

GA brief for Academic Study of the Bretherton Energy Partnership

Introduction

GA Pet Food Partners is offering a two-year employed study to assess the structure, management and governance of the Bretherton Energy Partnership (CIC) and the associated Bretherton Energy Local Co-operative, by working with local stakeholders, particularly residents. To determine the management structure needed to manage the day to day operation, and the distribution of surplus “profit” for the benefit of the residents of Bretherton.

Location

The study would be based at Plocks Farm, Bretherton, or remote working, so as to be accessible to the Project Leader, David Colgan.

Objectives

- 1, To work closely with all stakeholders, particularly Bretherton Parish Council Working Party, Local Energy, and Bretherton residents to identify if the proposed structure is workable.
- 2, To determine how the surplus “profit” should be managed and distributed, in consultation with residents.
- 3, To determine the risks and identify how the risks can be minimised in conjunction with the members of the working group.
- 4, To determine the social and economic benefits of the Asland Walks Energy Park works to Bretherton residents and to GA Pet Food Partners.

What do the outcomes look like

1. To produce a report, based on the input from all Stakeholders, to act as a guide to the establishment of the Bretherton Energy Local Co-operative and the Bretherton Energy Partnership (CIC) for the long-term benefit of residents of Bretherton.
2. The report would also be used to demonstrate the social and economic benefits of the Asland Walks Energy Park project, to assist the local residents to understand the proposals and support the Asland Walks Energy Park planning application process.
3. It would be expected that the report would utilise both qualitative and quantitative analytical methods.

What is the time scale

The instruction will commence on Winter 2024, and must be completed by Winter 2025 (date to be confirmed following confirmation of successful candidate), with an interim report being issued on Winter 2024.

Salary

The successful applicant will be paid £500 per week, every four weeks, including 6 weeks paid holiday, as an employee of GA Pet Food Partners Group Limited.

Candidate

GA are seeking a Business Management or other relevant social science-based graduate for the study, this specifically being a Masters graduate, post PhD student or experienced academic.

Following this two-year academic study there would be consideration of a further study aligned with the renewable energy project progression or a full-time position at GA Pet Food Partners.

Job Requirements and Skills

Essential;

- Strong planning and coordination skills
- Ability to communicate effectively at all levels, both verbally and written involving interviews and discussions with residents, consultants and others
- Attention to detail
- Strong presentation and negotiation skills
- Ability to build key stakeholder relationships
- Research skills
- Qualitative analytical skills
- Quantitative analytical skills
- Report writing
- Ability to think analytically and creatively
- Self confidence
- Business management knowledge or background

Desirable;

- Knowledge or interest of the UK Energy market and renewable energy systems
- Experience of working with community groups

Applications

Applications should be made by email including your CV to David Colgan at GA Pet Food Partners: email David.colgan@ga-petfoodpartners.co.uk.

Successful applicants will be invited to a physical interview and to make a simple presentation as to why they should be chosen.

Bretherton Energy Partnership Study Introduction

GA Pet Food Partners (GA) and Bretherton Parish Council are exploring the potential for GA and local residents to join together and begin a mutual journey to change the way we heat and power our homes and businesses, transitioning from our current reliance on expensive fossil fuels to the use of locally generated zero-carbon electrical power from low and stable costing wind and solar.

GA wants to do everything it can, as quickly as it can, to produce pet food in a sustainable and carbon neutral way. GA has pledged to halve its carbon emissions every decade in order to reach Net Zero. Shifting to generating its own zero-carbon energy from wind and solar at the proposed Asland Walks Energy Park also means they can reduce and stabilise their energy costs and safeguard the future of the business and the local people they employ.

The Asland Walks Energy Park is proposed to be a wind turbine and solar field (full details to be defined as planning assessments progress) between the River Douglas and the Leeds to Liverpool Canal. The proposed Asland Walks Energy Park comprises some 100 acres of arable land. The Energy Park will be accessible to the community. Future Ecological improvements will include:

- Tree planting, creation of wetlands for enhanced wildlife habitats
- Picnic areas, benches and a walking route around the Asland Walks Energy Park
- Visitor centre with information about the Energy Park and how it works
- “Live” electricity generation data may be added in the future.

GA has pledged to provide Bretherton residents 5% of the renewable generation at no cost in order for both parties to achieve mutual net zero. Therefore, the plan is to provide Bretherton households with reduced-cost electricity via a community-owned battery and local supply arrangement.

Bretherton Residents would set up a community enterprise to receive and manage income. The community enterprise would use the income to help reduce energy for the residents (for example):

- Providing advice, support and grants and zero/low-interest loans to help local households make their homes more energy efficient.
- Subsidising energy bills for low-income households.
- Providing funding for the community low carbon infrastructure such as electric vehicle charging points.

The ownership of 5% electrical energy will not require any capital investment by the community. The potential to sell that share of the power could help fund the development costs for the community battery if and when the local supply model becomes viable.

Further details of how this partnership is proposed to function is set out below, further information will be provided by GA, Bretherton Parish Council and Energy Local for the purposes of the study, the following website also provide further details and resources –

<https://brethertonenergy.co.uk/>

Details of the proposed energy partnership and structure is displayed in figure 1.

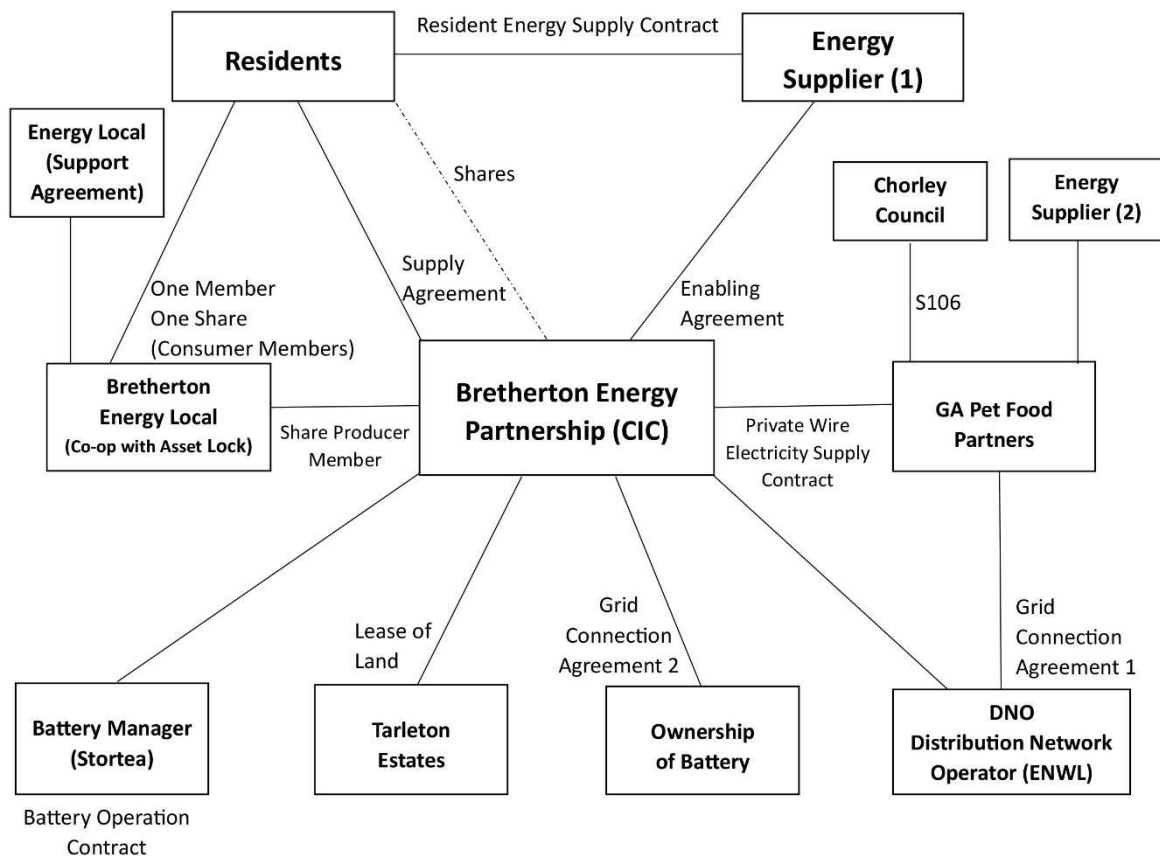


Figure 1 - Bretherton Energy Partnership – Its Structure & Governance

The above Matrix Chart identifies the individual component parts and how they relate to one another. On first review it is not easy to fully understand, but it is important to appreciate the structure, that ensures that residents have total control as to how the 5% of the electrical energy generated is distributed to residents or sold.

Bretherton Energy Partnership (CIC)

The Bretherton Energy Partnership is a Community Interest Company (CIC), with an asset lock, being at the centre of the structure. It will be owned by the residents (being those residents that wish to be part of the scheme) The company will own the assets and control how the electricity is distributed, together with the price charged.

Residents, who join the scheme, will own Bretherton Energy Partnership (CIC) and will be granted shares in the Company, when they sign up. This Community Interest Company, will hold all the valuable assets in terms of the battery, and have the right to receive 5% of the electricity generated from the Asland Walks Energy Park at no cost. The Shareholders will elect the Board of Directors, and the Articles and Memorandum of Association will determine as to how the Company is operated.

The Appointed Directors of the Company will make the operational decisions on a day-to-day basis.

The Company will effectively receive the electrical power, it will then be sold to meet its costs. Any surplus “profit” is then distributed to Bretherton residents, on a project-by-project

basis, to assist them in the transition to electricity-based energy, as well as improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the 5% of electricity available. As to how this will operate, is being considered by the Working Group, and will be a part of further consultation.

The Company's income arises from selling the electrical energy where it can, be it to residents, to GA Pet Food Partners, to the Energy Supplier (2) who feeds it into the Grid, or potentially via electrical car charges.

The expenses, which are offset against the income, are the costs of financing and maintaining the battery, the Battery Managers cost, Energy Local's charges, and any management costs incurred in organising and running the Company.

There are considerable sums involved. Communities for Renewable (CIC) report suggested an annual revenue of £350,000, with a need for professional management. It is important that the structure, and governance is effective, to enable the whole of Bretherton, not just the members, to benefit from the opportunity this presents.

Bretherton Energy Local (Co-op with Asset Lock)

Bretherton Energy Local would be a Co-operative, owned by the residents who join the "Club." The management is assisted by Energy Local, who is also a Community Interest Company, having 9 similar co-operative schemes operational throughout the UK. It is recommended that Bretherton Energy Local (Co-op) and Bretherton Energy Partnership (CIC) are different entities.

Bretherton Energy Local Co-operative is set up so that the members can have a say in how the energy is generated, distributed and priced, and to share the benefits of local renewable energy.

Members of the Bretherton Energy Local (Co-op) will be those benefiting from the match tariff once the club is set up. As Bretherton Energy Partnership (CIC) is a community wide organisation it will work for the benefit of the residents of Bretherton as a whole, and not just for the benefit of members in Bretherton Energy (Co-Op). Bretherton Energy Partnership (CIC) will decide whether to have an Energy Local Club, and once set up will decide how to spend the "profit" generated, which can be paid to all residents, not just members of the Bretherton Energy Local (Co-op)

Bretherton Energy Partnership (CIC) and the Energy Supplier (1)

In order to supply electrical energy to the electrical wires, it is a requirement to have an Electricity Supply Licence, and charge the statutory rates. However, there is an exemption that provided the energy consumed by Residents is no more than 2.5MW and certain criteria are met, then it can be supplied without an Electricity Supply Licence and the obligations to pay some of the electrical charges and levies.

This requires an Enabling Agreement to be established between the Electricity Supplier (1) (who will be any supplier chosen by the Community Company, for example Octopus Energy). The Enabling Agreement allows the supply of power from the battery onto the Grid, as a "Exempt Supply Services" under the provisions of the Electricity Act 1989 and meets the supply obligations to each Resident. The Agreement must be clear and unambiguous

that relevant electricity supplies are made by the generator (in this case the battery) to the demand customer (Bretherton Resident), and that the Electrical Suppliers (1) role is solely as a Service Provider.

The Enabling Agreement will specify: -

1. The fixed fee to be charged for the 'pass through' service from the battery to the resident.
2. The amount the Energy Supplier (1) will charge residents to cover the cost of the battery, and operational costs incurred by Bretherton Energy Partnership (CIC).

Energy Supplier (1) and Residents

Energy Supplier (1) will enter into a Supply Agreement with each of the Bretherton Residents that wish to join the scheme.

The Supply Agreement will specify: -

- i) The cost of electrical power, when available from the battery, and the cost when this is not. The price charged from the battery is set by Bretherton Energy CIC. When power is not available from the battery, then it reverts to the current market level, set by Energy Supplier (1)
- ii) Energy Supplier (1) is merely an enabling supplier to facilitate the "pass through", but administer their supply in order to comply with the required rules.
- iii) Invoices are issued monthly and paid in a similar way to any other utility supplier.

Bretherton Energy Partnership (CIC) and the Battery Manager (Stortera)

Bretherton Energy Partnership (CIC) requires a contract with a Battery Manager to manage and maintain the needed batteries, to store and release the electrical energy when required.

The Battery Manager releases the needed electrical energy from the battery, to match the forecasted electrical energy being consumed by residents. This is continuously updated based on each members half hour consumption data. Any over or under forecast of energy is adjusted through the Enabling Agreement.

Residents can access the operational conditions of the battery, via a website, which details when electrical power from Asland Walks Energy Park and the battery is available, and when it is not, allowing residents to make consumption decisions.

Full details of battery size, locations and arrangements are still to be fully defined

Bretherton Energy Partnership (CIC) and GA Pet Food Partners

The Bretherton Energy Partnership (CIC) will enter into a legally binding Supply Agreement with GA Pet Food Partners to supply 5% of the electrical energy generated from the Asland Walks Energy Park at no cost. This agreement will require: -

- i) An obligation to supply electrical energy generated to the batteries, which will be situated adjacent to the sub-stations on North Road and South Road, Bretherton.
- ii) An obligation to install and maintain a private wire cable from the Asland Walks Energy Park to the batteries.
- iii) An obligation that if the 5% of electricity generated is not used by the batteries, it would be sold, or used by GA Pet Food Partners, for the price paid for electrical energy entering the Grid.
- iv) An obligation for full metering and access to confirm the metering systems and processes, managing the power generation and distribution.

Distribution Network Operator (DNO)

The Distribution Network Operator (DNO) in the Bretherton area is Electricity North West Limited (ENWL), who are the owners of the wires and electrical equipment. It is necessary to apply and seek their consent for GA Pet Food Partners to link to the electrical network and for Bretherton Energy Partnership (CIC) to have a connection at the two battery locations. It will be necessary for Electricity North West to provide extra monitoring equipment, at an additional charge, to prevent any impact on the electrical network. An application has been made and we are awaiting the quotations

GA Pet Food Partners and Energy Supplier (2)

GA needs to enter into a Supplier Agreement with Energy Supplier (2) (This may have to be the same entity as Energy Supplier (1)) to sell and receive electrical energy, from and to, the grid, at the existing point of connection at Plock's Farm. An DNO grid application has been made to ENWL for a point of supply, and a decision is awaited, on what is possible, and what the costs might be, these associated ENWL DNO grid application costs and arrangement would be fully detailed for the study and to be factored in for the study economics

Chorley Council & GA Pet Food Partners

To obtain planning permission, Chorley Council will, prior to granting planning permission, require GA Pet Food Partners as owners of Asland Walks Energy Park to enter into a legally binding agreement, known as a Section 106 Agreement. This agreement binds the land and its use to the obligations and conditions of the planning permission.

The Section 106 Agreement will require the following:

- i) To secure the 5% of the electrical energy output for the benefits of Residents.
- ii) To secure a detailed framework for the distribution of the electrical energy, based on the above structure.

- iii) To secure the person responsible for setting and managing the legal framework.

Tarleton Estates

It will be necessary for Tarleton Estates to enter into an Occupational Lease Agreement with Bretherton Energy Partnership (CIC), to enable the battery and any other associated equipment to be positioned adjacent to the Bretherton North and South Sub-Stations.

GA Pet Food Partners Group Limited

August 2023