

Minutes

STEERING GROUP MEETING



7.30pm 28th July 2011 – Strathglass Community Hall, Cannich

Attendees:

Pierre LeBrun, Andrew & Tanya Castell, Anne MacDonald, Erik Trelfer, Mary Brook, Edward Redmond, Robin Sproull & Mike Girvan (Corimoney Energy Ltd)
Apologies: Paul & Kate McKinley, Neil MacInnes, Peter MacDonald & Bill McDermott

Agenda topics

Minutes of Meeting 26th May 2011

Discussion: the minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed

Current Situation

Project Progress – Mike Girvan outlined progress to date advising that a grid offer has been accepted for connection in August 2013. However, ROCS are being reviewed soon and may change from the current one MW per ROC to 0.8. This would reduce income by around £350,000 per year. However electricity prices were expected to rise significantly in the next two years so worst case this would compensate. He has therefore asked for an earlier connection date than April 2013, ideally to Q4 2012. It is thought to be quite likely that SSE will be able to bring forward this date. SSE are upgrading Fasnakyle to put in a new switchboard for the Beauly – Denny line and our circuit breaker could be fitted by them at the same time (Nov 2012 is the due date for installation for the new switchboard) to provide an earlier grid connection date. This would advance all the plans but Mike confirmed this was all achievable with a bit of re-scheduling of the works.

The Co-op Bank are working towards a financial close of end of November and Mike intends work to start in October this year on the access road when he moves to Glen Urquhart. Construction can start before the financing is in place. The Turbine order would then need to be made in December this year.

The over-all project cost was currently circa £13 Million – but dependent on the Euro exchange rates. Andrew advised we could potentially purchase Euros via the bank in advance in order to provide certainty. Mike confirmed that CEL were doing the road themselves. The low-loader delivery trucks would have a 120 ton load which was too much for the existing bridges on the Corrimony Road and strengthening them would cost more than constructing a new road avoiding the river crossing. The plans are now for a new road off the A831 at Milness running alongside the river (to the Cannich side). The road engineer is to be ex-forestry commission engineer Bob Main who has plenty of experience in this work.

The cable run would be undertaken in July/August next year by Agri-Leck specialist high voltage system mechanical engineers (approved by Co-op), and the Turbine Bases being built in September 2012. The Turbines would be arriving October 2012. The Turbine bases would be constructed by RJ McLeod (approved by both Co-op and Enercon).

Investigation into insurance of the project had begun by Mike but was still not complete.

The lawyers for the joint undertaking would be Wright Johnson & Mackenzie (WJM) who were used by CEL previously. The contact at WJM is Andy MacFarlane – **Action – Soirbheas to make contact with Andy MacFarlane.**

There was some discussion as to whether Soirbheas could have a different payment schedule to CEL and Tanya agreed to check with Laura what CES had seen in the past. **ACTION**

Finance

Bank Balance – currently £1,250 after further transfer from CES. Most of this will be used to pay the outstanding accountants fee and some other smaller bills.

Funding Applications – It was agreed that Tanya and Anne had delegated authority to prepare and submit phase 1 applications. **Anne would make initial contact with Social Investment Scotland. ACTION**

Directors CVS for Bank Application– all directors to send Tanya a paragraph by mid August **Action: All Directors**

Big Lottery – CES feel we have a good chance as there has not been much take up for the Community Asset funds. Anne advised we could potentially reach Stage 2 application by September. We should also apply to Social Investment Scotland (whose new funding arrives in August for this financial year) who still have some facility for part loan/part grant funding. **A business plan and a community engagement plan were likely to be needed and these needed to be prepared by Soirbheas. ACTION**

A meeting with the COOP bank was being planned, potentially for 26th August and Mike would revert on the date. At that meeting it would need to be agreed how communication with the bank would work going forwards.

Mary was working on the VAT registration for the trading entity. **Tanya agreed to confirm with CES that this was correct. ACTION**

Community Engagement

Anne/Tanya

Drop in meetings have not been as well attended as hoped for and it was decided that we must now change our strategy and go more pro-active. More door to door work is one option, but using other community group's meetings as a platform by attending them and speaking at them should also be productive in signing up members. Pierre also suggested we provide leaflets at events such as concerts at Glen Urquhart Public Hall which get good attendances.

It was proposed that we improve communication by appointing Soirbheas Community Contacts one for each small area of the community who would be able to represent and communicate with their local area e.g. doing leaflet drops in their immediate locality which could generate extra members. Pierre volunteered to be the contact for the Shenval area. Names of existing members to be provided to Directors and Community Contacts so they would know who had already signed up – **Action – Erik to provide list of members names**

Newsletter - Laura -Community Energy Scotland – is finalising the newsletter into a publishing quality format for the printers to save us costs. The print cost of 2000 newsletters was agreed at £110.

Groups Active in the Glens – Anne has contacted all the known active groups in Glen Urquhart

Glen Urquhart Highland Games – main tea tent will have a band and art gallery so would not be suited to our purpose – we will have a separate pitch. We will meet up at 12.00 on games day. Not known who supplied the gazebo for us last year. Erik to check if last years gazebo is available. Tanya to ask Kate if the hall has one we could use. No notice boards are required but pictures, a banner and ideally a model turbine would be used for both this and the Strathglass gala. – **Action Tanya & Erik re Gazebo/tent, Anne re model turbine**

Strathglass Gala – Tanya and Andrew to represent Soirbheas. Tanya to find out what equipment is required

Strap Line for logo – ‘Power in our Hands’ was the winning slogan and has now been adopted in the logo

Article for Glen Urquhart Bulletin – **Action Anne to contact Fraser Mackenzie**

Post Key Planning documents on our web-site – **Action – Mary Brook/Rupert Wilson**

Matters Arising and Any Other Business

Risk Register – Tanya ran through the risk register and provided updates on the status. Some risks needed further discussion before an action could be decided upon. In particular the risk of the community turbine not operating needed to be considered and so there was a need to review the proposed maintenance agreement with Enercon as to what situations were and were not covered by their warranty.

Outcomes – Broadband problem is the greatest at the top end of Glen Urquhart and particularly at the west end of Strathglass ie Cannich and Tomich. Some board members expressed concern that we did not have the capacity to become directly involved with the delivery of outcomes ourselves. Our original aim was only to assist with the finance to facilitate others to do this. BLF complicates this as they want to see specific outcomes delivered. Our original aim to help finance outcomes may not be sufficient for BLF purposes. Anne noted that there were likely to be other charities or enterprises that Soirbheas could link up with to deliver such outcomes in such a way that it should not be necessary for us to run them. It was also commented that despite people citing fuel poverty as a concern, some outcomes such as energy efficiency surveys and roof insulation for homes were already being provided by energy companies and others for the over 60's – but people were not applying for the help that was already available to them (assuming they were aware of these options and they were eligible).

ACTION ITEMS	Person responsible:	Deadline:
Different payment schedule for Soirbheas & CEL – ask CES	Tanya	soon
Soirbheas to make contact with Andy MacFarlane – WJM Solicitors	Not allocated	
Directors cvs to Tanya	All Directors	Mid August
Contact SIS	Anne	soon
Business Plan & Community Engagement Plan	Not Allocated	
List of Members Names to Directors & Community Contacts	Erik	soon
Gazebo/Tent for Games	Erik/Tanya	soon
Model Turbine	Anne	
Contact Fraser re Glen Urquhart Bulletin Article	Anne	urgent
Post Key Planning Documents	Mary/Rupert	soon
Draft communication Policy	Tanya	On-going
Strathglass Gala	Tanya/Andrew	
VAT Registration	Mary/Tanya	soon

DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS: Steering Group Meeting Thursday 18th August 2011 – Blairbeg Meeting Room, Blairbeg Hall, Drumnadrochit, Steering Group Meeting Thursday 8th September (Cannich Community Hall) [since changed from 18th to 19th August – and also the meeting on 8th September will need to change due to the forthcoming Coop Bank meeting]

Chairman:

Clerk to the Board:

Erik Trelfer

Date:

