

Heriot Community Council

Minutes of meeting, Wednesday 24th Aug 2022 at 19:00

Present: S. Sharp, H. Brinkworth, F. Connelly, G. Whittaker, J. Williams (Chair), Cllr. Mackinnon, Cllr. Sinclair, Cllr. Steel

Apologies: None received

1. Minutes of previous meeting: Accepted.
2. Wull Muir:
 - a. Michael and Michaela (Energiekontor) introduced themselves as having replaced Duncan Taylor on the development.
 - b. A recap of the latest revision of the scheme was described, having been pulled back from the escarpment to reduce the impact on Midlothian , but with increased impact on Heriot.
 - c. The turbine height is being revised upwards to 150m from 135m.
 - d. Exhibition is proposed for October.
 - e. Wireframes of the anticipated visual impact were requested and Energiekontor agreed to provide these.
 - f. It was pointed out that the increased height would mean the turbines would be visible from Gorebridge, despite the repositioning.
 - g. It was pointed out that it was evident from previous discussions that a move to 150m was virtually inevitable. Michael claimed that the move was not planned. In subsequent discussion, it was pointed out that Energiekontor have an extensive history of increasing turbine heights after receiving planning consents. Despite a request for an assurance that this would not happen, Michael would not commit to this and stated that he could “never say never” to modifying the plans.
 - h. HB pointed out that there were several misrepresentations in the application; that the local area was described as ‘sparsely populated’ and the development would be far from main roads, neither of which were correct.
 - i. GW requested that a mailshot that had been sent round the community by Energiekontor now misrepresented the scale of the development and that an updated mailshot was necessary. Michael agreed to do this and to use this to advertise the public exhibition.
3. Police report
 - a. The police report again contained no mention of rural crime, and no mention of traffic accidents in the area.

- b. These omissions would be followed up in discussions with the police area commander.
- c. Cllr Steel, FC, and SS had met with police representatives and other interested parties to discuss quad bike thefts. The police had explained their modus operandi and how they follow up on rural thefts. Quadcare, a quad bike distributor, knew of 20 stolen quad bikes, only one of which had been recovered. It was apparent that the police knew what they were doing, but their communication to communities was poor.

4. Windfarms

- a. Greystone Knowe – it was reported that the developers had responded dismissively towards consultees and claimed that they provided factual inaccuracies. JW would be responding to those claims in a subsequent submission. Attempts were being made to get SBC Environmental Health to respond to the comments about noise from the development, and for SBC to assign a noise expert to assess the claims made by the developers. SS asked whether a local landowner would be willing to fund a noise expert. JW agree to consider asking this.
- b. Wull Muir – discussed previously
- c. Scawd Law – Eagles that had had set up a nest on site had previously prevented the application from proceeding. It was reported, however, that the female eagle may have killed the male, meaning that the application may be brought forward in January.

5. Community Funds

- a. Funding of £250 had been unanimously approved towards a village sports day and evening event, and was reported to have been a success.
- b. Churchyard repairs – SS reported that the issues that were causing the delays were gradually being addressed.

6. AOB

- a. Forestry schemes - a response had been sent to Lauder CC, but without committing Heriot CC to any particular course. A discussion followed about the merits of commercial forestry for carbon sequestration, concluding that the CC needs to educate itself on the subject, but it was agreed that such plantations represent a loss of ecological value in the landscape.
- b. Buses – there had been numerous service cancellations due to a lack of drivers. As in previous discussions, it was pointed out that the buses last buses leave Heriot too early and leave Edinburgh too to allow a reasonable evening out in Edinburgh, and were effectively useless.
- c. Cllr. Mackinnon suggested the possibility of following a scheme use in other parts of the Borders where a scheduled bus service is replaced by an ‘on-demand’ service. The CC agreed this was interesting, but would need more information to determine the feasibility in our area.
- d. First Aid course. SS suggested the idea of a first aid course for the community and had obtained costings. The CC thought this a good idea and agreed to consider

funding it / supporting a funding application once more detailed options had been obtained.

- e. A leaflet on the locations of foodbanks and related services in the Borders had been published, but there were issues of how people who need these services would access them. JW agreed to contact the organisation to obtain more details.

The meeting finished at 20:25