

Lammermuir Community Council
Ordinary General Meeting

Wednesday 31st August 2022 at 7:30pm via Teams

Minutes

Present: Councillors:

Bill Landale (BL), Tony Homer (TH), Clive Warsop (CW), Johnny Fisher (JF), Anna Dabrowska (AD) Adam Prokopowicz (AP) Alastair Gordon (AG)
Morag Rodger (MoR), Cllr Mark Rowley (MR)

Guest Speaker: Kevin Burns, Project Manager, Fred Olsen (KB)

Minute Secretary: Dianne Repsch (DR)

Resident & Chair of LCF: Alison Landale (AL)

Agenda

1. Welcome and apologies:

Apologies: None received

2. Crystal Rig Wind Farm - Phase IV

Kevin Burns, Project Manager, representing Fred Olsen, kindly attended the meeting to inform the Community Councillors of the development plans for Crystal Rig Wind Farm Phase IV and showed a short presentation of the development. Fred Olsen Renewables was granted consent for an 11 turbine extension in 2021. Crystal Rig Wind Farm first commenced operation in 2003 with 25 turbines and a further 60 turbines were added in 2010 and a further 6 in 2015. Crystal Rig IV is part of the expansion of the existing site and will involve the construction of 11 turbines up to 200 m to tip and should be constructed by the end of 2024. This will allow the wind farm, combined, to generate 262.5 MW of electricity which is the equivalent to powering more than 200,000 homes annually.

Fred Olsen will put out tenders for local suppliers to tender for the construction work on the site and are committed to at least 30% of the tender spend going to local suppliers. Fred Olsen has been working with the local Chamber of Commerce, MP's, MSP's and Councillors so that contracts will go into the local economy.

Fred Olsen will provide over £6m in community benefit and will continue with £5k per MW of installed capacity which means £245k split between 5 Community Councils in the local area which are East Lammermuir, Lammermuir, ABPCC, Garvald & Morham and Cocksburnspath & Cove.

There will be a website set up over the next few weeks which will give details of the development as it progresses. There will also be a community liaison group set up to keep everyone up to date with the development and it was hoped that a member of LCC would join this group.

Kevin Burns took questions from the CC's

AL if there was extra power produced that could not be put into the grid, were there any plans for battery storage?

KB confirmed that as the battery storage technology has improved most developers are now looking to install battery storage when they can and also solar panels.

CW asked if environmental impacts were still being carried out on the Crystal Rig site. KB confirmed that even though Phase IV was an extension a full environmental assessment still had to be carried out. A number of studies were carried out before planning and even though the Phase IV site has been consented there are still a number of conditions that have to be fulfilled as set out by SBC.

MR said as this is a consented scheme and it is going to be going ahead it would be best to focus on the areas where value can be added to the community. MR raised a number of questions (which are listed below to highlight the information being requested). MR also raised concerns that the consent for Crystal Rig IV would be putting extra capacity into one of the most constrained pieces of grid in the UK.

At the end of the question/answer session it was agreed that LCC would write to KB to obtain answers to the following key questions:

- Which local Chamber of Commerce had Fred Olsen been in touch with and what had the response been?
- Is the commitment contractual for the 30% of the tender spend going to local suppliers?
- What is meant by "local"? Is this in Scottish Borders and East Lothian, inside of Scotland or within a 50 mile radius?
- Is there any evidence to support the 60 local jobs mentioned in the presentation?
- Can Fred Olsen provide in writing what the community benefit will be and the breakdown between East Lammermuir, Lammermuir, ABPCC, Garvald & Morham and Cocksburnspath & Cove?

KB confirmed he would reply, if these questions, were sent to him by email. KB also said the he would liaise with Fred Olsen Procurement regarding the contract and whether more detail could be put into the contract to make sure that there are local contractors bidding for the work.

MoR raised the invitation extended to Fred Olsen representatives to attend the Ellemford Show on the 24th September. KB confirmed their attendance.

3. Matters Arising:

Minutes of previous meeting held on 22nd June 2022:

BL confirmed that the minutes of the previous meeting have been approved as a true record of the meeting and the Minutes can now be finalised.

Action Point Document:

Action Point 1: Community Councillor vacancies. BL confirmed that he had a possible new member he had recruited to join the community council and he hoped to have a decision by the next meeting if not before. BL also confirmed that he was working on filling the other vacancies.

Action Point 2: TH confirmed that the notice via The Herald asking for information on any footpaths in disrepair, so that LCC could report them to SBC, had gone out but there had not been any replies.

Action Point 3: AG confirmed that he had been in touch with Rose Hogg, Dog Education Officer at SBC, regarding the emptying of the dog waste bins. The response so far is that SBC will not put in their own dog waste bins but would possibly empty the bins currently in place but only if they were moved to a more accessible position such as the car park. AG confirms he will report further at the next meeting.

4. Treasurer's Report

Bank Balance 31/0/2022	£3,533.98
Payments (in transit)	£0.00
COMMUNITY COUNCIL	£1,203.95
SBC COVID-19 FUNDING (ring fenced - no change)	£330.03
WALKING FUND (ring fenced - no change)	£2,000.00
<u>(LCC PROJECT FUNDING – RING FENCED AT THE LCF)</u>	
DEFIBRILLATOR (incl AED training) (no change)	£884.47
COMMUNITY BROADBAND	£1,000.00
COMMUNITY WEBSITE	£617.45
COMMUNITY EMERGENCY FUND	£8,662.50
LCC ADMIN COSTS	£2,000.00

AD explained that the bank balance of £3,533.98 was after LCC had received £2k from LCF for the admin costs. The admin costs will be for the period up to February 2023. Most of the LCF ring fenced projects show no change apart from the Community Broadband which was reduced to £1k as the rest of the funds were moved to the Community Emergency Fund. The Community Emergency Fund includes the application for the resilience work and also the electrical funding subsidy which has now been implemented. The LCC Admin Costs Fund of £2k is for next year's tranche.

5. Planning Applications:

No Planning applications received since the last meeting.

6. Update from the Resilience Sub Group (RSG):

AG reported that the RSG had made provisions in the village halls for people during the hot weather. Although it had been with limited success it had been worth trying.

TH reported that he had had meetings with JF and Paula Easton, the LCF secretary, to discuss the issue of data sharing across LCC, LCF and The Herald and it was proving to be quite complicated. New arrangements with Google are required so that a new joint database of contacts can be established with the correct permissions. It is not known how long it will take to receive the new approvals from Google.

JF said that Kathleen White (KW), who has agreed to be the Resilience Coordinator in the Longformacus area had been invited to talk to the Gavinton Resilience Group about how they had managed to set up a generator for their village hall. KW has also joined the new Longformacus village hall committee as a Resilience Group Liaison.

JF confirmed that when the RSG prepared the proposal for LCF it had been decided that a survey would go out to the community to find out what items people have available to help with the resilience response and who is willing to be contacted and who would like to be contacted in case of an emergency. The RSG has started to put together a survey. Once the survey has gone out and the RSG has the results they can start to build the community resilience plan, following the format that SBC and the Scottish Government has recommended for Community Council resilience groups.

AL from LCF confirmed that for the last 2 years LCF had given winter fuel assistance which involved a payment being offered of £80 in December and then again in January for those who felt in need and 67 payments were made for coal, logs, wood pellets etc. AL confirmed that she had put an application into LCF so that this offer could be repeated this winter. Pearson's coal prices have already increased and due to increase by a further £6 a bag on the 11th September. An email would be sent to the LCF Trustees for approval so that the application could go through more speedily.

AL also confirmed that since June 22 there has been a community larder in Longformacus which has been kindly run by Corine Craik who receives £100 from LCF to buy groceries each week to stock the larder and this is working well. There have been requests for a similar scheme in Cranshaws however a volunteer would be needed to run it. Perhaps the RSG could help find someone to take this on in Cranshaws.

AL reported that of the £10k emergency fuel subsidy, which was for £100 per household to assist with the cost of fuel, approximately two thirds has been claimed.

MR said that LCC should take a leadership approach with the resilience scheme and contact the committees of both Village Halls asking for their entrance halls to be made available to the community. LCC should also help find volunteers to support the resilience scheme.

MR also said that as LCF is supported by a renewable energy Wind Farm that LCF should make sure that the original agreement would cover supporting coal payments so as not to put the fund at risk.

BL said that he would ensure that LCF confirmed they were following the correct process from the original agreement.

After a discussion about the importance of the resilience scheme and being able to use the village halls BL confirmed that LCC would do the very best they could to gain access to the village halls for use in this crisis and he would liaise further with the RSG on how to take this forward.

7. Ellemford Estate Woodland Creation and Management Plan:

BL there is a plan for extensive planting of hardwoods in the Ellemford Estate and there are details in the form of a map which is already available. On Wednesday 14th September there will be a meeting at Cranshaws Village Hall to explain what this project consists of and there is a walk round the site between 2 - 4.00p.m. After the tour of the site there is a meeting in the hall between 4.30 - 8.00p.m. and there will be an opportunity to ask questions and learn more about the decisions being taken.

TH confirmed that he had had discussions with the TreeStory Agency who are acting on behalf of the Ellemford Estate. TreeStory have struggled to identify businesses, farming enterprises and estates and contacted TH to see if they could use The Herald to send out the information about the work on the estate. TH confirmed that this was sent out to everyone on The Herald contact list which contained a link to all of the estate forestry plan which will form the basis of discussions they will be having at the public meeting.

TH would be interested to know what is going to happen on the estate around the forestry plan as there is nothing included in the plan about livestock, jobs and issues relating to access. It is not clear whether these matters will be up for discussion at the public meeting and LCC should find out how we can raise these as the meeting is being run by TreeStory and Nature Scotland. TH confirmed that TreeStory were not attending the Ellemford Show which would be a missed opportunity to engage with residents. Local people could think they are avoiding the issue of public consultation.

AD confirmed that she had posted the information on the community website and The Herald News.

MoR confirmed that my husband Andrew and I received mail from the project management company with maps about the project. I believe that this is because we are one of the owners of farmland that March with the Ellemford Estate, which was confirmed by TH that we were identified for the mailing. MoR's understanding is that the whole of Rig Foot and the whole of the backside of the valley is going to be a continuous mixture of trees. This means that the ability to produce cereal crops and cattle/sheep will be lost.'

AP said that it would appear that the estate is contacting everyone as individuals when this is a massive project that changes the area and they should therefore be in contact with LCC not individual people. AP recommends that LCC establish a sub group that would make contact with the Agency and request full information before the meeting on the 14th September. The sub group would need to get involved with this very important project before the meeting, during the meeting and after the meeting.

MR agrees that LCC should demand that the estate consultants come and talk to LCC directly so that there is proper communication. LCC should raise the issue of better publicity to get the message out to the local community. LCC should agree now to write to the consultants immediately and insist that they send out a mailshot with an invitation to attend the meeting on Wednesday 14th September. Every resident should be contacted to give them the opportunity to attend. It would appear that they are trying to avoid public engagement and it is the job of LCC to do everything it can to put pressure on them and force them to engage.

After the discussion it was agreed that BL on behalf of LCC would write to the management of the estate and make these points very forcibly. LCC will also encourage other members of the community to attend the meeting on Wednesday 14th September. LCC would also advise that it would be very beneficial if representatives from the Estate and TreeStory Agency could take a stand at the Ellemford Show.

8. Updates from Council Members:

AP confirmed that he had attended the Black Hill Wind Farm Fund meeting on 17th August 2022. It was mainly older projects that were discussed so not anything to report at this stage. AP & BL to discuss strategic issues separately after the CC meeting.

9. Correspondence Received:

No correspondence received

10. Any other business:

MR mentioned the Tour Britain cycle race on Monday 5th September which would be travelling through some of the village and Duns. MR hoped the race would be supported by local residents. There would be traffic management in place throughout.

11. Date of next meetings:

Extraordinary Meeting: Wednesday 21st September 2022 at 7.30p.m. held at Cranshaws Village Hall to discuss the Ellemford Estate Woodland Creation and Management Plan and the resilience scheme for the community.

Ordinary General Meeting: Wednesday 19th October 2022 at 7.30p.m. via Teams

Annual General Meeting and Ordinary General Meeting: Wednesday 7th December 2022 at 7.30p.m. held at Longformacus Village Hall

Meeting closed at 21.30