



## **Minutes of the Wiltshire Wildlife Community Energy 2020 AGM held over Zoom at midday on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020.**

Prior to the meeting, the Directors met and declared the meeting quorate based on the number of members in the 'waiting room'. The meeting was recorded. In total, there were 38 participants. Jake Burnyeat (CfR) was the meeting 'host'. These minutes should be read in conjunction with the AGM presentation available on WWCE's website.

### **1 Welcome & Intro (Lesley Bennett)**

The Chair, Lesley Bennett opened the meeting by welcoming everybody to the virtual set up and allowing them time to familiarise themselves with zoom.

Members were advised to ask questions and communicate through the chat function.

### **2 Minutes of last year's meeting (Lesley Bennett)**

Jon Bateman motioned to approve the minutes of last year's AGM and Bob Kapp seconded the notion. Minutes approved.

### **3 Technical Performance of Solar Farms (Tom Cosgrove from CfR)**

Tom talked through the slides on the technical performance of both sites, noting that it was a good year across the portfolio in general. Irradiance was 2% higher than in the long term average projections at Braydon – the plant performed well.

At Chelworth, the older site, the irradiance was still up by 1.5% on the long term average, which was positive, however, a few things to note. The inverters are failing at the site after 7 years (earlier than expected). As at today, 40% of them have failed. We are replacing the units over the next 3 years, with more sophisticated modern ones. This will cost approximately £25k per annum.

### **4 Land Management (Rob Gilies)**

Rob highlighted the focus on biodiversity. The Chelworth site borders WWT land, so baseline wildlife is already higher than at Braydon. Sheep (and now lambs) are grazing Chelworth the majority of the year.

Again, at Chelworth, we were able to participate in the Naturesave SolarBee project. The first colonies of bees are installed and establishing. We are hoping there is potential to repeat this at Braydon.

At Braydon we are formulating a new LEMP (Land and Ecological Management Plan), alongside looking into viability of introducing ponds onsite.

Lesley gave specific thanks for Rob G and WWT for all their hard work.

### **5 Community Fund (Lesley Bennett)**

Lesley noted that Peter Newell is the Chair of the fund, and thanked all involved. Several projects were supported this year; Zero Chippenham, God Unlimited, Action for River Kennet, Lifecycle UK and Lea & Garsdon Primary School. The residue



funds (£4k) were given to the Wiltshire & Swindon Community Foundation Corona virus appeal.

New applications for this year were welcomed as the fund replenishes.

## **6 Finances (Angela Wright & David Lewin)**

Angela briefly talked through the group financial performance for the year ended 31 March 2020 and how despite a 'group loss', operationally the group had performed well in the period and is still cash generative, which is key.

David then spoke through some external factors influencing the group (RPI and power price reductions), operating costs savings and the potential to benefit from reducing bank interest rates. He then moved onto the long term interest rate proposition and share buyback policy for members. The process for share buyback was outlined and will be available on the website.

David also explained the upcoming refinance, the purpose of which is to reduce bank interest rates and free up cash to buyback share and invest in inverters at Chelworth.

A proposal was put forward to donate £10k to the community fund and applications were again encouraged.

## **7 WWCE 5 Year Strategy (Julian Barlow)**

Julian spoke through the group's 5-year outlook and objective, which is essentially to deliver less carbon and more wildlife in Wiltshire. We need to explore diverse ways of delivering clean energy. Key things are;

- Reducing the carbon footprint in Wiltshire is key
- Need to be proactive and work with local stakeholders

We are also looking to welcome new people to the Board.

Some questions arose on 'chat' around the refinance interest rates and term of the new loan.

## **8 Proposals and Resolutions (Lesley Bennett)**

Lesley noted thanks to Bob Kapp, who is stepping down this year.

Jake initiated a poll over which members could vote on the following resolutions.

- 1) Proposal to pay members 4% interest this year (result: Approved)
- 2) Proposal to approve audited accounts for y/e 31/03/20 (result: Approved)
- 3) Proposal to delegate appointment of auditors to the Board  
(result: Approved)
- 4) Proposal to re-elect Rob Gilies to the Board as he retires on rotation



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(result: Approved)

5) Proposal to donate £10k to the community fund this year

(result: Approved)

Lesley updated the members with the fact that we'd supplied over 2,000 homes this year, so each member is 'outputting' 3x more than they're consuming.

With no further questions or matters arising, the meeting then closed.