

West Fife & Coastal Villages Community Council Forum

Minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2014 at 7pm in in Blairhall New Community Centre

Present: Muriel Colver, Marie Crane, John Crane, Willie Hepburn, John Duffy, David Wall, Shelia Carabine, John Bonnar

Attending: Cllr Willie Ferguson, Cllr Kate Stewart, Cllr Bobby Clelland

1.0 Apologies: Jim Hensman, Ann Macdonald, Tim Collins, David A Lord, Cllr Alice Callaghan, PS Jillian Neill

2.0 Siting wind turbines on Council land in West Fife –Fife Council, Climate Change & Zero Waste Team

Chris Ewing provide an overview of the proposal. It was noted that:

- The Council were looking at the feasibility of 25 sites.
- Two options were being investigated:
 - Sites with a stand-alone turbine connected directly to the national grid.
 - Sites where a turbine would be connected to a Council building with any excess energy being sold back to the national grid.
- Investing in wind turbines rather than solar energy had been agreed as the long term business case because turbines offer the best financial return.
- Based on best estimates it would take around 10 years before the initial investment of £8-9 million by Fife Council would be recouped.
- There was broad cross party support for the proposal.
- No decision on which sites would be progressed had been taken.
- The outcomes of additional feasibility work would be known within the next month. This in conjunction with the comments from consultation events would be compiled and fed back to Council committees.
- Given the size of the turbines there would be no community fund established. Monies generated from the turbines would be used to offset the deficit in the Council's budget.
- The turbines had a life cycle of about 20 years. The maintenance of them was included in the overall business case.
- People would have the right to object through the planning process to any of the applications. The application for the turbine at Lochhead had taken over 13 months to be approved.
- The Council was actively investigating the use and development of other renewal energy sources and enterprises at sites throughout Fife.
- Updates on the progress of the project will be published on the Fife Council website – <http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/windpower>
- The proposed location of a turbine at Blairhall Bing included in the invitation to drop in events was incorrect. The location of this turbine was likely to be between Shiresmill and Blairhall.
- Carnock & Gowkhall CC in principle would oppose any applications affecting West Fife villages. This was subject to seeing the detailed applications.
- North and South Lanarkshire Council had removed turbines which were too close to residential properties & schools as they had an adverse effect on people and pets.

It was agreed that the Forum would:

- monitor the outcome of the feasibility reports before making a decision
- contact Chris and ask to be kept updated on any future progress.

Cllr Kate Stewart & Cllr Willie Ferguson left the meeting.

3.0 Minutes of previous meeting: The minutes of the previous meeting were approved

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4.0 Matters arising:

- Changing the signatories on the bank account - carried forward.
- Appointing a new secretary – DL was waiting for a response from Lynn Hoey.
- Amending the Forum’s constitution – carried forward, DL .

It was suggested that the Forum should submit an application to the local budget to cover its running costs.

5.0 Police report: JD advised that PS Jillian Neill had emailed an update. JD to disseminate.

Cllr WF re- joined the meeting.

6.0 Councillor Report: Cllr BC and Cllr WF reported on the following:

- Discussions in relation to the remediation of Blairhouse opencast with the site owner were still stalled.
- Signage on the A985 had been improved.
- A major application for a care home and sheltered housing in Kincardine had been approved.
- Photos showing the condition of Kincardine Bridge had been forwarded to BEAR Scotland.

7.0 Community Councils feedback:

Blairhall CC. MC advised that:

- The old hall had been bought and leased to a group.
- A new village website had been set up and a newsletter was to be produced
- The village currently had no recycling area
- Noise complaints had been received about a Harris Hawk being kept in an aviary

Oakley & Comrie CC. JB advised that:

- The new astro turf was being laid at the Community Sports Hub
- The charging policy for the community school was not in line with other Fife Council owned halls

Kincardine CC. DH & Cllr WF advised that:

- The setting up of a community development trust was causing friction within the community.
- The vandalised daffodil display had recovered
- Landfill tax fund in Scotland was to close in 2015
- Kincardine Football team currently had no home pitch as the existing pitch was in a very poor condition
- The development of a new play park was being investigated

Saline & Steelend CC. JC advised that:

- An application for a remembrance garden had been submitted for a site where an application for an eco-cemetery had previously been refused due to inadequate access.
- Work was currently being carried out on the A823.
- The Council had cut back overgrown vegetation on the boundary of a property at Kinnedar which the Community Council had complained about over a number of years.

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Low Valleyfield CC. DW advised that:

- Preparations for the commemoration of the Valleyfield Pit disaster were underway.
- A farmers fete and market was to be held on 29th June at Culross Green.

Torryburn & Newmills CC. JD advised that:

- a complaint from a resident about the Community Council had been passed on to Bill Welsh by Cllr KS. In resolving the matter it had come to light that any Council officer or Councillor who received a complaint about a Community Council should pass it directly to the Community Council to resolve.

8.0 Planning issues: It was noted that:

- DL and representatives from Saline Community Council had attended the West Area Fife Planning Committee meeting at which the application for a windfarm at Ouith Muir was refused.
- A screening application had been submitted for Colt Hill.
- LRD were to give another presentation on 5th April.
- DL had forwarded on background information relating to the public enquiry on Dart Energy's appeal against the refusal by Falkirk and Stirling Councils to grant planning permission for Coal Bed Methane extraction around Airth near Larbert. DL had expressed his disappointment that no one from Fife Council had attended the enquiry.

9.0 AOB. None

10.0 Date of next meeting: 24 April 2014 at 7pm in Blairhall New Community Centre.

AGENDA - 24 April 2014 at 7pm in Blairhall New Community Centre

- 1.0 Apologies
- 2.0 Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting
- 3.0 Matters arising
- 4.0 Police Report
- 5.0 Councillor Report
- 6.0 Community Council Feedback
- 7.0 Planning Issues
- 8.0 AOB
- 9.0 Date of next meeting - 29th May 2014