

Spring General Meeting 2009

Meeting Note (Public Summary)



Venue: Upstairs at the Red Deer Pub (18 Pitt Street, Sheffield, S1 4DD)

Time: 6.30pm for a prompt start at 7.00pm. Finish by 9.15pm

Date: Wednesday 29thth April 2009

Present: Rob Pilling, Jean Tinsley, Abigail Hathway, Mark Wells, John Taylor, Liz Gray, Helen Milicevic, Robin Mills, Chris Broome, Rich Collins

Apologies: Vicky Moore, Richard Keenan, Rick Morgan, Christine Ball, Dave Berry

Motions: were circulated in advance and discussed at the meeting, before voting by a show of hands. All were approved.

1. New name, New logo (Richard Keenan and Liz Gray)

New name and logo presented to the group to universal support. Tagline was queried (i.e. 'energy future' or 'future energy'). We settled on the former by majority view.

2. Principles of the new organisation (Rob Pilling and Mark Wells)

Motion 2: Approve the Sheffield Renewables objectives, Draft Offer, and business targets & development timeline.

Motion 3: Approve principles of operation for the new IPS

Motion 4: Approve list of founder members for the IPS

Motion 5: Approve plan and timescale for winding up SCR in its current form as an unincorporated organisation

Amendments agreed:

- include reference to social cohesion in objectives
- make commitment to multiple schemes explicit in the offer
- need to clarify how we assess 'rate of inflation' for final offer document
- Add Claire Gregory to invite list for founder members

Directors: An important task for the next few months is to agree who will be the interim directors. Anybody interested should contact Mark Wells. We aim to provide some training for those involved to ensure they understand the role and its responsibilities. Those currently nominated are: Rob Pilling, Mark Wells, John Taylor and Jean Tinsley. Further nominations welcome.

3. Financial Plans 09/10 (Rob Pilling)

Motion 6: Approve Sheffield Renewables budget for 2009/10

Amendments agreed:

- Consider buying a refurbished desktop (H&S, cost, environment)

Special Item: delay in grant payment by Sheffield City Council

Payment of ABG grant has been delayed. No confirmed payment date has been provided. Critical start-up activities are threatened creating serious risk for project timeline. We confirmed plans for members to provide limited bridging finance. We will push SCC hard for clarification and payments during May.

Action: Rob to coordinate offers of bridging finance and communicate concern and frustration of membership to Sheffield City Council and to pursue a speedy resolution

4. Project Update (Richard Collins and Abigail Hathway)

Motion 7: Approve continued development work to explore potential for developing the Jordan's Dam project

Motion 8: Approve SCR continued involvement in Kelham Island Project

See handout 4. Amendments agreed:

- Vital to pursue clarification of project roles and responsibilities with SCC as a priority (with reference to opportunity costs for Sheffield renewables).

5. Proposal for Sheffield Renewables support for local wind developments

Chris Broome outlined situation with regards proposed wind turbines at Sheep House Heights. The scheme will go to the Barnsley planning board in early June. There is an opportunity for Sheffield Renewables to support the scheme by writing to the planning consultation and/or writing to local press. The scheme is relevant to people in Sheffield since the site is visible from Penistone and Stocksbridge.

The general impression from the ensuing discussion was that Members generally supported the proposal at a personal level and were keen to see the scheme granted permission. We discussed pros and cons for getting involved as an organisation. There is a possible risk that we could alienate potential investors who prefer smaller renewable energy schemes to larger ones. Alternatively we may gain credibility by being seen to have a bigger picture view.

Meeting Decision (agreed by strong majority)

On balance, we agreed to put our support behind the Sheep House Heights proposal. More generally we see a role for Sheffield Renewables in helping to encourage an informed local debate on large scale renewables.

In doing so we recognise that the debate is sensitive and needs to be approached carefully, intelligently and respectfully. We will not give blanket support for all possible schemes, rather we will consider our position case by case.

We will continue to develop our thinking and keep our position under review, especially with regards to any risks or repercussions for the success or otherwise of our own projects

Action Richard: Draft letter(s) for sending to planning authority and media (& blog)