

Q&A | Policy

Q: Whilst I realise that everyone will be different, is there any form of template available to base an energy policy on?

A: Barker will share some outline templates in the coming days and CST and Barker will be developing a more detailed template energy policy in the coming weeks for CST members

Q: A key part for us will be getting someone to collate all of our data that impacts our carbon footprint, getting someone to fully measure the data (I can get invoices for the amount of plastic bottles we buy, but I mean the overall carbon footprint data for our trust and what/how we get that FULL data), then more importantly the reporting back of future data so impact can be measured as we roll further carbon zero plans out. Any companies anyone have used would be great to hear about.

A: The CST has a free SECR Tool for members it also may be worth looking at Mike Burners Lees book [How Bad are Bananas?](#) when trying to understand your carbon footprint. CST will also be running a workshop on Environmental Policy which will look at issue beyond energy such as the carbon footprint associated with waste management, catering and procurement.

Q&A | Policy

Q: ESG was mentioned by Tom. Having undertaken some recent research on this, it seems quite prevalent in the Banking/Finance/investment sector to help demonstrate Environmental/ sustainability/ Governance performance and inform investment decisions. What elements of ESG (or perhaps all of it) are transferrable to the Education sector?

A: ESG is a framework for measuring & managing those Environmental/Social/Governance factors. You are right that it is seen heavily in the private sector where there are commercial and regulatory pressures to adopt this, but the principles are entirely transferable to the education sector. The question to ask is why you are doing it and what impact it will have.

The Streamlined Energy Carbon Reporting (SECR) is the first step on the journey that trusts are having to take. The ESG models operated by the private sector are worth investigating further and CST will also be looking to see how they can support member with workshops on ESG later in the year.

Q&A | SECR

Q: I have heard about the SECR a few times now but don't know much about it? If someone can explain please?

A: [LINK TO BARKER WEBINAR ON SECR](#)

Streamline Energy Carbon Reporting applies to Academy Trust which have:



consumption | must be over 40,000 kWh in a reporting period



assets | stated in your accounts must be worth over £18 million



people | must have a headcount of over 250 people



turnover | in the reporting period must be over £36 million

Q&A | PSDS

Q: What's PSDS?

A: The [Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme](#) was launched in 2020 as a way to help public bodies reduce their carbon footprint. The scheme's second and third rounds were heavily focused on heat and we anticipate that will continue to be the focus

[Link to PSDS Case Study](#) [Link to PSDS Phase 3 Article](#)

Q: We have tried to apply for government funding for Carbon Zero projects, but they always seem to be so over subscribed, and we have not been successful at all yet, Do you know if there is likely to be more opportunities to apply for additional funding soon.

A: Further funding is anticipated later in the year, but it will be focus on heat rather than projects such as LED lighting and photovoltaics. Not all decarbonisation projects require major capital investment and there are alternative funding solutions to grants for key technologies.

Q&A | PSDS

Q: Looking at the PSDS website it looks like the first 3 phases of funding are closed - do we know a) when the next round will open and b) what success Academy Trusts have had to date accessing funding from this?

A: a| Previous rounds have launched around October. We anticipate the next round will follow this pattern but no formal announcement has been made. If you are considering bidding for future rounds it is important to start work on this before the next phase is announced as funding has been allocated on a first-come-first-served-basis.

b | In Phase 1 £30 million of the £1 billion went to academies even though the sector accounts for 10% of the Government Carbon footprint.

c | Barker have secured funding for our academy clients in all 3 phases.

Q&A | Photovoltaics

Q: Are there any grants out there to help install photovoltaics?

A: No, but currently with electricity prices about 25p/kWh the return on investment if funded by reserves/SCA/private finance is about 3 years. If you take the view over the 25 year warranted life of the panel you could be buying 25% your electricity at under 5p/kWh

[LINK TO BARKER WEBINAR ON SOLAR PV AND LED LIGHTING](#)

Q: Has anyone overcome the legal challenge of installing solar panels on an academy school where the building is leased from the local authority? Our experience made it an impossible task.

A: The process is common and should be simple. If Local Authorities are slow the best thing to do is to speak to your local councillor.

Q: If land rather than roofs are used for PV I understand SoS approvals may be required.

A: That is our understanding too

Q&A | Photovoltaics

Q: When installing PV, what sort of additional costs as a percentage over and above the actual PV was the additional associated costs? ie renewing roof coverings, adaptations, fabric penetrations? structural amendments. also- did you target only roofs or consider ground level PV?

A: Installing PV on roofs typically should not cost more than £800 per kWp installed on a secondary and £1,000 per kWp on a primary this should cover all cost unless the whole roof needed to be replaced. If you are already replacing the roof do the PV install at the same time as up to 30% of the cost on a primary school project is the scaffolding so this should already be in the roofing project cost

Q: Is there an estimate of how much energy PV could provide (in percentage against other sources) in an average UK school, in 2030?

A: The Government has set a target in its white paper that 70% of school's roofs should be covered in PV. Our estimate shows that would generate 30% of electricity at today's consumption levels

Q&A | Operational Lease

Q: Are you able to share who you used for the operational lease

A: Maxxia and Less is More Capital are two funders of LED and PV via operational leases

Q: With the DfE new approach that all leases will now be regarded as Finance leases, how do we navigate this?

A: We are aware of a number of trusts considering applying for Secretary of State approval to use finance lease for PV and LED.

Q: It seems that new leases for PV will require DfE approval under the new rules on accounting for leases. Maybe CST could lobby for these leases to be added to the list of goods and services exempt from SoS approval?

A: CST are already in discussion with the department about this and are using Barker's experience of different funding solutions and the associated costs of each option as evidence

Q&A | EV Charging

Q: EV charging - is this really important? "free" charges tend to be trickle charges - arguably green washing - fast charging needs to have costs passed on - this is typically more expensive than home charging.

Like any project you will need to weigh up the costs and the savings (carbon and financial). Any investment in EV charging must consider the usage patterns, if it is for trust staff traveling between academies or community use you may need fast chargers, if you are looking to use it for minibus slower charges may work but simply installing 7kWh charges may not be the best option.

Q: If EV chargers are installed, would you charge for use?

A: Yes. If you don't you are offering free fuel to staff and the community which is not ideal use of your General Annual Grant. Even though it is allowed for staff under HMRC rules.

Q: Won't providing EV chargers increase your Trust's costs and footprint?

- A: Yes, if they are not managed and usage monitor any energy sold to staff and the community wouldn't count as part of your SECR reporting if you can separate the consumption if you used it for charging minibus it would, but it would offset your petrol or diesel carbon footprint.

Q: How does the selling electricity through EV points affect your funding agreements etc?

A: It would only be an issue if you were making a loss and not treating the VAT correctly.

Q&A | Energy Price

Q: Any recommendation on length of electricity contracts given current volatility. I am in the unfortunate position of contract ending 31st march. I'm facing price rise from £37k annually to £101k. Do I go long or short. £101k is based on 2 year contract. Brokers recommend 3 years with the usual it will definitely only rise.

A: Our advice would be to proceed with caution on three year contracts based on today's price as prices are currently inflated due to the war in Ukraine. However Barker are not energy brokers and we would advise you to seek out a reputable broker or canvass opinion from more than one.

You may want to look at a contract which gets you to the summer of 2023 whilst also putting in place a plan to reduce your consumption as that will be the best way of reducing your energy costs in the long term.

Q&A | General

Q: Does moving to the cloud actually reduce carbon footprint or just move it somewhere else, given the huge amount of energy used by server farms?

A: Yes, it move it else where, but it does not count in your SECR report. Many of the server farms provided such as Microsoft are working to [net zero targets](#). However you need to think about the move in two ways; it reduces your carbon footprint, but you are also potentially moving 30% of your electricity budget to your IT budget as you are getting a service for the energy saving rather than simply getting energy.

Q: Regarding water and temperatures. If you make changes, make sure you remain compliant with legionella

A: Correct. Reducing temperatures/thermostats have to be implemented sensibly and in line with statutory legislation.

Q&A | General

Q: Will DfE prioritise CIF bids for green projects?

A: There was no indication of this in the current round. They may do in the future. Most decarbonisation funding currently comes from Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy not DfE. This is something CST are working on.

Q: We are currently in the process of a designing our roof replacement / refurbishment program, would welcome advise on some of the questions above regards utilising this as an opportunity to address PV etc.

A: Any coordination of projects will help you get better value for any investment you are planning to make. Scaffolding costs for a PV project on a primary school can be up to 30% of the install cost, this cost could be avoided if the panels are installed when the scaffolding for the roofing project is in place. The saving may only be 10 - 15% on a secondary phase project as the scaffolding is a smaller proportion of the project cost.

It is also important that you maintain the integrity of any warranties associated with the roofing system when installing PV so this may steer the fixing/mounting method.

Q: Has anyone invested in Voltage Optimisation in an effort to reduce electricity costs?

A: Voltage optimisation is worth considering but only if you have a lot of fan and motors as other solutions will offer a more cost-effective solution to reducing your energy consumption and carbon footprint.

Useful links

- [Baker | Energy Solutions](#)
- [eo energy portal](#)
- [Greenshaw Learning Trust | To reduce carbon footprint by 50%](#)
- [Lets Go Zero](#)
- [Lloyds Bank | Green Building Toolkit](#)
- [DFE | Climate Action Plan](#)
- [How bad are bananas?](#)