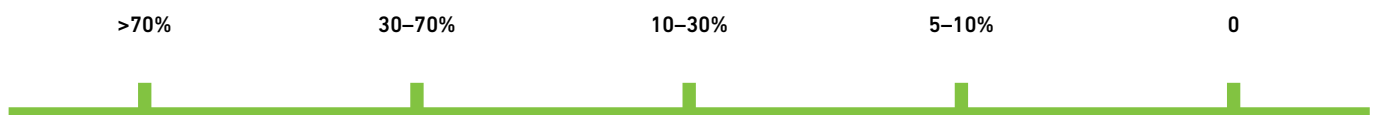
One of the benefits that is often described with CRE projects is the greater use of local labor and knowledge and the associated jobs and economic benefits this delivers. In addition, CRE projects often form partnerships with other local organisations (e.g. education providers, aboriginal and conservation groups), which helps to integrate the project in the community and build understanding of the technology.

Spectrum 9: Number of local businesses and organisations involved in the project (as more than shareholders)



In this Spectrum we propose that a higher number of local organisations and contractors involved in the project constitutes a stronger CRE project.

Spectrum 10: Dollar value spent locally as a % of project costs



In this Spectrum we propose that a higher percentage of the project costs spent locally constitutes a stronger community renewable energy project.

Results: a methodology for defining community renewable energy projects

Having identified some defining characteristics or features of CRE in the spectrums above, the following is a proposed methodology for assessing whether a renewable energy project should be eligible for CRE status.

This is a two-part assessment methodology. First, a qualitative and quantitative assessment of performance for each of the key features outlined in the section above (actors, ownership and decision-making, surplus, etc). Second, collating the features to determine the project's overall performance - the strength to which it can be considered a genuine community project when these key aspects are brought together.

Part 1: For each key feature project, applicants would undertake a quantitative and qualitative assessment:

Quantitative: Renewable energy projects would be assessed along a spectrum with five criteria to determine where along the spectrum a project sits. Where possible the criteria will be qualitative. This will help determine how weak or strong community energy is in this dimension of the project. The spectrums above are examples.

Qualitative: Project applicants would provide a short description of how the nominated placement on the spectrum was achieved, why the specific approach was taken and the outcomes achieved. This will act to qualify the placement on the spectrum, as well as flag potential discrepancies between the applicant's interpretation of the spectrum and its intended use. This could be in response to prompting questions.

Part 2: The results of Part one are then brought together to determine a "footprint" or a "score" of a renewable energy projects which indicates the degree of community participation and benefit.

Collate the results from each spectrum into a score. The score from each spectrum can then be multiplied by the weighting and added together to give a final score. A minimum score would be required to 'pass' as a community renewable energy project eligible for treatment by the planning system as a community project.

It is essential that these quantitative approaches be accompanied by an analysis of the qualitative information provided.

Table 1: CRE Spectrums and prompt questions

| Feature | Spectrums | Prompt questions |
|---|---|---|
| Actors* | <p>Who are the actors that comprise the desired 'community' of a CRE project?</p> <p>How many local actors are involved (as shareholders, members and active volunteers/staff)?</p> | <p>Describe why you located your project at this place on the spectrum, please provide supporting evidence.</p> <p>In what ways is the project a 'community' project?</p> <p>How do you define 'community' and how is this assessed in the project's membership/ shareholding application process?</p> |
| Decision Making and Ownership* | <p>Distribution of voting rights and balance of decision-making power.</p> <p>Percentage of local ownership / investment</p> | <p>Describe why you located your project at this place on the spectrum, please provide supporting evidence. This might include both formal (e.g. voting at Annual General Meetings) and informational (e.g. community workshops) decision-making.</p> <p>What types of opportunities have there been for group discussion and deliberation?</p> <p>How have the local community been involved in project design?</p> <p>How has community feedback and involvement influenced project design?</p> |
| Project Foundation | <p>Who drove the initial stages of the project development?</p> | <p>Describe why you located your project at this place on the spectrum, please provide supporting evidence.</p> <p>What's was the original purpose or motivation behind this project?</p> |
| Surplus** | <p>Percentage of surplus going to community benefit (e.g. as cheaper electricity, grants). Note that this is beyond that going to local shareholders</p> | <p>Describe why you located your project at this place on the spectrum, please provide supporting evidence.</p> <p>Who benefits from the project?</p> <p>Why is this important to the project?</p> |
| Scale | <p>What was the key decision criteria around scale of technology?</p> | <p>Describe why you located your project at this place on the spectrum, please provide supporting evidence.</p> <p>How this project does integrates with local aspirations and the local landscape/ streetscape?</p> |
| Community engagement practice | <p>Levels of engagement - diversity, consistency & longevity of community engagement practices.</p> | <p>Describe why you located your project at this place on the spectrum, please provide supporting evidence.</p> <p>Please describe the range of community engagement practices used.</p> <p>What is the role/ purpose/ importance of community engagement in the project?</p> <p>Tell us about a significant event in the life of the project that might give a snapshot of the nature of the project.</p> |
| Partnerships, contributions from local businesses, contractors, organisations | <p>Number of local businesses and organisations involved in the project</p> <p>Dollar value spent locally as a % of project costs</p> | <p>Describe why you located your project at this place on the spectrum, please provide supporting evidence. For example, letters of support or contracts as evidence.</p> <p>Describe the type of relationships and outcomes/benefits they have delivered.</p> <p>If there have been few such relationships, explain why (e.g. remote or very small community).</p> |

*NOTE: analysis of actors and decision-making will reveal who hold majority decision-making power in the project.

** NOTE: this section must include a way of recognising if the project generates little or no surplus and not penalising them for this