

**DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING OF PARISH OF STOW
COMMUNITY COUNCIL HELD IN STOW TOWN HALL ON
MONDAY 9th MAY 2011 AT 7.30PM**

Those Present: I. Anderson, N. Muncaster, I. Peacock, G. Saunders, D. Muir (Chair), A. McNeilly, T. Millar, J. Mushlin, Cllr Aitchison 2 members of the public.

Apologies: Cllr Mitchell, PC Lennon

1. Neil Reid, Project Manager, Ridgewind addressed those present regarding the proposed wind farm at Gilston Hill. There has been scoping for the environmental impact – it is adjacent to an area of special protection for birds. Also, scoping for archaeology, hydrology and geology has been carried out. Originally 24 turbines were planned, but this has been reduced to 16 turbines. The bird survey is continuing. A bat survey is being done this summer. Planning consent will be sought in August or September. In the North, Ridgewind is setting up a co-operative to allow local investment. It is possible to do that with Gilston wind farm with prioritisation for investment for people living close by. In Scunthorpe they give each household within 5km radius an annual payment of £250 towards their electricity bill. They have two scholarships of £1,000 for young people in further education and are hoping for more scholarships. Mr Reid estimates community payment of £2,000 per megawatt. 16 wind turbines should create 35 megawatts. 14 wind turbines will be 115m to blade tip and 2 wind turbines will be 100m to blade tip. The turbines will be slightly smaller than Toddleburn and longer than Dun Law. It straddles both the Borders and Midlothian with 7 turbines in the Borders and 9 in Midlothian. The A68 will be the access road to the wind farm via the road to Soutra Aisle. SNH are sensitive to more wind farm traffic along the A7 as it is a scenic route. It is not a section 36 application and will be determined locally. Permission is needed both from SBC and from Midlothian. Landscape architects advised minimising the number. Hence the reduction from 24 to 16. Feedback is that people prefer local decisions. The developer is trying to be sympathetic to the site and take on board comments and concerns. They are drawing up an investment scheme. Private individuals, community councils and charities can invest in the co-operative. Community funds have caused problems between communities. They are trying to get the money

to local people but can structure it whatever way people want. The wind farm has a 25 year span. Ridgewind is backed by HG (based in London) which manages pension funds. Public meetings will be held in Fala Village Hall, McFie Hall, Heriot and Gorebridge.

2. Police Report – There were 21 calls to Stow and the surrounding area. There were three vehicle accidents, one with minor injury, one damage to a lamp post and one vehicle struck a dog. The police request alertness as “scrap collectors” have been in the area and stolen items from premises. Police are looking for a Ford Transit cab on a flat bed with yellow drop sides and a yellow tailgate. If seen, please report to the police. Be alert to strangers and vehicles acting suspiciously. Note any details and report to the police. **DO NOT PUT YOURSELF IN HARM’S WAY AND DO NOT CHALLENGE PEOPLE.**
3. Matters Arising – Litter bins and rubbish – Cllr Aitchison is requesting a weekly uplift of rubbish in the hot weather; a fortnight is a bit long between collections. Weekly collections are needed on lay-bys. It is possible to ask for a bigger bin.

Mains Gas – There is no chance of Stow getting gas. Pathhead are getting gas. The Secretary is to write to Christine Graham about the possibility of mains gas. The costs of getting it in are prohibitive and parts of Galashiels do not have gas. According to SBC, there is no officer employed to deal with these matters.

Countryside Access – People should take extra care in the lambing season.

Reed bed at Ludgate – There are no reeds on the reed bed. Scottish Water have confirmed it is not working. Scottish Water is charged with the replacement of the reed bed. A major condition in allowing Wedale View was that they had a functioning reed bed as Stow sewage works are at maximum capacity. Borders Rail has work around that area. There is an allegation that there could be raw sewage. Cllr Aitchison is going to ask SEPA about sewage and also enquire whether any area of land is contaminated with raw sewage, and whether the grounds leading to the Gala Water have been tested.

Royal Hotel – This has been demolished. A site meeting is happening shortly. The subject is with Building Control to check

the letter of the law has been kept. There is still a pile of wood. It is unclear whether this has dry rot. It is a condition that the site should be cleared.

The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed by A. McNeilly, seconded by G. Saunders.

4. Councillors' Report – There has been a delay regarding hall charges. The drain outside the school has been reported. There is flooding at the cross roads at the town foot junction. There is debris on the burn.
5. Wind Farms' Report – John Williams is acting for all community councils, including Stow at the Rowantree Public Enquiry. He has submitted our case.

Jim Shanks invited Energy for All to a meeting with individual representatives from community councils explaining their scheme and its benefits. There is an assured business plan. Jim Shanks has not yet heard from the MOD regarding his proposed wind farm. He will be applying for planning in June. Representatives of Stow Community Council again agreed the principles of Energy for All, but have strong views regarding the planning of the actual wind farm. There will be a public meeting and leaflets before July.

Community benefit was discussed. The Council believe that, in terms of community grants, they are in a better position to get more from wind farms than individual communities. They do have to have a structure to be able to do this, but will not necessarily take 40 per cent of the amount.

6. Treasurer's Report – The grant for the year of £630 has been received. Monies for the archive have now been transferred to their account. The newsletter has been printed at a cost of £100. There is still the web site to be paid for in April and May.

Community Grant – there are 5 benches needing renovated. The job is underway. £218 has been approved for this.

An application from Fountainhall for £50 for first aid training for after school football was approved.

Fountainhall Mothers and Toddlers group applied for funding for an outing to Purves' Puppets. It was agreed to give £100. The Community Council agreed to a policy to give £100 to groups requesting money for outings, owing to the likely high number of requests for this.

The Community Council were informed that Barbara Baker passed away. She was an original member of Stow Community Council and acted as Secretary until recently. We were all saddened by the news and the Secretary is sending a condolence card to Freddie on our behalf.

7. Planning – Chris McVie – Partial demolition of wall. Formation of access and driveway, and erection of gates.

8. Correspondence – Welfare Advisory Services Review.

Girthgate Community Wind Farm –Public Exhibitions.

Scottish Borders Council – Adoption of Local Plan Amendment.

Scottish Natural Heritage – Spring 2011.

Scottish 36 Wind Farm Application – Scott MacKenzie.

Road Accidents – A7.

Playgrounds, Parks and Recreation.

9. AOCB – The old bridge is with the Flood Prevention Group. The bridge is listed. Cllr Aitchison will speak to Historic Scotland and the Council.

It was suggested that there should be a no camping sign at the Quoiting green.

Replacement of the church gate was mentioned.

There are scaffold poles at the corner in the conservation area.

There is a ragged railing by the Quoiting green.

There has been no progress on the bus shelter being moved at the cross roads.

It was noted that lay-bys on the A7 are being littered with an empty police traffic car, being moved from lay-by to lay-by, presumably to slow traffic.

Date of next meeting – Monday 6th June – Stow Town Hall at 7.30pm.

ALL COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO EVERYONE. WE WILL MAKE YOU WELCOME AND GIVE YOU A CHANCE TO EXPRESS YOUR VIEWS.