

**WOOLLEY HILL WIND FARM
COMMUNITY LIAISON GROUP**

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 12th February 2013

In attendance: Cllr Jill Elliott (Chair, Ellington) - **JE**
Cllr Mark Chapman (Ellington) - **MC**
John Simmonds (Woolley Hill Action Group) - **JS**
Reverend Canon Jonathan Young (Priest, Ellington Church) - **JY**
Cllr Peter Harrison (Barham and Woolley) - **PH**
Cllr Norman Grundy (Barham and Woolley) - **NG**
Jane Darlington (Cambridgeshire Community Foundation) - **JD**
Jon Knight (RES) - **JK**
Alison Jones (RES) - **AJ**
George Saliagopoulos (Bellenden) - **GS**
10 members of the public in the audience

Date: 12th February 2013 - 7pm

Venue: Ellington Village Hall

Apologies: Cllr Jane Baker (Alconbury Weston)
Mr Shailesh Vara MP (North West Cambridgeshire)
Cllr Grahame Leach (Spaldwick)
Cllr Bernard Plummer OBE (Spaldwick)
Cllr Jeremy Adams (Alconbury)
Cllr Vick Fayers-Hallin (Alconbury)
Cllr Keith Baker (Huntingdonshire)
Rosemary Massey (Clerk, Barham and Woolley)
Cllr Viv McGuire (Cambridgeshire County Council)

Due to unavoidable circumstances, the Chair agreed that the meeting would be opened with point 4 on the agenda – project update – however, for the sake of consistency, the minutes below are laid out in the usual order.

1. Welcome and Introduction

The Chair, JE, welcomed the group to the Woolley Hill Wind Farm CLG and asked the group to introduce themselves.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received for Cllr Jane Baker, Shailesh Vara MP, Cllr Grahame Leach, Cllr Bernard Plummer, Cllr Jeremy Adams, Cllr Vick Fayers-Hallin, Cllr Keith Baker, Cllr Viv McGuire and Rosemary Massey.

3. Approval of the Minutes of Last Meeting

The Chair explained that the last meeting of the CLG took place on 13th November 2012 and asked the group if there were any amendments to the minutes. One minor question was raised but the group was happy to confirm the minutes of the previous meeting.

4. Matters Arising

JK explained that there had been a procedural meeting in November 2012 to reconvene the CLG and establish its process, but this was the first official meeting to discuss business and address public questions.

5. Woolley Hill Project Update and Timeline

JK gave a brief overview of the project situation, stating that RES has 31 planning conditions to discharge before work can begin on the site. Details include preparations of detailed drawings, a construction management plan and a traffic management plan. JK informed members of the CLG that when RES submits these documents to discharge the conditions they will become available to view on the council website. JK invited questions from members.

JS asked whether RES had met with the Highways Agency (HA) with regard to the site entrances. JK confirmed that RES had met with the HA and clarified that the HA is responsible for the A14, while Cambridgeshire County Council is responsible for Grove Lane. JK stated that the HA are currently reviewing the designs for the site entrance and will also input to the TMP / CMP when these are submitted. Both the HA and County Council will have to approve these documents.

JS asked about the cabling route. JK stated that the cabling work is actually being undertaken by the network distribution company (UKPN) and not RES. JK told members that RES would be meeting with UKPN on 13th February to discuss their programme of works and said that the timetable would be shared with members of the CLG once it is finalised.

A member of the public audience asked if RES would first be building a new bridge. JK stated that the new bridge is required for the delivery of turbine components, rather than general construction and access. The new bridge will be situated to the west of the existing bridge.

A member of the public asked whether the land on which the bridge would be located is part of the common. JK said that RES' searches indicate that the land required to build the bridge is adopted by the HA or is the property of a local land owner.

6. Community Fund Update

The Chair introduced Jane Darlington of the Cambridgeshire Community Foundation (CCF) and invited her to explain the role that the CCF will play in regards to the Woolley Hill Wind Farm to the CLG members and audience.

JD gave an introduction to the CCF and touched upon the role the CCF would play in the Woolley Hill Wind Farm, explaining the protocols around eligibility for applying to the CCF for grant money. JD explained that the Fund Panel would be the ultimate decision-makers and that six to eight members are required for the panel.

JS asked whether the fund is index-linked. AJ explained that the fund is linked to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and (according to the number of Megawatts of electricity produced by the wind farm), it would be a minimum of £18k per annum.

JS said that the fund amount – £18k – is very small and should be increased, stating that it wouldn't give any meaningful help. JD replied that a little can be used in a very meaningful way.

There was a general discussion about the size of the fund and the perceived impacts of the wind farm on the community. One member of the audience asked how such a small amount could be distributed among the local villages. AJ replied that the amount was actually more than the industry agreed level.

JE commented that there seemed to be a lot of bureaucracy involved in applying for such a small figure. JD explained that part of CCF's role is to check that groups who apply for a share of the fund are legitimate and that the funding is being applied properly.

A member of the audience asked whether the money received is dependent upon proximity to the wind farm site. JE said that this would be something which would be considered by the Community Fund Panel. AJ explained that after carefully considering

the options, RES felt that using parish boundaries as guidance to the area of benefit and the composition of the Fund Panel would be a sensible approach, subject to further discussion.

Another member of the audience again commented that the amount was small and stated that the church and other community facilities were in need of larger funds to fix problems with the roof etc. AJ said that the CCF is also able to give advice regarding availability to other pools of funding e.g. Sport England and re-emphasised the point that the money would make a difference for many local groups.

JD added that communities usually appreciate the administrative help and explained the process behind the decision-making to award funds. This was followed by another general discussion about the fund, different ways to manage it and the perceived inconvenience of it.

JE moved the discussion on to the subject of timescales and asked when the fund would be available. JK replied that the fund is available one month after the turbines are up and running.

Next the discussion moved on to the grant sponsorship money given by RES to Alconbury. A member of the audience questioned the motive of this and AJ explained that once people know RES is in the area they will come forward and ask for grant money, stating that RES does make discretionary small grants before the main Community Benefit Fund is available.

JS asked when the turbines would be made operational. JK clarified that on the current timetable the turbines would be energised by April 2014.

One audience member asked about the feasibility of issuing the fund money direct to the Parish Councils. There was a brief discussion around the legal barriers to this and AJ clarified the role of the CCF as an administrator with the purpose of taking the burden away from the community.

The conversation moved on and JE asked at which point the fund panel needs to be set up. AJ replied that it's something which the group can start talking about now, with a view to being set up prior to the wind farm becoming fully operational.

JD talked about the fund administration and highlighted that fund applications had to be in for June 2014 for those wishing to access the resources from the fund. She stated

that the Fund Panel would need to be together by July and that funding would be awarded by September.

A member of the audience asked AJ to clarify RES' grant to Alconbury. AJ stated that the grant – which is different to the fund which becomes available after the turbines become operational in April 2014 – is at RES's discretion and stated that if anyone required further information to please email AJ at alison.jones@res-ltd.com

The discussion moved on to the Fund Panel itself and it was suggested by JY that one member from each parish should sit on the fund panel. JE added that the parishes may want to meet together to discuss options for the make-up of the Fund Panel and get back to JD and AJ.

7. Future Meeting Dates and Topics

It was agreed that the date of the next meeting would be Tuesday 21st May 2013 and agreed that RES bring in a sound expert to talk about Amplitude Modulation.

8. Public Questions

JE asked if there were any questions from members of the public. An audience member asked about the health implications, mentioning specifically Amplitude Modulation (AM), and the perceived effects of AM. JK reassured the audience that limits on noise are a condition of the planning consent. Any complain would be investigated by independent consultants and if the conditions were breached then the wind farm could be forced to cease operations.

There was a general discussion about AM and AJ suggested that RES could bring in an expert on the subject to do a presentation for the next CLG meeting and answer any questions.

A member asked about the Grove Lane entrance to the site and asked for clarification about vehicular access. JK stated that Abnormal Load Vehicles i.e. the large trucks carrying turbine components, would come in from the A14 off-ramp, while smaller vehicles would come through the Grove Lane entrance.

The issue of road markings in and out of Grove Lane was raised as a road safety and pedestrian safety issue. AJ said that RES could raise this issue with the HA and also highlighted that RES takes steps to ensure that haulage companies are trained to use the correct route to site. JK also promised to raise the lack of pedestrian foot-paths on Grove Lane with the HA.

9. Any Other Business

JE asked if there were any last orders of business. JK talked about broadband improvements – a subject which was brought up in a previous meeting – and said that a study had been undertaken about the feasibility of bringing high speed broadband access to Ellington.

JK highlighted that the cost of laying a high-speed cable from the Woolley Interchange would be £60k, discussed the various options available to the community and left the details with JE.

The final issue raised was the Decommissioning Bond for the Woolley Hill site. JK confirmed that a bond is in place to ensure that the site can be decommissioned in the event that RES is no longer an operational company.

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm