

Blair Hill Wind Farm Community Liaison Group (CLG)

17/01/24
7pm - 8.40pm

Attendees

Name

Cllr Katie Haggmann (KH)
Cllr David Inglis (DI)
Clifford Smithers (CS)
Richard Kay (RK)
Mary Harkness (MH)
Hazel Matthews (HM)
Iain Service (IS)
Sarah More (SM)
Terence Flanagan (TF)
Alan Howatson (AH)
Scott Jones (SJ)
David Bleasdale (DB)
Linda Woodfield
Sarah McArthur (SMc)
Carey Green (CG)
Graeme Kerr (GK)

Representing

Ward member for D&G Galloway and Wigtown West
Ward member for D&G Galloway and Wigtown West
Cree Valley Community Council
Cree Valley Community Council
Kirkcowan Community Council
Kirkcowan Community Council
Ditch the Blair Hill Project
Cree Valley Area Development Trust
River Cree Hatchery & Habitat Trust SCIO
River Cree Hatchery & Habitat Trust SCIO
Machars and Cree Valley Climate Action Network
Newton Stewart Initiative
Newton Stewart Initiative
RES
RES
RES

Apologies

Name

Craig McMilken
Cllr Jackie McCamon
Cllr Richard Marsh
Jamie Hyslop

Representing

Ditch the Blair Hill Project
Ward member for D&G Galloway and Wigtown West
Ward member for D&G Galloway and Wigtown West
River Cree District Salmon Fishery Board

Agenda Item	Activity	Actions
<p>Welcome, introductions & apologies</p>	<p>All members introduced themselves and advised which group or organisation they were representing.</p>	
<p>CLG Purpose, membership and chair</p>	<p>CG advised that the purpose of the CLG was to create an open and constructive forum for discussion and the sharing of information across the community. It is understood and respected that there are differing views on the proposal and the aim of the CLG was not to try to change people's opinion.</p> <p>An invitation to join the CLG was declined by Hands off our Hills, The Royal Burgh of Wigtown & District Community Council, the ward officer for Mid-Galloway and Wigtown West, Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere, Southern Upland Partnership, South of Scotland Destination Alliance, Galloway Fisheries Trust and RSPB. The invitation remains open to the above groups at this time.</p> <p>CG asked if any of the CLG members present had any suggestions for other groups or organisations who should receive an invitation to the CLG. No other groups or organisations identified.</p> <p>TF proposed IS be CLG Chair, seconded by CS. It was unanimously agreed that IS would be Chair.</p> <p>It was agreed that should the CLG Chair be unavailable for a meeting then a temporary Chair would be appointed at the relevant meeting by majority vote of the members.</p> <p>It was agreed, as the CLG is a forum for discussion and information sharing and not decision-making, that a quorum was not required.</p>	

CLG Terms of Reference

CLG members were presented with draft Terms of Reference (ToR) and it was advised that the ToR would be publicly available on the Blair Hill website, once approved.

It was agreed by the CLG members that membership of the CLG would be finalised at the next meeting. Subsequent requests for membership to be agreed by a majority vote of the founding CLG members. It was agreed that CLG membership would be reviewed if the wind farm receives planning consent.

It was agreed that draft minutes will be circulated by RES within 5 working days of a meeting with requests for changes or approval from CLG members within a further 5 working days. Approved minutes will be published on the Blair Hill website within 2 weeks of a meeting.

It was agreed that any request for an extraordinary meeting should be agreed by majority vote of the CLG members.

It was agreed that a proxy member from each group represented on the CLG may attend a CLG meeting if a principal member(s) is unavailable.

Dissolution clause to be added to the ToR.

RES

It was agreed that CLG members should raise any agenda items with RES within 5 days of the next meeting.

Updated ToR to be approved at the next meetings, updated draft to be circulated in advance.

RES

Project Update

SMc advised that the environmental site surveys are almost complete, and consultation is ongoing with stakeholders like Historic Environment Scotland. Both of these, along with feedback received from the local community will inform changes to the design that will be made prior to the submission of an application.

A scope has been agreed with the EHO for baseline noise surveys which will inform a Noise Impact Assessment.

To account for feedback received at Scoping, an updated list of viewpoints that will be included in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been proposed. This is currently being agreed with Dumfries and Galloway Council and will be shared thereafter.

An updated design for the wind farm will be presented at the second public exhibitions in late spring. It was agreed that CLG members would feed into the exhibition materials to be presented at these exhibitions. Feedback from the first set of public exhibitions will be referred to at the second public exhibitions.

Project Q&A

SJ asked if a social economic impact assessment will be carried out for the project and SM confirmed that a socio-economic report (which will include an assessment on tourism) will be provided and submitted as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). It was agreed that RES will provide a detailed response to this for the next CLG meeting.

RES

CM provided a number of questions in advance of the meeting relating to construction traffic. It was agreed that RES would provide a detailed response on construction traffic after leaving the A75 for the next CLG meeting.

RES

IS requested more information on the proposed grid connection route for the project. SMc & GK explained that the final grid connection design is a matter for the National Grid Electricity System Operator (NGESO)/Scottish Power Transmission (SPT) and an application for a grid connection will be submitted to NGESO shortly. Once RES receive more information from the NGESO/SPT, RES will provide more information at a CLG meeting ahead of the second public exhibitions.

RES

Any Other Business

SJ requested that RES provide further information on the costs of wind energy (specifically carbon payback and use of rare earth metals) to the CLG members at a future meeting.

RES

Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting to be held in-person on 27th February 2024 at 7.00pm. RES to book venue.

RES

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.