

Duneaton Community Council

Minutes 5th July 2016

Non-Quorate Meeting

1. Attendance

Present: John McLatchie (Chair), Anne Jefferies (Treasurer), Malcolm Muir, Councillor Hamish Stewart, plus guests Jason Morin and Alastair Yule from Muirhall Energy

Apologies: Jo Talbot (Secretary), Heather Watts

2. Minutes

The minutes from the June meeting could not be adopted because this meeting was not quorate. They will be covered in the August meeting.

3. Muirhall Energy

Presentation led by Jason Morin, Project Manager for Priestgill Wind Farm

Introduction

"I know that as a community council you are probably no strangers to wind farm developers, but I hope that Muirhall will be able to offer something a little different. Our company Muirhall Energy is based in South Lanarkshire, on Muirhall farm just a few miles from Carnwath. Our office is right next to our own operational 11 turbine Muirhall Wind Farm. We have a portfolio of large projects throughout Scotland. Most recently, we have started construction on our 15 turbine Tormywheel Wind Farm in West Lothian, and also received consent for our 15 turbine Crossdykes Wind Farm in May, which is located between Lockerbie and Langholm.

So, a little bit on the history of Priestgill

In 2015, Muirhall Energy acquired a portfolio of wind farm developments from an American company, AES Wind Generation – one of those included was the Priestgill Wind Farm development. The proposal is on land at Littlegill Farm, 2km east of Abington services, and lies wholly within the Duneaton Community Council area. It is also wholly within South Lanarkshire Council's Landscape Capacity area for turbines larger than 120m. At the moment, we are looking at a potential 9 turbine development, with an anticipated capacity of between 24 and 30 Megawatts. The turbine layout and capacity is subject to change following site surveys, and feedback from the community, consultants and consultees during the planning process. We will also go through a detailed process to ensure we choose the turbine best-suited to the wind conditions on site, so will quite possibly see the expected total output of the site change.

Public Consultation

In terms of community consultation, all applicants of major developments must undertake public consultation prior to submission of a planning application. Our Proposal of Application Notice or PAN for short, was submitted to the council on the 21st June, which outlined the consultation we have

undertaken to date, and any planned future activities such as public exhibitions. AES Wind had previously held a public exhibition in Abington Hall in 2014, and we will be holding our own Public Exhibitions in Robertson and Crawford Village Halls, on the 13th and 14th of July respectively, between 4 and 7pm.

With regards to our consultation so far; we sent introductory letters in April to the community council and neighbours within 2km of the development and any potential access route to the site, as well as following up on the previous developer's consultation with local residents at Wandel. Public exhibition invitation letters were sent out yesterday to all residents living within 5km of potential turbines, and a Facebook profile has been set up to make sure that the latest news will be relayed to the Duneaton Community Council, Crawford and Elvanfoot Notice Board and GANDL Facebook pages. There should also be an advertisement of exhibitions in the Lanark Gazette Public Notices on the 6th July. The public exhibition boards will be available for download on our Priestgill section of the Muirhall website, should anyone not be able to make the 13th and 14th of July, or just for general interest.

Community Benefit

As with all Muirhall developments, we are very keen to make sure that the surrounding area will benefit properly from the community funds available. In this case, areas such as Abington, Robertson and Crawford; as these are the areas which will be most affected by the development and should therefore receive the benefits of such. As you may be aware, South Lanarkshire Council administers their own Renewable Energy Fund and there is usually an expectation for developers to direct some of the community benefit into this fund. We have been trying to get clarification with SLC that the application won't be prejudiced in any way, should we choose to distribute funds in a more localised manner. However, we will make sure that the lion's share of this will be distributed to Duneaton should the wind farm be constructed. At the current proposed scale of 9 turbines, we would be looking at a potential figure of between £50,000 and £60,000 per year for Duneaton to distribute as they wish.

Shared Ownership

In addition to community benefit, we are offering the communities surrounding Priestgill a 10% share in ownership of the wind farm, in order to realise the same sort of revenues as Muirhall. Shared Ownership is being encouraged by the Scottish Government, and would involve working with the likes of Local Energy Scotland and CARES, which is the Community and Renewable Energy Scheme. At the moment, a number of community groups are looking into the feasibility of shared ownership at our consented 15 turbine Crossdykes wind farm, and we will be following the progress of this closely in order to analyse the real potential and opportunity of shared ownership to the communities.

Timelines

In terms of timescales, we are currently working through the various Environmental Impact Assessment studies with our team of environmental consultants, and are hoping to submit a planning application in October."

4. Website

Anne has added content to the DCC website and taken it live <http://duneatoncc.weebly.com/>. A feed from the Facebook page automatically updates the homepage to keep content current. The Good Citizen application form is an online one. Glenkerie and Clyde grant application forms, criteria etc are all available for download as well. John thanked Anne for her efforts and all approved of the content.

5. Treasurer's Statement

Balances

SLC Admin account balance: £280.18, +5p interest, pending the Secretary cashing her honorarium cheque.

DCC General account balance: £3187.82. +50p interest, +£1000 Infinis Glenkerie funding. Paid out £500 to DCC-CWF-006 Darren Hill (Abington Flowers).

Activity

CWFF cheque delivered to Darren Hill.

Emailed John Archibald who confirmed £2.5K additional funding will be coming to replenish the microgrant pot. Need to provide receipts for first grant recipients, all recipients have been contacted apart from Darren Hill (since he only just got his cheque). Pending details coming through.

Infinis Glenkerie grant funding paperwork completed, BACS transfer of £1000 has been completed.

Additional information required by SLC in order to sign off the annual accounts (now auditing all accounts, not just the SLC grant account). Provided by the Treasurer in June, pending confirmation that accounts are complete.

Action points

1/ Authorise Infinis Glenkerie ad in the next GANDL Newsletter (£50) to publicise the grant funding availability as per the Infinis conditions for receiving the grant.

- Unable to vote on this as not quorate, but given that the deadline for the ad to go in is 10th July those present authorised the advert on the condition that this is formalised in the next meeting.

ACTION: Anne Jefferies to put the advert in the GANDL Events Newsletter.

2/ Roberton Flowers and Crawfordjohn Heritage Venture microgrant applications. Total CWFF spend to date is £2540 of the £3000 initial grant.

Additional CFJ information: "Cost break down for 2 x printed roller banners from TFH Gazebos is £200 including vat. This also includes most printing but there may be an extra cost for unusual graphics - until we get to that stage I don't know if our museum logo is "unusual" - I wouldn't have thought so. There is no delivery charge. Cost from Sarah Peters - Douglas Print & Design (who did our original leaflet) for re-print of 2000 leaflets is £170 plus a delivery charge. I based the application costing on our 2014 printing cost (which included some design work and was £250). I have since had the above information back from Sarah. We could therefore reduce our application request to £370."

- Crawfordjohn Heritage Venture. Approved via email based on the revised costs above of £370.

ACTION: Anne Jefferies to notify the Heritage Venture of their success. To be officially noted in the next minutes to meet CWFF micro grant conditions, cheque will be signed once this is complete.

- Roberton Flowers. Anne worked out that this would equate to approx. £7/household being spent on flowers compared to Abington's approx. £3/household. £500 is excessive, £250 was deemed more appropriate. Since the new CWFF micro grant money is not available yet, this

request will be redirected to the Infinis Glenkerie Fund. £250 is within their limits and we want to save the micro grant money for villages outside Glenkerie's scope if possible.

ACTION: Anne Jefferies to notify Robin Craig to complete the Glenkerie application.

Total CWFF Micro Grant Spend to Date: £2910 of £3000.

Hamish shared that there is a South Lanarkshire Council community fund that is open to constituted groups (not individuals) with grants of up to £1000. They are actively looking for more applications from this area.

ACTION: Anne Jefferies to research this and add it to the DCC website's grants page, replacing the current DCC funding section.

6. Any other business

- There may be a chance that Robertson Hall, and other halls in our area classified as 'low usage' could be at risk of closure. Hamish made it clear that this is NOT in any formal plans at the moment, however he advised that it was worth looking into community asset transfers in case the situation arose.

ACTION: Malcolm Muir to look into community asset transfer and report back at the August meeting.

- We need to get a full complement of Community Councillors to try to avoid us being regularly inquorate. One constituted member place is free at present, and it would be good to have associate members who regularly attend. They would effectively become a 'subs bench', so if a member had to resign at any time there would be experienced people who could step up and be effective straight away. Ideally we will get people in from Crawfordjohn and Wiston, since at present they're not represented.

ACTION: All to approach likely people and ask them to attend the August meeting to get a feeling for what's involved. Hopefully we will get at least 1 new member and 2-3 associates.

- Malcolm shared that there are Biggar groups interested in opening up walking and cycling routes across the area, linking into neighbouring schemes such as the Southern Upland Partnership. General support for this scheme as it could bring a lot of tourism and other new business into the area. It also links into the 'pathway along the side of the Clyde' idea mentioned in the last meeting (for the South Lanarkshire Outdoor Access Forum).

ACTION: Malcolm Muir to ask a speaker on this subject along to the August meeting.

- Hamish asked that he be automatically copied any time minutes are issued.

ACTION: Jo Talbot (or anyone covering for her) to include Hamish Stewart when minutes are issued.

END