

DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING OF PARISH OF STOW COMMUNITY COUNCIL HELD IN STOW TOWN HALL ON MONDAY 7TH FEBRUARY 2011 AT 7.30PM

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

Apologies: F. Lackenby, S. Aitchison. P.C. Lennon.

In attendance: Emma Rafuluk, Charlie Young, Community Wind Power.

& Jim Shanks.

1. Community Wind farm outlined their proposal for 20 wind turbines, 130m high at Girthgate. Wind speeds 8m per second. Good access to the site. The bird survey is finished and they have a scoping report. They need to get permission from the Scottish Executive rather than Scottish Borders Council. They stated that they will not sell on to another wind farm company. They outlined various community benefits they have given to existing communities they work with and stated we could invest in a community wind turbine through their benefits scheme. They are funding at a rate of £2000 per megawatt, which would be about £120,000 per year divided between Oxton, Stow, Melrose and Lauderdale. They are not a multi-national. They are a private company which is profit making and employs 20 members of staff. They will hold public exhibitions to consult the public.
2. Jim Shanks spoke to the meeting about his proposed wind farm at Allanshaws. There are 9 x 100m turbines. He is waiting for the MOD response to his proposal. Individuals can invest in the wind farm. Once the planning process is completed so long as everything is done properly, risk is negligible. It is a low risk, high profit scheme. Energy for All will raise the money needed. They have done it 8 times before and have a lot of people wanting to invest, but preference will be given to Stow, Oxton, and Melrose areas. A minimum investment of £250 is required, up to a maximum of £25,000. Another option is community investment by the Community Council for the benefit of the community. The Community Council agreed to call a further meeting of members to discuss this wind farm fully. The secretary was asked to organise this meeting.

The minutes of the last meeting were approved, proposed by D. Muir, seconded by N. Muncaster.

Matters Arising

It was agreed to place no objection to the alteration of the local plan for Fountainhall.

Earlston Road

The salt bin has been moved from the middle of the Earlston Road to the top of the road. It was agreed that the secretary should write to the Council requesting that there should either be a salt bin at the middle of Earlston Road or regular gritting of the road in severe weather.

The road at Fountainhall has been patched from the road end.

Police Report

There were 17 calls to the Stow area in January. There have been 7 road accidents due to weather conditions. There have been instances of smashed windows in Stow. A motor cycle was stolen from Middletoun Farm. The police request all to be on the lookout for people and vehicles acting in a suspicious way near to or on farms.

Chairman's Report

The Community Council would like it to be taken up with the Wind Farm Panel that the wind farms have stipulated many conditions. There is a list of what is not acceptable for use of funds from Long Park and Toddleburn. Would it be possible to get the insurance for the sports facility from Toddleburn? The Community Council was informed that no money has yet been received from Toddleburn. All the money that has been disbursed is from EDF. It was proposed that commemorative mugs should be commissioned for all primary school children in the Parish for the occasion of the Royal Wedding on 29th April. Community Councillors decided against this proposal.

It was noted that there is an application for 24 wind turbines at Gilston. Stow Parish has not been included in beneficiaries, although our Parish boundary is very close to Gilston. The secretary is to write regarding this.

There is a meeting at Carfrae Mill on 17th February to organise the public enquiry into Rowantree Wind Farm. The secretary has been invited but is unable to attend. D. Muir and N. Muncaster will be attending.

Treasurer's Report

The newsletter costs £100 for each edition. It was agreed to ring fence £400 for each year for the newsletter. Amendments to the current newsletter were agreed. The website is currently a real problem. It was agreed to take the website into our own hands and ask for the transfer of the site to a Stow person. We own the domain name. It costs us £18 per month - £108 to the end of March. We need to open negotiations as updating is not happening. We need to make a decision regarding this, when we can. Hopefully we will reduce the cost. The closing balance is approximately £250. The website, archive, Christmas tree fund and newsletter are all ring fenced funds. The distribution of the next newsletter was discussed. D. Muir agreed to distribute the newsletter and Community Councillors agreed which areas they would be responsible for. The archive will shortly be a constituted group and will withdraw their funds from the Community Council.

Correspondence

The cheque has not yet been received from Scottish Community Foundation to fund micro grants of up to £250. It was agreed to approve the application made by Low Carbon Stow.

8th March – next panel meeting of Stow Parish Archive group. The Community Council has been requested for input into an archive event in April. T. Millar agreed to represent the Community Council.

14th March – at 7.30pm in Stow Town Hall, there is a public meeting regarding the plans for the old school. A big turnout is needed to prove support within the community for the project.

7th March – there will be the AGM of Stow Community Council at 7pm. This will be followed by the normal meeting at 7.30pm.

Grant application to the Parish of Stow Community Benefit Fund Advisory Panel – Ref 19443.

Borders Railway project programme of advance work – January to spring 2011. It was agreed to invite Jonathan Hepton to speak at the April Fountainhall meeting.

Scottish Natural Heritage.

14th February – planning will be discussing the proposed roundabouts at Fala Hill.

AOCB

The pavements in Stow are dreadful to walk on with grit causing slipping. Cllr. Mitchell will take this up.

The drain at the bottom of Hill Terrace needs cleared.

Snow plough

Cllr. Aitchison is taking forward the possibility of community purchase of our own snow plough. It was agreed to ask Cllr. Aitchison to get a quote for both a hand pushed but mechanised plough and also a small four wheeled bike with fittings. For this to be worth doing, we need volunteers who would be willing to help clear snow in bad weather. Could anyone who would be willing to help please contact the Secretary, Jenny Mushlin on 01578 760297.

There is flooding on the back road between Stow and Fountainhall. Water is also still gushing on to the A7 at Galabank.

Cllr. Aitchison has saved flooding through having the arch on the bridge cleaned. However, the middle arch is now filling with gravel.

The sandstone block at Stow Primary School is dangerous. 6 months ago, it was requested that this should be lifted. It has not been done.

Slates are coming off the Royal Hotel roof.

The Packhorse Bridge needs attention. The Secretary is to write to Historic Scotland about this.

It is now a year since yellow lines were introduced on Earlston Road and there will be a review. Letters will be sent to all people affected by yellow lines. A traffic count of vehicles proved nothing. Heavy goods vehicles need access to Cotland Place. Cllr. Mitchell asked if Stow Community Council would organise a public meeting. The Secretary stated that she would do so, in conjunction with Cllr. Mitchell.

Bins – a recycle bin was not emptied on Galashiels Road. Cllr. Mitchell will look into this.

PLEASE NOTE ALL COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO EVERYONE. WE WOULD WELCOME YOU AND EVERYONE GETS A CHANCE TO PUT FORWARD THEIR VIEWS.

Date of next meeting – Monday 7th March 2011 in Stow Town Hall. AGM at 7.00pm, with the normal meeting following on at 7.30pm