



Notes from Smart Energy Workshop

Summary

Paul Phare, Energy4All, talked through a whole systems approach to energy and presented the different stakeholders needing to be involved in this. (See separate slide presentation).

We had an interesting discussion around should the Local Authority sit at the heart of this; what other important stakeholders come into this including data.

Spoke around the Bristol City Leap approach and how it allowed community energy organisations to speak directly with bidders to embed their suggestions into the City Leap project. Vattenfall are very supportive of this.

Spoke around the Energy Bill and the funding aligning between LA and national government with the key intermediary being Local Authorities.

Finally around engagement, how do you get people to invest their time and understand the benefits of engaging in smart local energy systems.

Presentation Notes

Why? - Brings together energy supply, storage, heat, transport and buildings to interact in a smart way

Systems thinking applied to this. Local Authority is the centre of this with knowledge and assets to bring in key stakeholders including

- Developers and innovators
- Data experts
- Tradespeople
- Citizens and communities – very important, behavioural change is required and where community energy comes in. An agent of change
- Businesses
- Investors
- Energy networks

LAs struggle with capacity with this.

Why are communities not in the middle – guided by LA as the natural co-ordinator and focal point looking at the energy system socially, environmentally and financially.



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Should people be the centre of this to make it smart? Focus to take action for energy in their area.

Each stakeholder has an agenda and so someone in the centre that can co-ordinate this.

Hard to see the whole system from a local level, LAs should/could be seeing more holistically.

Q's on what comes next from local power plan. If funded properly to drive locally LAs could be the convener for this. Projects show the need to draw this back up. Policy push is more for LAs to be convener and co-ordinator.

Citizens assemblies are an opportunity to feed into this.

LA is a representative of the local people, co-ordinator role but lacks resources and funding

To communicate with a Local Authority need to offer the cost saving opportunities.

Data also critical at a system level, show the answers you might not expect.

Finance on bringing in investment from the outside.

Needs a decision making process – LAs can do this.

Needs a more holistic look planning wise rather than project by project basis.

Notes from Discussion

City Leap – Bristol approach rooted in a whole systems approach

LA and developer bringing in capital and expertise

How does the community benefit?

Created a fund through approaching bidders – the one who one had this in their bid

Part of the bid to create a smart local energy system for Bristol – pipeline of 182MW of local renewables and how they keep this locally for local consumers. Developed by BCC, community energy, DNOs etc. Running 18 months, becoming more routine

DESNZ looking to Bristol example and 4 other councils looking at it

Have a community energy approach within the plans – funding to develop community energy projects

How do community energy engage LAs in this?

Community groups came together and lobbied the council. City LEAP was how are you going to approach and engage community energy. Individual conversations with bidders so brought themselves together and came up with a service.

Vattenfall really took on and embraced their ideas



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GBN money £400m loan fund managed centrally by GBN – doesn't quite fall within the smart local approach. Unclear on how this will be run and administered currently.

£600m pot requires LA to work with community energy. Money should allow communities to have a stake.

Hope is for both to align as focus is community energy. Hoping it brings together a wider system thinking rather than individual communities doing their own thing. Money allows you to engage at a wider level.

SW Net Zero Hub – document with an annex about smart local energy system.

Difficult in bringing people together and to get them to understand the value.

Need to know why should we collectively do this planning together. Need the incentive and empowerment that things will happen, need an ecosystem that allows community energy to work with LAs.

Ways to engage people is talking around savings directly, if people know energy costs come down.

Example resilience network CIC – put solar on roofs for free. Then open conversation for more things.

Energy Local an enabler for this as well.

NIMBYism a barrier to overcome – make the link between local generation and consumption.

How to value demand flexibility – incentivisation of energy usage. Heat as a service rather than a commodity. Systems thinking change how we relate to our energy usage.

People don't know how to alter energy usage, or think it's a con or not trust.

Digitally excluded as well, run things for them. Trust to manage their energy.

Isle of Wight project looking at generation due to limited energy system. Constrained and isolated so changes uses. Similar to Scottish islands.

Examples of solar on schools – showing the different in buildings, smart energy to see how much is saved for own generation vs connected to the grid. More issues with host sites than panels themselves.