

Ellingham Community Trust

Notes: 11th September 2013

Public Meeting held in Ellingham C of E First School

Trustees Present: Gustav MacLeod, Heather Cairns, George Unwin, Christopher Watson, Robert Stuart

Apologies for Absence: Ruth Machen

Also Present: Members of the public as signing in sheet; Kevin Bartlett (Localities Officer, NCC); Allen Creedy (Ethical Partnerships)

Introduction: GM introduced the meeting and made a presentation explaining the various options which have been explored and considered, how these were chosen as priorities, etc., and informed meeting about biomass scheme for the School. (See PowerPoint for details). The Trust aims to find and pursue schemes which will pay back to the community.

CW made a presentation about the community solid fuel scheme and gave a synopsis of monies received and spent by the Trust to date. There were no comments or questions about the fuel scheme.

GM invited questions from the floor.

Rosie Barber, Newham – How much will biomass scheme at school cost?

Cost estimated at £30-40,000. Allen Creedy currently costing scheme; costings will be finalised in the next week. It will be funded by money from school income and Renewable Heat Incentive; estimated 3-4 years to pay back costs. The boiler will be owned by the Trust and the school will buy the pellets. The school will then buy energy from the Community Trust.

Jane Hall, Newham Buildings – how would solar panels of farm buildings work for the Trust?

The Trust would rent the roof from the farmer/landowner. A legal agreement with the farmer/landowner would be required.

Ron Moscrop – query about connections to the grid.

There may be issues if there were to be a flood of domestic installations – however each individual has to pay for their connection to the grid.

Mrs Hall – how does the application process [for Community Trust grants] work?

The Trust has various criteria to consider when assessing an application, set out in a grid. The application is tested against this grid. Trustees make decisions as to how the fund is used, by majority vote. Applications should be for community benefit however applications for personal development will be considered. However, some funding is being kept aside for larger schemes which will 'shoe horn' more money in to the Community Fund.

Louis Fell – is the fund earning interest?

Part of fund is in a current account and part in a deposit account – both earn interest although current interest rates are extremely low.

Other questions/comments –

GM noted that Ridgewind Ltd had awarded two scholarships to assist students in the parish with course fees. It is hoped that Blue Energy will operate similar schemes.

How many successful applications have been made?

One successful and one unsuccessful (the latter due to a query on ownership of land).

Will applications be published?

Personal details of applications will not be discussed but applications will be listed under 'case studies' on website.

Process has been too secretive; there has not been enough information to parishioners.

Parish Newsletters are delivered to every household in the parish at least once a quarter; these contain information about the Trust and what is happening. Information is also available on the website.

Can meeting minutes be published in newsletter?

Yes by all means. In future a synopsis of Trust minutes will be published in the newsletter.

There are no schemes for pensioners.

MINUTES

The school biomass boiler is the first scheme, others will follow. It is intended that in the future these will generate enough income to provide benefit to households throughout the parish, for example by covering the cost of fuel bills, providing double glazing, etc – these are longer term goals.

Would an application for a cycle track be considered?

If this was made by a community group it would be given consideration.

Would parishioners like an open day to be run, where information on grants for individuals would be available?

Yes this would be useful.

How do you become a trustee?

There is a process for this – applications can be made at the AGM.

There being no further questions of comments GM thanked everyone for attending and drew the meeting to a close.

Notes prepared by: Elspeth Gilliland