

## **Minutes of WREN Board Meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2023, Zoom**

WREN Board Members present: Chris Coonick, Tony Faragher, Simon Miller, Kevin Smith, Victoria Smyth.

Apologies: Leonie McGregor (minutes from recording), Ian Welch.

Meeting started 1900, closed 2030.

The Board approved the minutes of the last meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

There were no matters arising.

### **1. Funding:**

- Chris has applied to the Energy Affordability Fund for funding to extend the functionality of the Net Zero Community tool. The idea is to make it work with the Fairer Warmth signposting app developed by Andy Ross of the Centre for Energy Equality. The project would use WREN's presence at the Royal Cornwall Show to test and showcase the tool, and fund more local energy clinics. The work would also link in with CEP's plan to support applicants for ECO funding. CEP has applied to the St Breock Community Fund for the cost of EPC assessments which are required as a precursor for ECO funding applications. The Board is in favour of the developments going ahead.
  - The Board also discussed the Local Energy Advice Demonstrator Programme, a call for projects via the Southwest Net Zero Hub. It was agreed that this programme is outside the scope of WREN; the funding is for projects of up to £2m with delivery over 2 years, for "innovative in-person energy advice" as opposed to funding retro-fit and energy efficiency measures, and there is a short deadline for applications. Chris will feedback WREN's views on the viability of such a programme for community groups.
  - Energy Redress fund: The Low Carbon Energy Advisor role would appear to fit the criteria for this fund. Tony has registered WREN for updates and to be informed when the next grant round is announced.
  - Shared Prosperity fund: The funding is available to mitigate the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis via investment into renewable energy and energy efficiency measures. Simon has sent a link for calls for expressions of interest. This is a minimum £200k pot to manage a fund for households to do retrofitting with 100% intervention rate. The deadline for EOI is May 30<sup>th</sup>, with an event at Newquay Orchard on 20<sup>th</sup> April. Simon and possibly Vicky will attend in person, Tony will attend online, Chris will watch the recording.
- 2. Recruitment:** Project manager to progress and deliver the Energy Equality Project. It was clarified that the Board has agreed to fund this post using £30 – £35k of the surplus from NZCom. It was agreed that the role could be full or part time and requires an experienced project manager. The role should be publicly advertised, as well as being posted on the website and social media. Tony will scope out a job description and send it to the Board. Chris has talked to a graduate based at Penryn about possible WREN roles. They have worked with Andy from CEE and are available from the end of August.
- 3. RCS:** Simon has reserved a double pitch in Wadebridge Street and is awaiting an invoice. CEP are keen to join WREN as they did last year. Simon will ask them to contribute half the cost of the pitch. Planet A wish to attend on one of the days. The format will be similar to last

year, but without scheduled talks; the idea of inviting a different installer to the stand on each of the days was preferred. Simon and Kevin have the details of a sole trader renewables installer from Wadebridge who was recommended by an attendee at their recent WI talk. Bennaman will also be invited to appear at the stand. The Board agreed to pay Simon to plan and run the event at RCS. A call for volunteers to help set up and staff it will go out in the next newsletter.

4. **St Breock Community Fund.** The panels are due to meet week commencing 17<sup>th</sup> April. The fund is 50% oversubscribed. There are several applications for energy saving measures.
5. **Communications:** Kevin was thanked for the recent excellent newsletter. Vicky will email her photo to Kevin for the website. Simon is happy to take any photos that are needed for this. The recent Wadebridge Life magazine has a feature on Ian, as well as a full page write up of the Your Energy Transition event. Energy clinics at the Betjeman Centre are also advertised, but as these are not running at the moment. Simon will advise the staff at the Centre to pass on to him any approaches .
6. **Finance:** There is no update this time. Kevin is working on the end of year figures. WREN is still awaiting an invoice from Exeter University.
7. **Other business:**
  - SHARE, a community energy group from the Callington area is seeking recommendations for contractors for a feasibility study. The Southwest Energy Hub would be a good first approach, and/or Planet A.
  - There was a discussion about SW Water and an update given on the current situation at Nanstallon.
  - Clare Wallerstein of Cornwall Climate Care has been in touch with Chris. They are planning their next film which is about energy and would like to talk to WREN.
  - Ian had emailed the Board highlighting the negative press about EVs. This topic to be discussed at a later date.
  - Tony has been contacted by Neil Farrington from the Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult to talk about water powered generation.

**NEXT MEETING MONDAY 15<sup>th</sup> May 7.00 pm on Zoom**

**Then: 5<sup>th</sup> June, 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 7<sup>th</sup> August, 4<sup>th</sup> September, 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 6<sup>th</sup> November, 4<sup>th</sup> December.**