

Community Power Hub Bendigo Inception Workshop

Tuesday 12 September 2017, Bendigo Library Meeting Room 1

Attendees

- Taryn Lane, Akin Consulting
- Sheri Doyle, Sustainability Victoria
- Jeff Bothe, CoGB Economic Development (and representing Bendigo Manufacturing Grp)
- John Lowther, Bank Australia
- Grant McVicar, ICAN – keynote speaker in renewables event in Aus in 2007
- Rosie Dean, local resident – passionate about renewables (was a school principal)
- Ian Dean, local resident – passionate about renewables
- Dave Richardson, Deakin University – works on Deakin Energy – Smart Energy Solutions leader has started – connected to Smarter Bendigo Movement – Deakin has pioneered battery storage technology, etc (also representing Coliban Water)
- Audrey Dickens, Gunbower Development Group
- Marika Wanklyn, DELWP Community Energy
- Jason Schubert, CoGB Regional and Sustainable Development Unit, small business
- Jeff Ackland, Bendigo Health
- Colin Lambie, BSG – founding member of BSG
- Bob Jamieson, Haven Home Safe and Chair of Junortoun Community Action Group
- Graham Alldardice, BSG
- Jenny Turner, Campaspe Shire Council, Community Planner
- Geoff Caine, DELWP Loddon Mallee, Sustainability Programs Manager
- Rob Law, CVGA
- Jay Smith, MASC
- Peter Brain, MASG
- Mick Lewin, MASG
- Keith Reynard, CoGB
- Sherrie Coote, Advance Heathcote Inc.
- Chris Corr, BSG, Vice President
- Chris Weir, BSG, President
- Jo Kaptein, MASH (arrived 9:40am)
- Michelle Barton, ResourceSmart (LMWRRG) (arrived at 12:30pm in time for project brainstorming)
- Mike Lowther, Bendigo Northern District Community Enterprise

Apologies - Allan Stobaus, Loddon Shire Council, Rochester Community Group, CFCV, Make a Change Australia, RDV (Hayley Cail).

28 people attending

Taryn outlined agenda for day

Sheri outlined SV's requirements for the Bendigo CPH

Chris Weir - Future Vision of BSG – Bendigo 100% renewable-owned energy

Projects

- Bulk Buy of 800 homes with solar – 200 MW solar into the community
 - Bendigo Library – 20 kW system – revolving energy fund (was crowdfunded)
 - Discovery Centre – 11 kW system
 - Tramways – 50 kW system – monitoring using technology
 - Archives – 30 kW system – BSG funded with loan from Bank Australia
 - Multiple CoGB buildings – 150 kW
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- 550 GWh per annum is used for electricity in Bendigo (from substations data)

Community Power Hub Bendigo

- confident that BSG as Hub Hosts will assist the Hub to create 1 or likely more flagship projects

What would we like to achieve through the hub in 5 years (butchers paper activity)

- Keith Reynard - establish a target for becoming 100% renewable
- Chris Weir – thinking about achieving that by 2036 – Keith - will be established through the process
- Rob Law – unlock clean energy for renters and a self-sustaining revolving fund
- Dave Richardson – VRET targets are taken up by the private sector and community
- Graham BSG – Identify activities and fostering that in area
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- Chris Corr – Bendigo is growing at 1.5% per annum – how do we provide power for the population and increase energy efficiency
- Jeff Bothe – providing a community resource that goes far beyond the CoGB – community energy or energy type projects need to be developed in the wider region is the challenge
- Sherrie – Rural communities committee for CoGB – should be engaged as part of this process
- Mick – lower the boundaries in each shire to work across boundaries a bit more – use expertise from each area
- Grant – important for hub to recognised in the area as being the go to group to get information – need to understand where the energy flows are currently (ie – gas, transportation – not just electricity) this is all leaking out at the moment not just electricity – how to recirculate heating and cooling in the community – we need to understand the resources, etc in the area so we can fill any gaps and meet the 5-year target
- Colin – we have looked at gas and transport fuel and thought we'd start with 550Gw of energy! – we want the hub to be sustainable past the 2 years of funding from the state government – need a sustainable model
- Sherrie – need more community education around EE and RE
- Jo – have big goals but need to look at targets year on year – energy poverty and increasing capacity

Taryn – What is Community Energy?

- 55 CE projects operating around Australia with 80 CE groups (30 of these in Victoria)
- large percentage is solar and 2 wind farms
- it's about local ownership and giving people a pathway to participant in RE developments
- experiencing significant policy reform – CPHs are only 1 of many RE projects in policy
- 13% renewable in 2017 to 40% renewable by 2025
- Social feasibility is tested very early on in CE projects
- many benefits of highly engaged communities
- a lot of desire for community investment (congalla sold out in 16 mins)

- Dave Richardson – raising the civic awareness in groups like BE. Bendigo – economic development and local jobs growth and CE's role in this and as a viable opportunity for growth and expansion – energy front and centre rather than a add on cost centre – mainstreaming CE - In Echuca, new development has allowed for a significant area of land near the development for RE – this should be embedded into new developments – raising collective consciousness
- Jo Kaptein – would like to set up working groups for key target areas like revolving energy funds, document and share this expertise to other communities
- Bob Jamieson – annual survey of residents has shown complaining about energy and heating costs – need a more in depth understanding of EE in the community and how to utilise energy/gas technology sustainably
- Jeff Bothe – LG in procurement policy could make suggestion with major projects look at alternatives rather than just doing business as usual
- Chris Corr – manufacturing industry in CoGB and beyond – can we grow this
- Keith Reynard – research focus R & D – baseline and opportunities
- Grant McVicar – CE used to development social enterprises/businesses – use high cost of energy or climate change is an issue or business is remote – renewable energy farm – installing heat pumps to socially disadvantaged groups – people get involved and have ownership on this – this takes a huge chunk out of government and creates businesses
- Jo Kaptein – how do we get the message across to people in the region about what the hub is about and what it can assist people to do
- Rob Law – the Bendigo CPH needs to connect people to the idea that they can have affordable and renewables

****Channel 9 News interviewed Chris Weir and BSG**

Values of the Hub (butchers paper exercise)

Jay Smith – openness and information sharing between different communities

Sherrie – inclusivity of large and small communities

Graham – access and equity

Ian Dean – need a mechanism or awareness of cohesiveness – leave your egos at the door – collaborative, cooperative and integrity

Jo – think outside the box

Rosie Dean – keep the future in mind and share current research and information

John Lowther – education should be a value focus for the community, industry – education as a future focus element

****Channel 9 News filmed Taryn speaking**

Collaborative Governance discussion – led by Taryn Lane

C4CE

- 86 members across Australia in C4CE (business, and organisations) – run the national energy congress
- important to have a spokesperson when there is advocacy involved – branding important to not misrepresent the members

Collaborative Governance – led by Chris Corr

- we have draft ideas and would like buy in from the group today
- we need an advisory group to advise hub and that it isn't resource intensive
- advisory group needs to lead decision making on hub activities
- working groups to facilitate projects

What else do we need (butcher's paper activity)

Grant McVicar – do we have an IP policy – important for volunteer groups

Jeff Bothe – part of the solution that we're looking for will come from outside the CoGB – working group criteria

Mick Lewin – so why is only Bendigo, we thought it included projects in MASC, etc

Sheri, Taryn and Chris clarified the idea of the Bendigo CPH will be to put up projects within the CoGB area but Bendigo CPH can indirectly assist groups within other surrounding council areas

**maybe send out information after the workshop (from BSG) that includes projects along boundary of CoGB, can be part of the projects put up

Sherrie – communication strategy needed and branding

Jay Smith – conflict of interest

Skills at each table (3 tables with butcher's paper)

Table 1

Jeff Bothe (CoGB Economic Development Officer/Bendigo Manufacturing Group)

- Business Database (regarding EE and RE?) – bottom line benefits (direct benefit to individuals on database needs to occur for them to consent to being on the database)
- BMG meet monthly – 17 reps from different industry sectors
- Knowledge – 2003 to current on buildings and historical database on energy and investment – installing PV – no information on battery storage though

John Lowther (Bank Australia)

- Need to know who are the environmentally aware consumers (Sheri replied that SV social research can assist with this soon)
- Finance, business acumen/strategy and business modelling
- Consumer based financing around sustainability – offsetting work done on new builds (ie – recycled materials used), new cars – done at a grassroots level

Grant McVicar (Independent non-locally experienced community member)

- Lots of experience in negotiation – manufacturing utilities and between government departments – drafted legislation and advised on regulatory issues – non-local value
- 20 years' experience – developed, populated and monitored EE programs – 5000 people worldwide
- Advised on national electricity laws in Canada and US and the reliability of energy

Rosie and Ian Dean (passionate local community members)

- Dean – Chemical engineering research – mechanical, electrical – CSIRO – concerned with other people's carbon footprint
 - Well read on technical issues and amazed at misinformation
 - The one people come to for assistance with sustainability, etc
- Rosie – school leadership – retired school principal
 - Experienced in funding submission writing

Sheri Doyle (SV)

- Waste education and broad sustainability background having worked in many state, local government roles across the Loddon Mallee region over the past 10 years – sustainability educator

Table 2

- Role of local government – linking community groups together – with skills of BSG group
- Bulk buy – shared learnings, p energy – suppliers criteria
- Good governance skills – organisations represented
- Negotiation skills with suppliers

- Willingness to share learnings
- CE – taking the community with you
- Ability to survey people
- Research/business/finance skills – collective knowledge
- Promotion/dist/business
- Large number of organisations
- Technical skills
- Reporting
- How to measure success
- Grant writing/business skills
- Different methods of financing energy projects
- Further skill development – upskilling communities
- Identifying opportunities
- Thinking outside the square
- PR skills
- Good IT skills
- Marketers
- Community perspective

Table 3

- Solar heritage fact sheet – Mt Alexander Shire
- Large Scale solar calculator – CVGA
- Establishing legals and insurance to operational entity
- Financial modelling
- Understanding the energy sector
- Connecting to small regional communities
- Knowledge from past experiences/projects
- Giving voice to small and disempowered communities – opportunity for engagement
- Collective networks – link projects to challenges and needs
- Community engagement and education
- Access/hosting of potential sites
- Purchasing power – PPA's
- Stakeholder resources – access to industry
- Goodwill – collective ambition/social change
- Engaging communications/resources
- Skills in leveraging funds
- Respected – trusted advisor status – leadership capital
- Linking state and federal expertise to local level
- Entrepreneurial – innovative solutions – take a risk

BSG Projects – led by Colin Lambie

- Demonstration using participants to explain CE potential projects in Bendigo
- need to do more work on choosing models of CE – we need to go to community for the money to go to the entity (Ian Dean acting as this!) – need information from businesses (recent bills, etc and funding)
- Clear sky up to project 15 – project 11 sold out to investors in 6 hours
- get money from investors with the promise that they'll get their money back over six years – higher risk than putting in a bank but better return - we will need to buy things with only 10 year warranty – businesses/local government get the benefit of PR through being involved in the CE project

- one model is to have 20 investors into CE project entity – BSG have traditionally done projects with only one investor

- Chris Corr – project ideas

– we want money to be invested in local community to benefit local community through the Bendigo CPH

- short discussion on pumped hydro – Jeff has idea using compressed air and pumped hydro system for double energy benefit

Mapping Project Ideas (mapping activity)

Bendigo Community Power Hub Project Ideas Map #1

- Gold mine workings – rehabilitate with solar parks
- Concentrated solar power – desalination of groundwater ie – Coliban Water
- RE local education project – mobile demo home
- Large scale waste redirect facility for bioenergy
- Microgrids – JPNH, SANH, SH, VH, CONH, CH, TBH – Gov??
- Mapping heating and cooling for industry
- Mapping waste streams
- Waste to power
- Household batteries – all
- Future – charge points for electric car
- Councils use purchasing power for local RE generation
- Future Projects – waste to energy – sewerage – methane gas
- Future Projects – waste to energy – rubbish – methane
- Combine different “roof” owners into packages – community/sports, education/aged community, business
- Electric vehicle charging at CPH sites – engagement
- Infrastructure and operations audit support – how to make buildings work for the school
- Solar on Goods Shed Castlemaine
- Collaboration not duplicating – mapping the opportunities
- Solar on Castlemaine secondary college
- New housing developments with best practice RE design and infrastructure
- Solar at White Hills landfill
- Solar farm and storage – Axedale transmission line

Community Energy Project Ideas (incl shires of Campaspe, Mt Alex and Loddon) Map #2

- Heathcote low-income community rooftop solar
- Roof top solar for : Heathcote Heath, Primary Schools, Kinders, Community Orgs
- Redirecting investment into local offsite PPA’s (eg councils having 10 year contracts W/CE projects for black or green power
- Community retailer
- Resource mapping – potential sources in rural communities, farms, orchards, wineries, etc
- Off the grid small towns
- Hydrogen energy
- Complimenting pumped hydro work with Coliban Water 4D printed pipes
- Concept renewable energy from dairy/pig waste
- EV charging points at schools – linked to solar
- Concept solar farm at Gunbower and Girgarre



- Creating a solar fund for community – Hepburn 1st
- Schools as energy community hubs – powering cars, powering houses, education centres, waste collection points, distribution points
- Supporting schools to establish sustainability leadership networks for teachers and students across regions e.g. small quick response grants – CRT saves
- Local retailer/gentailer onselling local electricity