

Heriot Community Council

Minutes of meeting held via Zoom on Wednesday June 9th 2021, 6pm

Present: Gavin Whittaker, John Williams, Frank Connelly, Sue Sharp, Helen Brinkworth, Cllr. Jardine, Cllr. Scott, Julie Aitken (Fred Olsen Renewables). 2 Members of the public

Apologies for absence from Cllr Aitchison, Cllr Anderson.

1. Minutes of previous meeting. Accepted and approved.
2. There was a powerpoint presentation from Fred Olsen Renewables in respect of Scawd Law Wind Farm (Near Walkerburn). A copy of the presentation is attached

A question was raised about the extent and amount of night lighting required. Julie reported that they are in discussions with the CAA about the use of four peripheral lights, rather than the application of the current regulations that require lighting on every turbine. JW requested a hard (paper) copy of the application when it was submitted, and Julie agreed to this, pointing out that soft copies of the full application would also be made available.

3. Police reports: There were no incidents of specific interest to Heriot. Police Facebook postings include reports that suggest police are active in the wider area.
4. Broadlaw Quarry – Skyrora rocket engine test site. This application had been approved by Midlothian Council, with conditions. Skyrora would like to hold a meeting on site during the construction phase in July, and wish to initiate liaison with the local community. The most relevant planning condition that had been set was that the first few test firings would be formally monitored for noise. A number of points were made in the ensuing discussion:
 - a. Heriot CC feels that we should be involved in quarterly liaison meetings and other aspects of the operations.
 - b. A question was raised by the public about the frequency of firings: We are to be notified when they are taking place. There are restrictions on how often and how many firings can take place, and the number is limited to three per week, of 30-60 seconds duration, although additional firings will be permitted with advance notification.
 - c. Noise. Midlothian Planning deemed the noise levels to be ‘acceptable’, but it is not possible to judge how invasive the operations will be prior to tests actually starting. Most impact likely to be to people working outdoors, notably farmers, and to livestock.

JW to follow up with Richard Slipper (Skyrora)

5. Eildon area meetings

- a. Feedback has been requested on the meetings. This appears to be in addition to the previous consultation, the results of which appear to have been ignored. It was generally felt that we are being asked for our views on these meetings, the results of these consultations are ignored, and then further opinions are requested later.
- b. 20mph limits. GW had responded to Phillipa's survey with answers that were consistent with previous email correspondence with her. There was still frustration that a decision about the 20mph outside the primary school had been deferred until SBC received supporting feedback from the community. Cllr Scott shared that frustration and would support the 20mph limit at the school.
- c. There was a question about the use of mobile signs, but Cllr Scott reported that there was inevitable disturbance from the lights for local residents.
- d. HB reported feedback from school parents. There was support for a 20mph limit outside the school from parents, but there was also a strong feeling that that should occur alongside a change to a 30mph limit from the A7 through to Borthwick Hall, down from the current 40mph limit. It was agreed by all that it is not possible to safely drive faster than this along that stretch of the B709.

6. Windfarms

- a. Greystone Knowe (Corolis Ltd.)– It was reported that the application is due to be submitted in August, with a public exhibition to be held outside at some point.
 - i. Shared ownership. Sue suggested that it is possibly worth contacting the organisation mentioned by Julie Aitken in her talk, as all other information that she and Frank had found on the subject was not particularly relevant to Heriot's circumstances. It was agreed that it is worth seeing what the offer is, but SS pointed out that there is a significant amount of work involved and large amounts of finance required. Discussion about the practicalities followed. Sue and Frank agreed to continue exploring the concept.
 - ii. JW suggested that community schemes should be examined that extend beyond windfarms, such as community drives to get properties towards net zero emissions.

7. Community Funds

- a. Bus shelters. No progress. Gavin to speak to the Marshalls in the next week or two
- b. Church yard – No progress. Sue to re-examine what can be done soon.
- c. David outlined a meeting of the windfarm panel to take place on 15/6. The meeting will look at what might usefully be done with the excess funds that the panel now holds.

8. AOB

- a. New road signs at Heriot – These were very much appreciated and Sue was thanked for all her efforts. The benches were also reported to be being well used, not least by passing cyclists.

- b. Hall meetings – Macfie use restrictions are being lifted, but SBC councillors wouldn't be permitted to attend under current rules, which may prevent the CC from meeting there in the near future. Cllr Jardine was in the process of requesting updates from SBC on future plans about meeting attendance.
- c. GW updated the council about the playpark in Heriot. A site visit had taken place with FC, Cllr Aitchison and SBC officials. SBC was arranging for professional drainage companies to suggest remedial action on the flooding issue. Another potential site for the playpark had also been identified at the time, although the land appears to be owned by Network Rail. GW was attempting to get a response from Network Rail officials. Cllr. Jardine offered to help with his contacts at NR.
- d. The annual duck race had been successfully run by the parent council using live streaming. They had sold fewer ducks than normal, but it was reported to have been fun for the kids.
- e. Nettlingflat cattle grid. GW is addressing this, and aims to attempt to source funds from SBC.
- f. Cllr. Scott was thanked for auditing the accounts.
- g. Cllr. Scott reported the following:
 - i. A7 / B709 junction - Police and SBC have examined this and a site meeting is planned to improve it.
 - ii. 'Slow' signs at Heriot to be done in August.
 - iii. Galashiels campus – opposition to new campus is vocal, but public consultation will take place soon. All interested parties are encouraged to give their views.
 - iv. X95 – Border Buses' plans for the future have been restricted by the loss of overseas drivers, as a consequence of both Covid and economic factors. They are currently operating at 85% of previous levels. Border Buses are trying their best but the future looks bleak.

The meeting ended at 19:15