

Frances Warburton
Partner
Energy Systems
Ofgem

23rd September 2016

Dear Mr Warburton

Open letter: charging arrangements for embedded generation

Thank you for the opportunity to feed into your thinking on charging arrangements for embedded generation. As way of introduction, Community Energy England (CEE) was established in May 2014 to provide a voice for the community energy sector primarily in England. Membership totals 200 organisations. The majority of the member organisations are from the community energy sector but the membership extends across a wide range of organisations which works with and supports the community energy sector. Further details can be found on the CEE website at www.communityenergyengland.org.

I would like to start by stating that we object to the principle of further charges on the clean and renewable energy sector. Community energy schemes in particular have additional benefits that many other sources do not. Community energy refers to the delivery of community led renewable energy generation, energy demand reduction and energy supply projects, whether wholly owned and/or democratically controlled by communities or through partnership with commercial or public sector partners. By placing democratic control, shared benefits and active participation at the centre of project delivery, community energy can create a foundation for the significant infrastructural and cultural change we need to reduce the impact of climate change and increase our energy security.

Where successful, community energy has the potential to draw people in, not just as consumers but also as active participants, or partners, in a process of change. Partners because people share in the benefits, have some say in how things happen, are actively involved and feel a connection with the outcomes. Community energy has the potential to do this by creating a sense of collective purpose which can help to normalise the adoption of demand reduction behaviours and encourage the take up of energy efficiency measures. Community energy can also help to underpin the more rapid role out of a decentralised energy supply system by giving local people a stake in the outcome.

Many of our members have only one or two small renewable energy schemes and so are working to very tight margins. Any additional charges will therefore have a big impact on their projects. If more charges are borne, these will come out of groups' community funds which otherwise would have been used for education, to support fuel poverty work and other social and environmental improvements.

I sincerely hope that you take these considerations into account within your proposals.

Cont/-

Community **Energy** England

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to explore these issues in more detail.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emma Bridge." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Emma Bridge
Chief Executive
for Community Energy England