

## **Biogas Regions Advisory Group**

Meeting held at the Newport Civic Centre, Newport, South Wales.  
24<sup>th</sup> February 2009

Present: Andy Bull (SWEA), Adrian Jones (WAG), Tim Patterson (University of Glamorgan), Richard Baines (Royal Agricultural College), David Williams (Potters), Paul Roberts (Wales Environment Trust) Oliver Harwood (CLA), Kierson Wise (SWEA), Steve Rist (Merlin Biofuels) and Christopher Maltin and Helen Barclay (Organic Power)

Apologies for Absence: Sue Thompson (Glasu), Sandra Esteves (University of Glamorgan) Lucy Lewis (Greenfinch), Bev Hodgett (Ceredigion CC) and Vicky Davies (WAG – Agriculture Division)

### **1. Introductions**

Arising out of the introductions, there was given, by Oliver Harwood a brief description of the work of the International Energy Agency Task Force 37 and the establishment in the UK of “ProBiogas”.

### **2. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as accurate.

### **3. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising that were not covered by a specific item on the agenda.

### **4. Regional Strategy and Action Plan**

The alterations suggested by Oliver H, that had been circulated prior to the meeting were accepted as was an additional suggested change at paragraph 6.2.2 (5<sup>th</sup> bullet point).

**ACTION AB to make necessary changes and replace the version on the Biogas Regions web page.**

### **5. The Opportunity Study Tool**

The opportunity study tool (biogas calculator) was briefly demonstrated to the meeting and there was considerable concern about the results given by the tool. The size of the digester, for instance, appeared to be very much too big as was the CHP engine.

There was a general discussion about the likelihood of any such tool being able to give results of any real value with a conclusion was that a tool may be valuable so long as it is used for very early investigations for relatively straight-forward proposals with few feedstock types. It would be no substitute for detailed feasibility report. **It is agreed:-**

- **AB and Tim Patterson should work on testing the calculator using real data as a test and input UK settings**
- **OH would send through the data from the real case**
- **This tool should be compared with that prepared by the Anderson Centre (OH to send through details)**

As a “rule of thumb” CM suggested that a digester should be producing its own volume of gas every day.

## **6. Progress on Study Tours**

AB reported that the study tour had been finalised and was due to take place in Vienna from April 20<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> with all 15 places booked. A list of participants was circulated.

## **7. Biogas Regions Brochure**

A draft of the brochure had been previously circulated and comments received from CM and Lucy Lewis. Following a discussion it was agreed that AB would send a Word version of the text in order that suggested changes to wording could be easily made and forwarded electronically. Suggested changes were to be forwarded to AB within a week and he would then send out a revised version for further comment.

The view of the Group was that the potential value of the document as a guide to Council officers and Members, along with the interested public, was high. It was important to produce a high quality document and not delay in finalising and printing it. **ACTION AB**

## **8. Suppliers and Services Directory**

Work will commence shortly on such a directory and may well be undertaken jointly with the University of Glamorgan. OH volunteered to supply material that the CLA had already compiled. **ACTION AB,TP and OH**

## **9. Regional Seminars**

It was agreed that it would be very valuable if a seminar for planners/councillors could be convened for June 09 as there is clearly a need for education on the subject. This was reinforcing the plan that SWEA and UoG had already made in outline to hold such an event. **ACTION AB and TP**

## **10. Potential Sites in Project Region**

AB updated the information from the last meeting and others added as to the available data:-

- a. Great Porthamel Farm, Talgarth. Adrian Jones reported that the planning permission for this scheme had not yet been issued and there appeared to be fundamental questions being asked once more?
- b. Unilever ltd. was reported as having submitted a planning application for a biogas plant in Gloucester. AB agreed to find out more detail and distribute it to the Advisory Group.
- c. The site at Kemble Farm near Cirencester was running and working well.
- d. AJ referred to several proposals that he was aware of in Wales. AB would be following up on some of the known schemes once (if) the opportunity study tool was operational

AB and TP were due to meet to discuss a feasibility study for an AD plant based on grass in the south of Powys.

### **11. Date and Venue for Next Meeting.**

An offer had been made to host a meeting at the Organic Power office in Somerset and CM confirmed that this was a possibility. The meeting expressed a desire to take up this offer so Horsington was chosen as the venue for the next meeting. No date was set but it would probably be during September 2009.