

Minutes of WREN Board Meeting
27th March 2020, Zoom

WREN Board Members present: Chris Coonick (CC), Tony Faragher (TF), Kevin Smith (KS), Marcus Shirley (MS).

WREN ops assistant: Leonie McGregor (LM), (minutes).

WREN Community Engagement Officer: Simon Miller (SM).

Apologies: Rick Johnson (RJ), Amanda Pennington (AP).

Meeting started 13:30, closed 15:00.

The Board approved the minutes of the last meeting held on 28th February 2020.

Matters arising: TF has contacted Stephen Knightley regarding the hustings hall hire fee. TF has yet to approach Ian Welch regarding possible Board membership.

1. **Rural Community Energy Fund (RCEF):** SM had circulated a comprehensive update on progress. The launch event and all other face to face meetings have been cancelled as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic. The hall hire cost will be refunded, no other print or promotion costs have been incurred. All Board members to promote amongst their contacts the completion of the online questionnaire. RCEF have requested monthly reports – CC to complete. It was agreed that the programme now needs to be extended and re-scoped. CC to request a time extension to the end of June for the first phase, and to the end of September for the final report. SM to list what he can now do in the new circumstances with a time estimate. Adam at BRE has identified sites and will need to visit some of these. Photographs of certain meters are required – SM and CC to provide. It appears the grid connection cost for a 2 MW solar farm will be prohibitive and the plan may have to be scaled back to a half MW site. A proposal will be submitted to Cornwall Council once the grid connection issues are clarified. More rooftops would therefore be required to fulfil the envisaged generation of the project, with consequent higher build costs. An enquiry regarding the proposed rooftop solar is being prepared by BRE for Western Power Distribution. AFE, the modelling consultants, are to be updated.
2. **Exeter University internships:** 9 applications have been received for a 6 week post (remote working) starting in June. SM, CC TF and KS to complete the scoring grid. The interview panel will be SM, CC and either TF or KS
3. **Finance:** Nothing to report.
4. **Communications:** The next newsletter should be sent as soon as possible. In the light of Covid 19 energy poverty and community have become relevant to many more people, and the newsletter can direct readers to sources of help. SM and TF to prepare an updated press release referring to Covid 19 relating to the RCEF project. Sharing on social media is currently the main route for promoting the project.
5. **EV promotion day:** It was agreed to postpone the event.
6. **St Breock Fund:** The awards were made by the 7 panels meeting in early March. Some of the projects will not now be able to go ahead, however it was agreed to offer the grants as awarded understanding that variations/postponements may occur. The St Breock panel had a substantial underspend, and has been invited to fill any gaps now that all the panels have met. The wind farm owners and WREN both consider that monies should not be held over to another year.
7. **Other Business:** KS had been approached by Paul Rogers of Plymouth University regarding a pop up innovation centre. KS to find out more.

It was agreed that WREN would support Lord Foster's bill to require all fuel poor homes to be brought up to EPC band C by 2030 and the remaining homes by 2035.

NEXT MEETING FRIDAY 24th April 2020, 1.30 pm on Zoom.

(then 29th May, 26th June, 31st July, 28th August, 25th September, 30th October, 27th November 2020)