



## Considerations for BHCC Scrutiny Panel on Renewable Energy:

### Key Issues:

- 1/ What sort of renewables might be appropriate for the Council?
- 2/ How might Council renewables be financed?
- 3/ Who should the Council partner with?
- 4/ About Brighton Energy Co-operative
- 5/ What sort of decisions need to be made?

### 1/ What sort of renewables might be appropriate for the council?

We feel solar should have a strong presence in BHCC's renewable portfolio:

- the Council has large, underused roof stock
- it's increasingly straightforward to find partners to fund solar projects
- solar is an established, relatively simple technology
- PV encounters few planning and public acceptance obstacles

### 2/ How might Council renewables be financed?

There are two widely accepted methods of financing solar - a/ buy panels yourself, or b/ have someone else pay for them.

a/ Buying them yourself is preferable - you get cheap energy and a decent return on your investment (ROI).

b/ If someone else pays for them, you still get cheap energy. The return on investment (ROI), however, goes to whoever has bought the panels that now sit on your roof.

### 3/ Who should the Council partner with?

The question, therefore, arises: who will fund the panels?

One way is through community schemes. Brighton Energy Co-op can offer expert testimony on -

- **existing community energy schemes:** UK community solar initiatives; UK community wind farms; energy co-ops in Europe
- **benefits of community energy to Brighton and Hove:** local profit retention & wealth distribution; stimulating local action on climate change; broadening local renewables' involvement; increasing community cohesion

### 4/ About Brighton Energy Co-op

As of October 2010 we are in negotiations with several local sites for a large solar array. To date nearly 150 local people have expressed an interest in investing. Our local MP, Caroline Lucas is keenly supportive as is Conservative MP Zac Goldsmith, and we are receiving coverage in local,

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national and international press. Our business planning, publicity materials and marketing channels are well advanced and we have a dynamic, committed core team.

#### **5/ What decisions need to be made?**

The Council has an obligation to make the most of its roof space, just as commercial organisations have the finances to make this happen. We believe, however, that community renewables can also have an important part to play .

We propose, therefore, that **20% of solar-friendly BHCC roof space be earmarked for community-funded schemes**. This would give both Council, commercial and Community schemes opportunities to flourish in Brighton and Hove.