

Minutes of WREN Board Meeting 4th March 2014 The Energy Shop Wadebridge

WREN Board Members present: Richard Alexander (RA), David Atfield (DA), John Catchpole (Jn C), Jerry Clark (JC), Tony Faragher (TF), Lizzy-Jane Frankel (LJF), Stephen Frankel (SF), Adrian Jones (AJ), Peter McGregor (PM), Kevin Smith (KS), Rachel Wigglesworth (RW).
Dominic Comonte (DC) (operations manager), Leonie McGregor (LM) (minutes).
Helen Hyland (Wadebridge Town Council).
Apologies: Jake Burnyeat (JB), Caroline New (CN), Amanda Pennington (AP).

Meeting started 18.00, closed 20.30.

Board approved minutes of last meeting on 21st January 2014.

Dementia Action Alliance: TF is arranging a date for dementia awareness training – Doodle has been circulated.

Chamber of Commerce: TF is completing membership form.

Wadebridge Energy Futures: the virtual exhibition is now on the website. Board members to check content and send any comments to LJF. Thanks to CN for her excellent work on this.

1. **Finance:** RA is preparing a draft cash forecast for the financial year ended 31st March 2015 and will circulate for consideration and agreement before the next meeting. The Board agreed that WREN should voluntarily register for VAT from 1st April 2014. RA was thanked for his work as treasurer.
2. **Operational Projects**
 - **Modern Energy House:** There are ongoing discussions with providers of energy efficiency measures aimed at gathering a complete set of offers from WREN. Diverters and battery back-ups have been added to the micro-generation offers.
 - **Wadebridge Energy Company (WEC):** Progress with the elements of the smaller portfolio is delayed for a variety of reasons including the finding that one of the school roofs is not fit for solar panels, and European rules delaying ratification of the domestic RHI.
 - **British Gas Fuel Switch Project:** This is proceeding without WREN's involvement.
 - **Diocese project:** JC recently undertook another church survey for biomass which would feed an adjoining school.
 - **Sunshine tariff:** WREN is collaborating with Western Power Distribution on a Low Carbon Network Fund project which is aimed at providing cheaper electricity from local sources, initially to 250 homes.
 - **Big Energy Saving Network:** Most sessions have now taken place, and TF thanked the volunteers who helped with these. Take up has been low and the target group (vulnerable consumers) not substantially reached. Lessons have been learned for the future, including training the frontline workers first.
 - **Community Fund arrangements: St Breock Down** – TF is working with the community engagement officer at REG to refine the terms of reference for the individual committees. WREN will manage the advertising of the fund, the applications and the committee meeting arrangements, and the meetings will be chaired by TF. The first funds may be available starting in September.

Middle Treworder – DC & TF met representatives from Balfour Beatty investments to discuss possible community fund arrangements.

Sainsbury's – The s.106 agreement provides for skills development work. The possibility of WREN apprenticeships has been discussed with Cornwall College. RW will be consulted on the health and well-being aspects of the proposal.

- **Information Management System:** key documents are individually password protected.
 - **Smart Innovation Hub (SIH):** Wadebridge Town Council has added its approval to the feasibility study document. The possibility of the SIH forms part of wider plans being formulated by the Local Enterprise Partnership for the allocation of the next round of EU funding. Investment in a Smart –type project involving support for WREN may be included in this. As a first step, the Department for Communities and Local Government has been asked to approve this as a legitimate use of EU funding.
 - **Wales & West Utilities:** JC is part of a working group aiming to facilitate domestic connections to the gas network and thereby securing cheaper options for heating, particularly for those in fuel poverty.
 - **South West Water (SWW):** There are 4 potential sites for generation in connection with water pumping. Clarification is needed on the possible implications of inheritance tax on land use. Jn C has consulted a colleague but this is a grey area. JC will consult SWW for precedents.
3. **Communication strategy:** The elevator speech has been circulated and already proved useful in dealing with the media. A timetable for newsletters was discussed. It was agreed that the newsletter should be sent out on the last Tuesday of the month, every other month, January to November. The aim is to build up distribution to a wider circulation, but to adhere to the rules of unsolicited emails. Topics for the next newsletter were agreed - copy to KS deadline 18th March.

Other Business:

- TF is drafting a procurement policy and will circulate for approval by the Board.
- Wadebridge School is one of 11 schools taking part in a Cornish Guardian competition to win an energy makeover worth £100,000. An email will be sent to the membership encouraging them to vote for whichever school they wish to support, and a collecting box will be set up in the Energy Shop.
- It was decided that WREN did not currently have the capacity to support a proposed student masters project. Ideally any initial meeting with potential students should be attended by their supervisors.
- An offer of voluntary work by a contact of JC has been received: ideas for how this could be taken up were discussed, including light bulb audits for businesses, the Wren currency and energy monitors.

**NEXT MEETING TUESDAY 1st APRIL 6.PM WREN ENERGY SHOP
(then 6th May, 10th June, 1st July, 2nd September)**