

MEETING MINUTES

West North West Stakeholder Reference Group

Meeting #4

Date	12 September 2023
Time	5:30 pm-7:30pm
Presenters	Jarra Hicks (JH) Stewart Sharples (SS) Suki Hopgood-Douglas (SH) Charlie McAlister (CM)
Location	Circular Head Council Chambers, Smithton

Attendees

John McNab	Community Member
Elizabeth Ettlin	Community Member
Xander Power	Community Member
Brenton Hosking	Community Member
Jeremy Ward	Community Member
John Bruce	Community Member
Victoria Cotton	Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation
Daniel Summers	Waratah-Wynyard Council
Vanessa Adams	Circular Head Council

Apologies

Name	Organisation
Skye Thompson	West Coast Council

Agenda

Ref no.	Item
1.0	Acknowledgement of Country and Housekeeping
2.0	Update: Marinus, Offshore Wind, Other In-region Energy Consultation
3.0	Summary: Mapping Important Places
4.0	Community Benefit Sharing Process and Presentation
5.0	Short Break
6.0	Regional Community Needs
7.0	Summary and Next Steps

Minutes

Ref no.	Item
1.0	<p>Welcome and Acknowledgment of Country</p> <p>CM thanked the group for attending. CM acknowledged country and provided an overview of the session. The previous SRG Minutes were endorsed.</p>
2.0	<p>Update: Marinus, Offshore Wind, Other In-region Energy Consultation</p> <p>SS provided an update on Marinus Link and the Commonwealth's announcement regarding consultation on a proposed offshore wind zone for Tasmania. SS addressed questions and concerns from SRG members.</p> <p>Marinus Link</p> <p>A recent announcement made by the Government sees the Commonwealth, Victorian and Tasmanian Governments agree to progress the first stage of Marinus with arrangements in place to reduce the cost to Tasmania.</p> <p>A member inquired about the tender released for Marinus last year which was for both cables and its utilisation. It was explained that a second trench would be dug to retain optionality for the future development of a second cable, but it will not be progressed at this time.</p> <p>Transmission</p> <p>Questions were raised about how the transmission would occur between Robbins Island and Hampshire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It was clarified that if the Robbins Island project went ahead, its own transmission line would be built to handle the capacity of all its output. - Transmission lines from Robbins Island is not being considered as part of the REZ work, it forms part of the private proponent's scope. <p>Concerns were voiced about whether this project would involve new corridors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It was confirmed that new corridors would need to be established if a project in the far north west was progressed. <p>SS indicated that the single cable Marinus announcement will mean a rescoping of the proposed North West Transmission Development and that TasNetworks was working to confirm which sections would be built.</p> <p>Environment</p> <p>Concerns were raised about environmental impacts, particularly regarding projects like Robbins Island. Members questioned who would make the final decisions, especially regarding foreign company investments.</p>

General Discussion

Some further discussion revolved around the increasing energy needs for Tasmanians, emphasising the requirement for more energy, including on-island needs in the future – energy needs for Tasmanians are expected to increase over time.

Discussions turned to the challenge of working across different jurisdictions and identifying the steps to determine the least contentious corridor for development.

Participants expressed a desire for a coherent and coordinated narrative in the broader community about Tasmania maintaining its energy balance, as they currently perceive announcements as arbitrary.

Commonwealth Offshore Wind Zone

It was shared that the Commonwealth Government will shortly consult on a draft offshore wind zone in Bass Strait. It was noted that should a zone be declared this would be the first step in then allowing proponents to seek tenure on the sea bed.

A member expressed concern that no Australian manufacturers can build offshore wind components.

Questions were raised about alternative technologies, as wind is not the only option. Members inquired about the business cases for these alternatives.

Update on the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner's Work

SS provided an update on the work of the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner, Andrew Dyer, and the Commonwealth's First Nations Clean Energy Strategy consultation.

With respect to the Commissioner's work, SS cited NSW where new compensation schemes have been raised as potential approaches for helping to move transmission projects in particular ahead.

It was noted that the energy landscape is complex, with various companies expressing interest in establishing renewable energy projects as soon as possible.

3.0	<p>Summary: Mapping Important Places (MIP)</p> <p>SS noted the engagement outcomes and findings from MIP and how the data is being used to refine ReCFIT's work to put boundaries around REZ.</p> <p>Group Discussion</p> <p>The group outlined the importance to be clear on how long the process of incorporating MIP and other government technical work will take.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SS and CM noted further community engagement will occur, but this has been delayed due to the announcement around a single Marinus cable and how the NWTD may be rescope. The intent is still to consult on REZ boundaries and the broader package of REZ (including market offering for proponents) in the last quarter of 2023 and SS reaffirmed that the package will be shared with the SRG before broader public consultation. <p>A potential issue is that there will be some community members who hadn't had any input early in the process may raise concerns.</p> <p>SS spoke to MIP and noted coastal regions had the highest number of submissions.</p> <p>There are a number of grouped pins with high concentrations of submissions being along the coastline, namely Robbins Island and the Stanley Peninsular.</p>
4.0	<p>Presentation: Community Benefit Sharing – Functions and Features</p> <p>The SRG members engaged with a presentation from Dr Jarra Hicks, Community Power Agency.</p> <p>The input throughout the discussion from the SRG group was as follows.</p> <p>Questions asked during the presentation were: What do you think are important functions / roles for a regional CBS body to undertake? What should regional CBS do?</p> <p>Feedback was that the term 'region' is not well defined, the SRG group and future CBS-SRG group should work on defining the term region in a north west context.</p> <p>'Region' could start to be defined at a scale that identifies multiple projects within it, but likely not as broad as the whole of the north west. This could be because of the nature of dispersed populations in the north west and townships may not be inside or close to potential REZ/s. This requires further discussion.</p> <p>When establishing CBS, the definition of the project is required, which would usually be defined as each individual wind farm or transmission line, for example.</p> <p>If one administrative body were to manage a pool of CBS funds, complexities regarding multiple projects and differing levels of disbursement could be overcome.</p>

It was suggested that there is a potential existing body in the north west, that may have the means to administer CBS funds. Further investigation and discussion on this would occur in 2024.

Questions from the group were raised around following CBS funds through its lifecycle and where the responsibility for continuity and transparency sit.

There was a discussion around how funds might be split, given that it will likely be a small pot of money. This comes back to how 'region' is defined and the scale and location/s of the project/s.

- Will transport associated with projects be covered by CBS funds?
- Will shops 20 – 30km away benefit from CBS?

It was noted that it is the intent that many of these questions would be addressed in 2024 as part of a CBS-specific Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG), if the case to declare a NW REZ is found suitable.

Further discussion on CBS funds suggested that additional money received into a CBS fund could be used positively for community grants and scholarships and we shouldn't re-invent the wheel and should instead use existing structures such as Tasmanian Government grant funding administration mechanisms.

Discussion and JH's presentation continued. A consultative committee model was mentioned for decision making on allocation of funds. It was suggested this could work well, for example if working across multiple projects, one committee could sit across the region and hold individual meetings for each project.

A Citizen's Jury was suggested as vehicle for region-wide collaboration on CBS and the allocation of funds.

It was mentioned that councils in the region have governance and legislative mechanisms in place, which could assist with administering CBS, however scholarship funding would sit outside of Council remit.

JH spoke to some examples of how CBS funding had been applied in other jurisdictions. One example that the group found positive and relevant was:

- To ease impact on the local housing market, a proponent paid for prefab granny flats in eligible backyards.
- Workers used the accommodation during the two-year construction period.
- Workers lived in and integrated into the community.
- Once project was finalised, the flats were gifted to homeowners.

Additional points made throughout JH's presentation were:

- Consistency in administration is required.
- Addressing social license is relevant and very important.
- Proponents still need to have some flexibility to administer a share of funds for brand purposes.
- If a CBS is established, the ability for stakeholders to participate should not be diminished.
- The SRG would be looking for equity and transparency.
- One governing body for each project within the region was suggested, with one representative from each area to be the conduit.
- Further discussion on boundaries is required in the context of 'region',

	<p>‘sub-region’ and disbursement of CBS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It was mentioned that it’s a challenge getting project proponents on board with CBS and the way it is administered.
5.0	15 min break
6.0	<p>Regional Community Needs</p> <p>CM introduced a desktop review undertaken by ReCFIT, of current regional plans and regional strategic directions as a context setting piece, highlighting five high-level regional focus areas, including information gathered from consultation to date. These broad areas could be in focus when discussing future CBS-funding to enhance, support or solve NW-regional concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Healthcare – e.g. telehealth, barriers to access, allied health, attracting workforce, mental health - Housing – supply and affordability - Environment – e.g. biodiversity, land care, natural resource management - Social infrastructure – e.g. community assets, education, youth centres, seniors’ centres - Tasmanian Aboriginal Culture and Heritage is threaded through these focus areas as disproportionate disadvantage is experienced in each area. <p>SRG members discussed this notion of CBS enhancing, supporting or solving the areas mentioned.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ability to address these will become part of the process when regions and projects become clearer and tangible. - Once mechanisms for how the money will be used becomes clearer, these issues can be addressed in the next phase. - Housing isn’t going to be solved with renewable energy. - CBS funds will likely become very specific to the project site or nearby. Biodiversity is further out and at a whole-of-region scale, as is housing. - Great job for identifying CBS opportunities. - Can not dig deeper without information on how CBS will work.

	<p>Additional areas were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workforce readiness and upskilling. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Opportunities for young people. o Pathways from high school. o Training. o Retention of locals. - Electrical transition and addressing local impacts. - Seeking longevity from projects. - The granny-flat example/idea for new workforce was well-received. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The region does not need worker camps. o Wants something that can be repurposed. o Accommodation of construction workers without exacerbating existing housing issues, is required. - Increased and improved aged care facilities.
7.0	<p>Next Steps</p> <p>It was suggested that the next SRG session would likely be a workshopped review of information summarising what we have heard from the region over the past year, regarding defining REZ. The session would be a first look at the reflections summarised, and would seek SRG-members to support distribution of the public-facing summary and any calls to action or further engagement.</p> <p>ReCFIT may also seek SRG members to inform us of other topics or considerations of the REZ-agenda requiring further coverage.</p> <p>It was noted that the SRG had appreciated the engagement from ReCFIT on the REZ-consultation process undertaken so far.</p>

Actions

No.	Action	Owner	Due
1	Send Minutes to SRG for one round of feedback	ReCFIT	15 October
2		ReCFIT	