

Ellingham Community Trust

Minutes: 7th August 2013

Ellingham Village Hall

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

Present for feedback session: Alan Creedy, Andrew Frater, Steve Stubbins (Northumberland Estates), Hugh Fell (Ellingham Estate), Graham Simpson, Gilfrid Baker-Cresswell, Aidan Ruff, Graham & Julie Carr.

Apologies for Absence: Ruth Machen

Feedback to Landowners: GM welcomed everyone and began by explaining that the Community Fund will generate approx £1 million over the life of the Windfarm, ie 25 years, to be used solely for the benefit of the parish of Ellingham. The Trust is tasked with looking after and dispersing the fund and in order to assist in decisions as to how best to do this, soon after being appointed the Trustees carried out a parish-wide survey to identify parishioners' priorities. The survey identified faster broadband and green energy provision as two of the main priorities for parishioners. The Community Trust has worked with the Parish Council to encourage sign up to the 'i-Northumberland' campaign (run by the county council) which will, it is hoped, result in faster broadband being brought to the parish. Ellingham is currently the second highest in the county in percentage of households signed up for faster broadband. Should the bid not be successful, however, there may be options to purchase satellite broadband the parish and this is something which could possibly be funded through the Community Fund.

Trustees then decided that as well as encouraging applications for funding from members of the community, part of the fund should be invested for community benefit via green energy schemes. To assist in looking into this further the Trust engaged Ethical Partnerships. GM introduced AC to the landowners, who then explained that his role is looking at potential resources to generate energy but noted that the potential to a farmer or landowner is very different to that of an independent trust, and there are many variables as well as physical constraints. AC has identified priority projects with the Trust, including the pros and cons of joint ventures and possible social projects – eg at the school. Priority projects include hydro at Ellingham Hall (full feasibility study to be undertaken), biomass and PVs or small turbine at Ellingham school, PVs at Tynley, wind turbine/solar array at Brownieside. The Trust has 3 funding options – its own funds of £38k pa; grants for - be funded. 7-8 projects have been put forward to Northern Power Grids with a request for costs to connect to the grid – once this information is received then the Trust will go back to the landowner(s) to see if they are interested in a joint project.

A general discussion then took place regarding possible schemes which would be of community benefit. It was noted that although not every scheme would initially be of direct benefit to every area of the parish – eg outlying settlements – it would be intended to look at further schemes for other areas at a later date, and also that any income generated would feed back into the whole community. Other comments –

- Possible partnership with Ellingham Estate for provision of wood chips for a district heating system (for the village)?
- Be careful not to get into too much complexity – figures only stack up on larger projects. Most houses are privately owned and feed in tariffs available are pitched at a level to incentivise the individual to install their own green energy measures.

Ellingham Estate would promote Estate and Trust schemes alongside each other.

Northumberland Estates would look at individual projects on their merit.

Some general interest exists in partnering the Trust to generate green energy and benefit the community as a whole – partnerships required to take forward larger schemes.

Concluding this discussion GM thanked all Landowners for attending, then moved on to general business of the meeting.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of 3rd and 11th July were approved and signed.

MINUTES

Matters Arising: Rural Community Energy Fund application submitted.

Trustees Election: RM had advised GM that she is relocating to Durham for 3 months and therefore felt she should stand down from Trust. Suggested options - (a) RM stands down but acts as adviser and new Trustee recruited (b) if RM feels she can adequately carry out her role as Trustee then she should stay on Trust.

Decision/Action: *GM approach RM and put these options to her*

Treasurer's Report: Bank balance £33,934.27. Second instalment of funding which was due for payment in May still not received.

Decision/Action: *GM to telephone T Hall (Blue Energy) to chase up payment*

Invitation & Programme for Public Meeting at School: GM to draft invitation letter and circulate to Trustees for approval. These to be printed and hand delivered around parish. Agenda: Introduction; log scheme; list of proposed/potential schemes (GM to list).

Decision/Action: *GM draft letter; Trustees comment/approve; All deliver to households*

Log Scheme: CW made power point presentation outlining the scheme, which would provide all households with a voucher for log briquettes which would supply approx 1 month's heating. Trustees approved scheme subject to storage being identified.

Decision/Action: *CW/GU identify secure storage area(s)*

Broadband Satellite Scheme: as per discussion with landowners.

Decision/Action: *GM to research broadband satellite providers/costs*

New Application Form: GM had sent draft simplified application form to Trustees – this was agreed by all.

Decision/Action: *form to be finalised and made available at public meeting*

Next Meeting: Friday 6th September, 7pm, Ellingham Village Hall

Wednesday 11th September, 7pm, Ellingham School (**Public Meeting**)

Minutes prepared by: Elspeth Gilliland