

COMMUNITY BENEFIT CONCORDAT CONCORDAIT SOCHAIR COIMHEARSNACHD

between

The Highland Council

and

**Developers of
Onshore & Offshore
Renewable Energy
Projects**



INTRODUCTION

The Highland Council is committed to maximising Community Benefit to Highland communities from renewable energy development.

This concordat sets out the terms of a new relationship between **the Council and Developers of renewable energy developments**, based on mutual respect and partnership. It underpins the framework and infrastructure for Community Benefit to be provided to local communities as set out in the Council's Community Benefit policy and 10 point action plan for Offshore Renewable Energy Developments.

CONTEXT

The Highland Council wishes to ensure that local communities benefit directly from the use of their local resources associated with renewable energy development projects.

Development that has an impact on the environment and resources should be acceptable not only in land use planning terms, but should also have clear and direct benefits for those who live and work in the area.

It is the Council's policy to seek funding and/or in-kind contributions from developers towards local community initiatives in respect of development, such as renewable energy schemes, which have a long-term impact on the environment.

POLICY

The Council's policy on Community Benefit was agreed on 3 March 2011 whereby Developers will provide Community Benefit of not less than £5,000 per installed Megawatt that will annually appreciate in line with the UK Retail Price Index.

Onshore developments

Council policy states that the Community Benefit system for onshore developments will operate over three tiers in the following manner:

- Foundational - the first £100,000 will accrue to the local level
- For funds above £100,000:
 - o Tier 1 – 55% will accrue to a Local Fund(s)
 - o Tier 2 – 30% will accrue to an Area Fund
 - o Tier 3 – 15% will accrue to The Highland Trust Fund

Community Benefit will be shared by taking account of 3 Allocation Factors calculated within a 15 kilometre radius of the development site:

1. Proximity to Site
2. Visual Impact
3. Number of Residences

Offshore developments

Council policy states that the Community Benefit system for offshore development will operate over two tiers in the following manner:

- o Tier 1 – 80% will accrue to The Highland Trust Fund
- o Tier 2 – 20% will accrue to a local coastal communities level

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

The Highland Council will, in accordance with its policy, provide a framework and infrastructure for receiving Community Benefit from Developers and for its disbursement to qualifying communities as determined by a series of Allocation Factors.

The Council will establish an appropriately governed financial structure for receiving Community Benefit funds and for disbursing them.

The Council will communicate with affected communities in relation to Community Benefit and calculate the percentage of Community Benefit to be disbursed to qualifying communities.

The Council will arbitrate in any disagreement among communities in relation to the percentage of Community Benefit disbursed

DEVELOPERS

Developers will provide Community Benefit of not less than £5,000 per installed Megawatt annually that will appreciate each year in line with the UK Retail Price Index.

This will be payable one year in arrears upon generation of electricity with 2011 as the baseline year.

Community Benefit may include lump sum payments and these may, if agreed by all parties, be paid in advance of electricity generation.

Developers will agree all Community Benefit from renewable energy schemes with the Council but shall retain responsibility for ensuring that communities are kept informed of progress on this.

LIMITATIONS

This Concordat has been agreed entirely without prejudice to the execution and implementation of the Council's powers, duties and obligations as Local Planning Authority.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT COMMUNITY BENEFIT PLEASE CONTACT:

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