

Ray Windfarm Fund CIC Meeting

Date 28th September 2023
Otterburn Memorial Hall
Time 7.00pm

1. In attendance

Action

David Burn, (DB) Chair; Lesley Gosling (LG); Katie Wood (KW); Sarah Lunn (SL); Sarah Crone (SC); Martin Dickson-Green (MDG); Alison Thomson (AT); Deb Walton (DW) Joanne Willis, (JW) CDO (Minutes) from item 9.

Apologies

Chris Robson (CR); Peter Ramsden (PR); Martin Chilvers (MC); Paul Cowie (PC)

2. Introductions

Nick Hall Head of infrastructure at B4RN and Helen Eastwood Special Projects at B4RN.

3. Declarations of interest

MDG B4RN

4. B4RN Presentation

The cabinet within Barrasford will be live within the next few days which is dependent on BT. Two local contractors from the Allen valleys have been hired who are experienced and have completed work in the neighbouring areas. 98,000m of ducting needs to be laid within a 28-week build, contractors are due to commence towards the end of October and work on phase 1 should be complete by the end of April 2024. There are a potential 521 properties to connect. The government have awarded £812,000 for this project, but there is a gap of £267,000 between this and the build cost. £44,000 has been raised through community investment to date. 219 of the 521 properties have signed up to B4RN = 42% which is a very high signup rate, and it is anticipated signups will continue throughout the build, though signups will not reduce the deficit in money required.

B4RN have been operational for 11 years and have laid 5 million metres of network and have 12,696 live customers. They provide a free service to 220 community assets – churches, village halls and schools.

They have been approaching other local funders such as Tarmac for match funding but can commence the build without the total cost being secured.

They have a resilient network, during Storm Arwen there was no network loss. In the event of problems with the network, the cabinets have a battery backup time of 8 hours by which time a generator will be in place if required. Repairs are prioritised. Contracts can run alongside a BT contract, and they have a support group to assist people to get online who have no experience. They also provide a social tariff for those on lower incomes.

Nick Hall and Helen Eastwood left the meeting.

5. Minutes of the last meeting 24th August 2023

Accepted as a true record.

6. Notes of the ARC 21st September 2023

Accepted as a true record.

7. Minutes of the F & GP 12th September 2023

Accepted as a true record, matters arising from the meeting included a discussion on funding allocation. There is currently £412,000 in the accounts with £20,000 yet to be awarded from two grants in 2022-23 grant year. DB would like to ensure that £90,000 formerly awarded to SGP with Community Foundation is ringfenced for similar charitable and community organisation grant giving.

8. Governance Handbook wording

Directors approved the suggested wording of the Governance Handbook and Appendices 10 and 14 to recognise the move away from the Community Foundation administered Small Grants Programme.

9. Policy Reviews

- Code of conduct and portfolio holders
- Complaints
- Disciplinary
- Equality and Diversity
- Risk Management
- Safe working
- Visitor's expenses

All accepted and adopted.

10. Community Engagement Event

JW gave an overview of the preparations for the event. LG has photo boards printed so attendees can see recent grant awards made. Maps will be displayed to allow people to pinpoint most travelled routes and where transport is required, also any community buildings or businesses who wish to become dementia friends can be marked on a map. Information on all grants awarded across the AoB in parishes will also be displayed. Leaflets have been printed detailing the new Community Benefit Fund name. Any Directors that can attend would be appreciated.

11. AOB

None.

Closed 8.30pm