**Community opportunity to develop a local energy plan that will benefit the community**

**Introduction**

Many thanks for being given this opportunity to present this proposal to the Community Council. To minimise jargon, I have set the paper out in a Q&A format for easy reading and to minimise technical content. I hope this will be of help in the understanding of the proposal. It is also important to note this is about community benefits not individual house owners. Home Energy Scotland has been established to provide advice and finance to allow energy saving changes in the home. Community projects are supported and funded by \*CARES**, (Community and Renewable Energy Scheme)**

\* CARES – see attached pdf file

**What is local energy?**

Unlike traditional energy generation (by burning coal or gas, for example), renewable energy is energy generated from natural sources such as sunlight, wind or waves, that are continually replenished.

Local energy is the delivery of renewable energy projects involving a range of public, private and community organisations for the benefit of local consumers operating within a defined area which could be Ward 5 for the purpose of this proposal.

**What are the benefits of local energy?**
Local energy benefits local economies by re-generating communities, delivering financial benefits to the community and its stakeholders, and creating jobs. Local energy generation can also help alleviate fuel poverty and empower communities by delivering benefits to the community.
 **How can Cares help?**
They are Scotland's one-stop-shop for all your local energy needs. Their advice is free and impartial, and we will provide support y at every stage - from initial planning, through development and funding applications, right up to and beyond the launch.

 They administer the Scottish Government's Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES), which offers grants and loans to support local energy development across Scotland.

This support covers local ownership and/ or community involvement for shared ownership projects and local energy systems. CARES also supports projects contributing to Scotland’s 1GW of locally owned energy by 2020 ambition and aims to maximise the impact from community benefit funds.

**What work has been undertaken so far?**

My first engagement with CARES was in 2019. I was keen to investigate the potential opportunities that could be pursued to impact and benefit the community. I was made aware that significant funds were available yet with limited uptake. Working with Gemma Murray, Lead Officer at CARES who has responsibility for our geographical area, Gemma was able to provided me with a better understanding of the \*funding structure and eligibility requirements and how to access funding. Further details can be found by following the link below.

\*<https://www.localenergy.scot/funding/>

**Extract**

**CARES enablement grant**

Are you thinking about a community renewable energy project but aren’t sure where to start?

CARES enablement grant funding of up to £25,000 is available to fund non-capital aspects of a project. Funding can help with start-up costs of feasibility studies, community consultations and other preparatory costs.

**Discussions and engagement with South Ayrshire Council**

I met with Councillors Siobhian Brown and Ian Cochrane, (portfolio remit for energy). The purpose of the meeting was to explore the opportunity of working in partnership with the Council. Unfortunately, the Council cannot apply direct to CARES for funding but indicated they would be happy to support the partnership. As part of the support I was put in touch with the relevant Council Officer, Colin Love, Social Enterprise Development Officer. Colin and I have been working together and have produced a \*draft Project Development Map. We have also engaged with Tom Burns who has responsible for Energy portfolio for the Council. Working with council staff is proving to be exceptionally useful. Both Colin and Tom are keen to work with us. This clearly demonstrates what can be achieved through engagement and partnership working.

 The project map identifies the tasks that require to be undertaken to allow us to deliver a successful project. I have attached a copy of the development map for your perusal.

\*Project Development Map copy attached

**Charitable Status**

 The main barrier identified is being able to provide evidence of charitable status hence bringing it to the attention to the Community Council.

**Way Forward**

**Proposal**

The Establishment of two Working Groups, (Finance and Technology respectively) one to investigate the process to gain charitable status and the second group to develop a detailed viable energy plan for the community we serve.

I would be happy to lead the Technology group and invite other members with an interest or knowledge in this area.

The Finance group, I have limited knowledge on the processes to gaining charitable status so I would call on others with knowledge/expertise in this area to consider joining this group.

**In Summary**

I believe we have an exciting opportunity here to achieve something both viable and sustainable for our community. With world focus on energy and the pending elections there is no doubt significant funding will become available to support energy initiatives. You will be aware of the COP 26 Conference taking place in Glasgow later this year. This would be a perfect platform to showcase our plans.

Alan Roseweir