

Sheffield Renewables AGM

4th March, 2023

held at The Friends Meeting House, Sheffield.

MINUTES

Present: 37 members, 3 guests and one new volunteer.

Apologies: were received from 40 members.

David Berry, volunteer and Board Adviser, welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

The minutes of last year's meeting were accepted as a true record.

Matters Arising

Jean Tinsley advised the meeting that last year we had agreed to donate 80% of the Community Benefit Fund to South Yorkshire Energy Centre. This was done, but soon afterwards the management at Heeley City Farm, where the Energy Centre is based, changed and fuel poverty work was no longer happening. The money was repaid to us, and after some thought and investigation the Board decided to give the money to Sheffield Citizens' Advice Bureau as they are now carrying out fuel poverty work.

Chair's Report – Erin Lachs

The full slides for the report will be on our website. The highlights:

- Erin Lachs reported that we have now generated 1 million kWh – a really good achievement.
- We have vacated our office at Heeley City Farm, due to the changes happening there. It remains our Registered Office, files are stored there and we still visit to collect our post.
- The Board decided not to ask our customers for the full 9% RPI rise on their bills this year, but only increased prices by 4.5%. This helps to show that renewable electricity does not have the same overheads as non-renewables.

Erin then showed the meeting some potential new projects we are working on

- Five Rivers Co-Housing (where we will put panels on the roof of the communal house)
- The Oakes (Christian Activity Centre), where the panels will be ground-mounted
- Park Hill Flats
- Some Sheffield Council schools.
- We are also in discussion with the Council about a possible project. Dave Berry explained about the problems we have had pursuing projects with the Council. This is mainly due to their Procurement Policy, but they have now accepted we could take on one scheme as a Pilot.

The scheme at Whirlow Hall Farm that we were pursuing was eventually self-funded.

Questions were asked about hydro (low volume on the Don means this is no longer viable), flat roofs (the need for ballast means we need good information about the roof

structure).

Operations Report

Dave Berry reported that all schemes are operating well and showed the graphs that demonstrate that generation is not very different from year to year.

Annual Accounts

Richard Collins (Treasurer) pointed out that we could have increased our income if we had increased our charges by RPI instead of only charging half of RPI. We also paid Corporation Tax for the first time this year. The accounts were accepted and the meeting agreed that we do not need an audit.

Application of Surplus (Interest and Capital Payments)

Richard Collins, Treasurer, took us through the figures for this year. We will again be able to pay 3% interest on all shares, and nearly £25,000 is available to repay capital. The amount available for the Community Benefit Fund this year is £3,019. It was AGREED that 80% would go to a local scheme – The Gleadless Project (£2,415.20), and 20% would be invested in TRINE (£603.80).

Communications

Ted Datta told the meeting about the newsletters that had been sent out this year and the latest news on our website. Members who did not receive our newsletters were invited to sign up.

Membership

Jean reported that 13 members withdrew all of their capital this year. Three members had died. We have 191 members remaining. Over 20 members have no contact with us.

A new active volunteer, Niko Viphakone, was invited to join as a member on payment of £1 [see rule 52(e)].

Election of Board

Paul Cocker, Erin Lachs and Christine Gilligan stood down this year as per our rules. Paul and Erin are standing for re-election. Christine is not standing for re-election for personal reasons. She was thanked for all her work over the past 10 years.

Richard Collins, Luke Wilson, Keith Alford and Ted Datta are continuing from last year.

Jean Tinsley stood down as Company Secretary and was thanked for her work over the past 14 years. She said she had enjoyed the work, and would continue with admin work for the time being. Lewis Blake Dagnall was introduced to the meeting. He will take on the role of Company Secretary.,

Members were reminded that we continue to look for new directors to give new energy to the board. Anyone interested was invited to contact any member of the board.