

Outcomes from the Totally Renewable Phillip Island Public Meeting, June 24th, 2018

Present – see attached list

Apologies – Jeff Nottle, Pam Spencer, Kay Setches, Brian Paynter MP

Welcome and Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners, the Bunurong Peoples

Introductions

The idea of a Totally Renewable Phillip Island sprang from a conversation initially between Moragh Mackay (Energy Innovation Co-operative) and Kylie McMurray (PICAL & Boomerang Bags Phillip Island and San Remo), at the Southern Gippsland Sustainability Festival in April 2018. Following on from this conversation Moragh and Kylie initiated a meeting with several community groups and individuals active on the Island in the environmental space. These included:

- Phillip Island Community and Learning Centre
- Phillip Island Conservation Group
- Bimbadeen Farm
- Boomerang Bags
- Phillip Island Landcare
- Plastic free Phillip Island and San Remo
- Women Connect

And others including Bass Coast Shire Mayor Pamela Rothfield, Judy Lawrence, and Kaye Setches.

Agreement was reached at this initial meeting to initiate a public meeting with quality guest speakers to present examples of what is possible and to engage widely on the topic of Phillip Island sourcing 100% of its nett energy from renewable sources.

Presenters at the Public meeting were:

- Taryn Lane, Hepburn Wind and Akin Consulting
- Matt Charles Jones – Totally Renewable Yackandandah and Mondo Power
- Moragh Mackay – Energy Innovation Co-operative
- Bob Davie – Bimbadeen Carbon Farming
- Lauren Barker – Plastic free and Boomerang Bags Phillip Island and San Remo
- Heidi Hamm – Sustainability Victoria

Over 120 people attended on the day, and 200 more watched the event on Facebook live.

The following motion was presented and carried:

"We support the formation of a Totally Renewable Phillip Island working group to support existing and develop new community initiatives to pursue the following draft vision:

"Phillip Island will be a carbon neutral community by 2030 through our collective efforts to use clean, efficient energy, reduce pollution and offset emissions."

The following additional groups were also nominated on the day, to participate in the Working Group:

- Grow Lightly
- 'Create 1 Co' (not identifiable)

Questions and discussions followed. The Slido app was used throughout the meeting to ask three survey questions of the audience and to invite the audience to put forward their questions to the speakers. The results of the surveys (including from hard-copy versions), and a list of the questions asked with some responses, are provided on the following pages:

Poll results and questions from the Totally Renewable Phillip Island Public Meeting, held in Cowes on Sunday June 24th, 2018

1. What brought you here today? (50 respondents)

- General interest in the idea of going totally renewable - 56%
- Excitement! What a great initiative - 30%
- I want to support uptake of renewable energy - 68%
- I want to do something positive about reducing greenhouse emissions- 60%
- I have expertise and I would like to contribute - 26%

2. What interests you most about the totally renewable movement? (48 respondents)

- It is community driven - 50%
- It supports energy self-sufficiency - 77%
- It supports a distributed energy network - 21%
- It provides opportunities for people to act locally - 44%
- It strengthens community and builds capacity - 54%

3. What most interests you about the possibilities of Totally Renewable Phillip Island? (51 respondents)

- The support for community groups to install solar - 33%
- The opportunity to invest in community-owned renewable energy - 63%
- Keeping energy investment in the local economy - 69%
- Co-ordinating how and where renewables go into the grid - 12%

Questions (some were responded to on the day, others since, others still to be answered)

Q: Why are the private business at Phillip Island Nature Parks able to serve all their coffee in take away cups? This seems out of character with no plastic

A:

Q: How do we bring community along for journey? How do we ensure equity for all islanders, including visitors who support local community, jobs and small business?

A: MM: The Working Group participants are committed to making this inclusive and will plan to engage widely and often to ensure all Islanders have many opportunities to participate, learn and have a say. We are also committed to equity and that is principally why we want a planned, co-ordinated response. Only this will ensure broad community participation. We will look closely at Hepburn Shire initiatives that include visitors plus we have local strategies to draw on, including the Visitor Economy Strategy 2035, The Phillip Island Nature Parks, Bass Coast Shire Council and Westernport Water Strategies

Q: The motion is ambitious and needs a better understanding of the parameters eg how will visitors emissions be counted???

A: TL: Counting tourism emissions is not standard under the global accounting methods, however, the impact in high tourism areas is high and someone needs to take responsibility for them. How the Hepburn Shire – another tourist destination – is counting the impact of tourism emissions has been by the Z-NET project team working with their council and Daylesford and Macedon Tourism to utilise their quarterly visitation tracking reports. Visitation to the region is tracked through the National Visitor Survey and the International Visitor Survey. Visitation statistics are updated quarterly and have a three month lag. Further electricity usage is mapped through the smart meter data from Powercor.

Q: How do we bring along leading businesses in the renewable energy space into the fold after they have independently gone forward with their renewable investment?

A: TL: Any transition to zero-net energy or carbon neutrality will take a range of actions from the household, business through to the wider community level. Activities should be seen as complementary and creating a place-based masterplan can help to tie together these various initiatives.

Q: Let's not forget our neighbours at French island who are totally off grid- a learning ground I'm sure!

A:

Bill McKibben, 350.org, ged as big as WW2 mobilisation

Q: Are we only talking about grid enabled solutions?

A: SD: I think you will find the working group is open to any measures which will assist in the achievement of the target, and that will include energy efficiencies, grid connected renewables and off-grid renewables as well as other activities!

Q: Does the state govt have a timetable for legislation that allows small scale retailers or comm groups to sell electricity on the grid as opposed to behind grid

A: SD: Feed-in tariffs enable the selling of electricity from small scale generation, on the grid, now. Hepburn Wind sells electricity it generates into the grid. Micro-grids where local renewable electricity generation can be sold locally, are in operation as trials in Victoria, probably still needing some “tweaking” of regulations to make it easier. A community-owned or community-partnered retailer will assist also- coming but not here yet.

Q: How do you buy locally created energy/electricity?

A: MM: There will be, or are already, several options to do this:

- Behind the meter options for medium to large scale users
- Micro Power Purchase Agreements for businesses
- Micro and mini grids for people and business that live or operate adjacent to each other on the grid and can therefore share power generated on this part of the grid
- Community-owner energy retailers that buy from renewable sources – Co-operative Power Australia hopes to be such a retailer and is likely to be operational in the next 12 to 24 months. (The Energy Innovation Co-operative is an organisational member of this Co-operative and is working to bring an initial retail offering forward later this year.)
- Commercial retailers such as Powershop
- White-labelling with social enterprise retailers such as Enova (not registered in Victoria) and Energy Locals(awaiting Registration as a retailer in Victoria)

Q: Why do SP Ausnet restrict solar feed in to 4.5KW per phase?

A:

Q: Can you please send us a copy of the slides?

A: SD: Yes, we have the presentations up on the Energy Innovation Co-op’s website www.eico-op.com.au , or you can email a direct request to susand@eico-op.com.au now and I’ll send them.

Q: Can anyone talk about batteries for home solar? We have wanted to do solar for years but as we are not home during the day it is not economically viable.

A: SD: The Energy Innovation Co-op runs information sessions on solar/batteries and will be organising sessions on Phillip Island, or a community group can ask us for their own session any time.

Q: What regulatory requirements act as a barrier to micro grids?

A: TL: Local energy trading, peer to peer, virtual net metering.

Q: Who paid for the installations across Yack?

A:

Q: To left of stage, thru window, is new Cowes Health Hub (substitute for hospital). What do you think about rooftop soak PV as small as 4kW?

A: SD: If you have daytime energy usage, a suitable roof space, and a suitably sized solar PV system installed by a good installer, then solar usually pays for itself relatively quickly.

TL: Rooftop solar is reducing in price by around 10% per annum, most homes can put solar up with a pay back period of 4-8 years currently.

Q: Taryn are you employed by Hepburn Wind and if so how many salaried positions would you recommend to see new projects through?

A: TL: Yes, I work 2 days per week managing the co-operative, importantly we are owners and operators of the 2 turbines, so have a lot of complicated asset management arrangements. Salaried positions depend on what exactly you are doing – are you looking to fully develop a project, or partner with a developer? What is the scale of the project you want to deliver? If you are looking at engagement role it can often be done by volunteers.

Q: Is Phillip island a good scale at which to achieve zero nett emissions?

A: SD: An island, particularly one with so many relevant groups and businesses and individuals already active and interested, makes a good start which can then extend outwards. Other towns, cities, local government areas or islands, in Australia and overseas, have set 100% renewable or zero emissions targets and are well on the way to achieving them, or have achieved them already.

Q: Invest in Renewables obviously desirable but easier reduce emissions by reduce consumption Isnt best result upgrade efficiency houses first then renewables?

A: SD: We need both, at the same time. Not “either/ or”. Both!

Q: What goals does our local council have for renewable energy?

A: SD: Bass Coast Council in 2017, adopted a target for its internal operations, “a reduction of 50% of emissions from 2009/2010 emissions levels by 2025”. This will be measured by “emissions per Bass Coast Shire resident” ie because the Shire is growing, it won’t be an overall emission reduction of 50% of Council’s emissions, but calculated per number of residents. Council has been installing solar and energy efficiency measures at many Shire buildings. (Bass Coast Councillor Whelan was present at the 24th June Cowes meeting and responded to this one on the day.)

Q: Oakland (San Fran) just declared target to deliver negative emissions. Don't we need more powerful language than Totally Renewable to stress too little too late

A: SD: This target is the first community-wide target for our region. It is a great start, so let’s just see how we go with this one first!

Q: Wave and tidal power?

A: MM: Yes, it would be great to see tidal generation part of the mix. Early conversations have been had with owners of the tidal generator at The Narrows (Newhaven) and they have made a preliminary

offer of the generator structure and potential to connect with their expertise and university researchers

Q: Are wind turbines the only option, isnt there a smaller residential wind power system we can install?

A: SD: The Energy Innovation Co-operative has seen several smaller wind turbines installed in this area, some good, some not so good. We can provide advice on issues to consider, and contacts.

Q: What can you say about <http://mash.org.au/hepburn>

A: TL: The Hepburn Solar Bulk Buy is run by MASH which is hosted by CVGA. Hepburn Wind and Hepburn Shire Council are partners on the project. A solar bulk buy makes it easier for people to trust the installer as they know the checks and balances have been done already. Since we launched it two months ago we have already had 75 solar roof sales and 10 powerwalls – we are aiming for at least 200 this year.

Q: What cooperation have you negotiated with Ausnet?

A: MM: Mondo Power is supportive of the Totally Renewable concept and representatives have indicated an interest in talking further on how they might be involved on Phillip Island going forward. An approach to Ausnet is likely as an early step in the planning phase, as they have indicated talking early is their preference.