

Tweedsmuir Community Council

Minutes of the meeting of Tweedsmuir Community Council (TCC) Thursday 5th October at 7pm, Tweedsmuir Village Hall & via ZOOM

Present: Lesley Mason (LM, Vice Chair), Mark Cullen (MC, Treasurer), Debbie Cullen (DC, Secretary), Frances Leckie (FL), Carolynn Hoy (CH) and 3 members of the public

01.10 Welcome and Apologies

No apologies received.

02.10 Minutes of the last meeting

Accepted as correct.

03.10 Matters arising not covered in the agenda

LM reported that following the last meeting a letter of thanks had been sent to Gavin Parker for his work on behalf of the community as Chair of TCC.

04.10 Planning applications

- Proposed 4G Telecommunications Installation for H3G UK.

LM reported that local residents had forwarded documentation for consideration at Appeal – a copy of the Community Action Plan and the Oral Submission made to SBC Planning Committee. TCC also sent a letter emphasising that the objections made were not in relation to a mast per se but the location in this specific instance.

TCC's have received an acknowledgement for their response and informed that notification will be sent once a determination has been made.

- The following response had been received from Fred Olsen following issues raised at the September TCC meeting in relation to feedback from the survey –

i) *The numbers in the first table didn't 'add up' to the total number of responses.*

That is correct. The numbers reflect those answering the questions – i.e. not everyone answered every question. However, we shall ensure that moving forward we include the 'no responses' figures in any summaries as well so that this is clearer and will do so in our Pre-Application Consultation Report.

ii) *A resident reported having made a comment in relation to this question which was not reflected in the feedback.*

As originally noted, this was a summary of the feedback received. Non project related comments were not reflected in the summary. The comments shall all be shared, in full, in our Pre-Application Consultation Report.

iii) *The feedback does not indicate any potential conflict of interest from respondents.*

We do not ask those providing feedback to declare a conflict of interest. Indeed we encourage everyone living in the local community to provide responses.

- iv) It would be helpful to have an indication of the number and nature of responses by area - Tweedsmuir / Broughton. In the initial printed literature and at the initial presentation it was stated that the proposed windfarm would have visual impact in Tweedsmuir but would not be visible in Broughton. It would be helpful to know if and how this impacted upon the responses received from the different communities.**

We received one feedback form from a resident in Broughton. Two were from elsewhere in the Scottish Borders area and the remainder from Tweedsmuir.

- **Whitelaw Brae Windfarm**

DC reported on an update recently received from the developers regarding the Whitelaw Brae Windfarm

Stage 1 Initial Access Works (November 22-February 23) - Completed

Earlier this year works were carried out to construct a new entrance/ access to the wind farm site from the A701. Approximately 70 metres of track has been laid to link the existing Tweed Bridge and a widened junction providing improved access to the site to facilitate component deliveries. This work has now been completed and the developers wish to thank the community of Tweedsmuir for their patience whilst these works were carried out.

Stage 2: Forestry Felling and Extraction (expected Autumn 2023 – Spring 2024) – Current

Having successfully completed the initial access works, the focus will now be on preparing the site for the main construction phase. This involves the felling of approximately 60 hectares of commercial forestry, which is scheduled to start in Autumn 2023 and is anticipated to take around eight months to complete. Although this area of woodland is commercial forestry, comprising mainly Sitka spruce, the tree felling will be compensated by new, native broadleaf planting as part of the overall wind farm commitments. Prior to the works commencing a team of environmental consultants will carry out bird and mammal surveys as well as water monitoring which will continue throughout the construction period.

Timelines are currently being finalised and an update on the felling activity will be provided for the November TCC meeting.

Looking further ahead:

Stage 3: Main Civils Work (expected 2024)

The main civils work will involve the construction of wind farm tracks, excavation of turbine bases and construction of the site substation and will take approximately 12- 18 months.

Stage 4: Turbine delivery and erection (expected 2025)

Turbine delivery will take place in consultation with Dumfries and Galloway Council Roads, Scottish Borders Council Roads, Transport Scotland and Police Scotland. Turbines will be delivered to the site along the A701 from the south and will not pass through Tweedsmuir.

Scottish Power Electricity Networks Grid Connection

Scottish Power is wholly responsible for the grid connection works and the developers are working closely with their team to optimise the grid connection.

Information about the programme of work and progress can be found at – www.baywa-re.co.uk Anyone wishing to contact Alda Forbes, Stakeholder and Community Engagement Manager directly can do so by email alda.forbes@baywa-re.co.uk or phone 0141 674 0004.

05.10 Treasurer's Report

This can be viewed at - <https://www.tweedsmuircommunitycouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Sept-2023-Finance-Report.pdf>

06.10 Grant applications

No new applications have been received.

DC reported that The Memorandum of Understanding between Ventient Windfarm and TCC and Upper Tweed Community Council is currently being reviewed.

07.10 Police report

This can be viewed at - <https://www.tweedsmuircommunitycouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Tweeddale-East-and-West-September-2023.pdf>

08.10 Scottish Borders Councillors' report

As no Councillor was present, no update was available.

09.10 Community Action Plan

LM reported that 2 grants had recently been submitted for funding for personnel to support the delivery of the Community Action Plan.

10.10 Recruitment to Community Council

DC apologised for not having progressed this but will do so on return from holiday.

11.10 Community Council Website

FL reported that she will be meeting with a member of the community to discuss this shortly.

12.10 Private Water Supplies & water scarcity

DC reported that following the last TCC meeting she had contacted Viv Thompson (VT, SBC Councillor) to follow up on this issue initially raised at the August TCC meeting.

VT had responded informing that her enquires within SBC had resulted in the following response –

'the Council have a stock of bottled water at HQ and can provide supplies of this to those who need it.

Beyond this the Council can provide grant assistance to residents (up to £800 per household) and where hardship is demonstrated then further grant is available.

Also, on the point below, we can offer advice for residents on considerations for contingency plans, around a water safety plan.'

DC reported that Lesley Kirkwood (LK), Resilient Communities Lead had responded directly to SBC informing of resident's concerns regarding Water Scarcity issues and enquiring about support available for those with Private water supplies and SBC's plans to address this issue.

LK also suggested that -

- in addition to community planning around managing water scarcity, planning around fire risks should also be considered.
- once information has been obtained from SBC a resilient communities meeting may be useful, open to all members of the community to identify and discuss resilience issues including water scarcity and fire risks.
- the Resilient Communities Register holding details of residents who may need assistance and these willing/able to assist to be updated.

A discussion took place about access to bottled and other potential water supplies in the event of a disruption to supply, which could impact on any resident not just those with Private supplies. It was also noted that potential scarcity is not restricted to the summer months.

Anyone with concerns about their PWS and potential/actual Water scarcity issues who has not already been in touch and would like to be involved in/informed of further discussions, please contact the TCC secretary.

Actions:

- **LK** to update the Resilient Communities Register.

13.10 Items for information

SBC have been made aware, by a local resident, of drainage issues with water pooling around the signpost pillar at the crossroads. SBC have noted to inspect and if work needed this will be added to their routine maintenance schedule.

14.10 Forthcoming Events

- Monthly Citizens Advice Surgeries have commenced in Tweedsmuir Village Hall and will be taking place on the first Thursday of the month between 10am - 12pm.
- Info about forthcoming events can be found at <https://www.tweedsmuir.scot/events/>

15.10 Any other business

- Consultation - SBC consultation seeks information on pavement/footway parking locations – information about the consultation and the associated survey can be found at - [Footway Parking 2023 - Scottish Borders Council - Citizen Space](#)

- TCC have been asked to remind residents that deer stalking season has started in earnest on Hearthstones Estate and will continue until at least mid November. When stalkers are about in Hearthstones, Cockiland and/or Menzion they will indicate this by flying the red flags and placing the padlocks on the signs. Typically, they are around in the early morning and late afternoon.
- Guardians of the Tweed. Volunteers are being recruited along the length of the Tweed to take part in gathering data about water quality and river health. More details can be found at www.rivertweed.org.uk

15.10 Date of next meeting

Thursday 2nd November 2023

Below is the zoom link for the meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88590891104>

Meeting ID: 885 9089 1104

One tap mobile

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Vice Chair: Lesley Mason Treasurer: Mark Cullen Secretary: Debbie Cullen

Other Councillors: Frances Leckie Carolynn Hoy

Resilient Communities contact: Lesley Kirkwood