

Minutes from this meeting

1. Introduction and Welcome

The chair of the advisory group Councillor Evelyn Tweed opened the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance to Volunteer Scotland, Jubilee House in Stirling.

2. Attendance and Apologies

See attached.

3. Minutes of previous meeting – 13th September 2017

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate account of the meeting.

4. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Callander Community Development Trust - Community Hydro Scheme

Frank Park, the Chair of Callander Community Hydro gave a presentation on Callander's Hydro Scheme, from its inception in 2008 to its plans for the future. A Hydro plant was established on land leased from the Forestry Commission Scotland, which generates green electricity and receives income from FIT's and the wholesale power market. Profits are then donated entirely to the Callander Community Development Trust.

Frank highlights the length of time that the project took, and in particular, the amount of preparation and negotiation that was required before construction was able to begin. A timeline was showing, with feasibility studies marking the start in 2009, planning approval awarded in 2012, the build being completed in September 2014 and a maintenance team being set up in 2015. Frank noted that the building period itself was quite short, at only 5 months.

Overall the project cost £1.65 million, with an estimated annual income of £308k. This will allow about £3 million to be given to the trust over a twenty-year period. They chose to have electricity to be fed directly into the grid, rather than providing their electricity directly to properties, for the sake of simplicity, and due to the convenience of having a connection point close to the site.

Frank also went over some of the other issues that arose at the start of the process. They initially had some difficulty convincing the Forestry Commission, due to differences in the models both groups were using. He also highlighted the amount of money needed up front, and that costs can mount quickly, such as for legal fees and for commissioning the turbine, which required 30% immediately.

Pictures of the various stages of development were included in the presentation, which can be found on the APSE website. There are also breakdowns of how the money was raised and spent.

Frank then went over a number of lessons he had learnt through the process. These included that it would take longer than expected, building a committed team, continually

revisiting plans and models, and the challenge of doing something first, as there is no precedent to follow. He particularly stressed the importance of budgeting for professional advisers, and investing in good project management. He felt that their project manager helped make the project the success that it has proven.

Finally, he concluded by showing a number of projects that the money made has been able to fund, including the recruitment of a town co-ordinator. £80,000 has been invested into the community already, and they had committed to funding an additional £100,000 over the next three years.

There was a short discussion after the presentation about various elements of the Callander Hydro Project, including how the change in FITS rates would affect similar projects going forward, and how the experience of Callander can be used as a model for other communities to follow.

6. Highland Council - Heat Mapping

Jackie Sayer and Sophie Vivaudou gave a presentation on the work Highland Council had done around Heat Mapping. This involved creating the HERO map, Heat, Energy & Renewable Opportunities. This is an interactive GIS based map of the Highland Energy landscape, and this information is then used to support a long-term energy strategy.

Jackie highlighted why this was particularly useful in the Highlands, where many are off the gas grid. Data is collected at a household level, and it is built on top of existing data from the Scottish Government Heat Map. It added information on Fuel Poverty, the Electricity Network, Sewage Network, Energy Project Opportunities and School Energy Visits. There are also ambitions to refresh utilities, and add RHI/FIT sites, a Green Team Network, social housing information and BMS & Control Level. Sophie took the group through the technical aspects of the HERO map.

Some of the other uses for the map have been informing the WestPlan Heat Network Opportunities Assessment, providing a useful illustration of the renewables landscape, and allow the Energy team to track activities and share workload information.

Benefits of the map are that it is user friendly and easy to interpret, which is particularly useful when engaging with stakeholders. It allows for a focus on local communities, has a lot of potential for future development and it helps with delivering projects. Especially useful is that it lowers consultancy fees, as more information is already on hand and does not need to be collected by someone else. She noted that no one on the team was working on the project fulltime, and that everyone on the HERO team had other jobs within the council and contributed to HERO on the side.

Jackie went on to discuss the relationship between HERO, LHEES and SEEP, with a diagram with how they are able to feed into one another to create a feedback loop. Jackie also presented a diagram of their SEEP project Identification process, which looks at the practicalities, refinement and alignment of the process.

Jackie concluded with a summary of the HERO map, noting the significant progress made with adding GIS energy data to the map, the improved internal relationship and that they have made the project identification process better. There are still some unknowns, such

as the programme timeline, some questions still remain around SEEP/LHES alignment, achieving political support and what effect the establishment of a national ESCO will have.

7. Fintry Development Trust - Renewable Energy Projects

Matthew Black, the Community Project Manager for Fintry Development Trust delivered a presentation on the community energy projects that have been undertaken in Fintry. Fintry Development Trust was the first community in the UK to enter a joint venture with a windfarm developer, Falck Renewables. The trust owns 1/15th of the Earlburn Windfarm, and has used the income generated from it to improve energy efficiency in the town, through a £500 grant offered to residents.

They also set up their own electricity provider, Smart Fintry, to allow for a resident's tariff. They partnered with Good Energy to deliver this, and work through the grid, using technology to monitor supply and demand in real-time, rather than use a private wire. They have about a third of houses signed up already, and are looking to introduce business on the tariff in the near future. They also hope to create a report outlining policy guidance for future UK projects. Matthew outlined the aims of Smart Fintry, chief of which was reducing fuel poverty

Matthew then spoke of another project undertaken by Fintry Development Trust. 26 permanent residents in park homes at Balgair Castle Caravan Park were given community renewable district heating, a project that is also a first in the U.K. This led to savings of around 20% on residents heating bills, as well as removing the need for boilers or gas deliveries. Carbon Emissions were also reduced by 150 tonnes.

One of the questions that arose from the discussion after the presentation was the role of Biomass boilers. These have been seen as a way of tackling fuel poverty, particularly in rural areas, however, one member raised questions about possible implications they may have for air quality, particularly in the future.

8. APSE Update

Iain Scherr provided an update on the current work of the Association, including the latest briefings, the recent APSE publication 'Accountability and Scrutiny', the APSE/ITN 'Redefining Neighbourhoods' programme, recent advocacy work, network queries, deadlines for Performance Networks data returns, upcoming APSE Energy and APSE Training events in Scotland, the work of APSE Solutions and upcoming Scottish and National seminars.

9. A.O.C.B

There was no other business.

10. Date and time of next meeting – 24th April 2018, Location to be Confirmed.

Attendees

Name	Council
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Iain Scherr	APSE
Frank Park	Callander Development Trust
Cllr Les Sharp	Clackmannanshire Council
Douglas Evans	Falkirk Council
Clair Lawrence	Fife Council
Janet Archibald	Fife Council
Mathew Black	Fintry Development Trust
Jackie Sayer	Highland Council
Sophie Vivaudou	Highland Council
David Hopper	Stirling Council
Evelyn Tweed	Stirling Council
Roz Smith	Stirling Council
Tim Ugwu	Stirling Council

Apologies

Peter Henderson	South Ayrshire Council
Paul Gillies	Argyll and Bute Council
Paul Slevin	East Dunbartonshire Council
Jack Caldwell	Scottish Borders Council
Shona M. Cargill	Resource Efficient Solutions
Andrew Mouat	Glasgow City Council
Peter Henderson	South Ayrshire Council