

DRAFT MINUTES

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MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF FOWEY TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13th JUNE 2012 AT FOWEY TOWN HALL

12/21 Present

The Mayor, Cllr John Berryman (part)
The Deputy Mayor, Cllr Mrs A Boosey
Councillors Mrs K Alexander (part), Mrs S Gudmunsen,
Mrs R Finlay (part), N Mason, Mrs J Vincent, T Vincent, D Willmore

In Attendance

The Town Clerk, Sally Vincent
Cornwall Cllr Mrs S Bain
Cornwall Cllr D Hughes
Neil Farrington (Community Energy Plus)
Mrs C Wharton (Chairman, FREE)
51 members of the public
1 member of the press

12/22 Apologies

None

12/23 Declaration of Interests

- a. In items on the agenda.
The Mayor declared a prejudicial interest in applications 1, 2 & 3
Cllr Alexander declared a prejudicial and personal interest in all the applications on the agenda.
- b. Of gifts to a value in excess of £25.00.
None

12/24 Neil Farrington

Neil Farrington introduced himself as the Sustainable Projects Manager for Community Energy Plus (a registered charity) and explained that he had been involved in most of the Community Energy Schemes in Cornwall.

Neil made the following points

- The government and national planning policy was supportive of renewable energy
- Community Energy Plus was trying to drive community schemes, rather than commercial developments.
- There were 15 cooperatives across Cornwall at present, although FREE was already ahead of the game so when the group secured its grant it was able to use it to submit planning applications.
- One of the actions in the Fowey Parish Plan was to investigate wind, tidal, solar and other renewable options
- He was aware that much of Fowey was a sensitive area, largely within the AONB, which was why the majority of the proposed developments were on the boundary of the town.

- The energy produced from the Squires Field scheme would be fed into Fowey Primary school before going into the grid.
- Feedback from the two consultation events held by FREE had been wholly supportive of solar and largely in favour of wind.
- There would be a public share offer, open in the first instance to Fowey residents.
- Any surplus income would go into a community fund for local projects but the schemes would remain in Cornwall to support the local economy.

12/25 Public Questions

The Mayor and Cllr Alexander left the room in accordance with their prejudicial interests.
Cllr Boosey took the Chair.

The following questions were asked and responded to by Neil Farrington.

Q. Is there a minimum distance required between a dwelling and a turbine?

A. No. There is a Members Bill in the pipeline, which will restrict the erection of turbines within 2 miles of dwellings but if it becomes law this will apply to wind farms and not to single turbines. Separation distances must be justified on noise grounds, not an arbitrary separation distance with no specific relevance to the turbines in question or the specific site.

Q. Why is there a persistence in erecting dominating structures (wind turbines) when the technology will be outdated within 10 years? Why not tidal?

A. At the present time onshore wind power is the most efficient and cost effective way of producing green energy. Wave power technology will probably not be on line for another 10 years.

Q. For turbines to be efficient the wind speed has to be correct. Has there been on site testing at the proposed locations?

A. No specific on site testing, one of the applications includes permission to erect a 10m anemometer mast at Penhale farm. We have used a number of databases and our own critical analysis to assess the likely wind resources available on the selected sites.

Q. The noise and flicker effect will have a negative effect on the surrounding area.

A. Noise testing has already been carried out and shows that there will be no detrimental effect on neighbouring properties. Likewise the separation of the proposed turbines from any properties is sufficient that they will not be affected.

Q. Who will buy the turbines?

A. They will be purchased by the Cooperative by means of a tender process. Funding will be raised by means of a share option and borrowing, hopefully from the Low Carbon Society but with any shortfall from a commercial lender. After the distribution of dividends to shareholders any surplus income will be held in a Community Fund, administered by FREE.

Q. Is there a business plan in place?

A. No, because the government has not yet confirmed subsidy prices, which are part of an open consultation due to be responded to by the end of August 2012. This will set technology rates from September 2012 onwards. However, an outlay of £980K is estimated with an initial income of £150K pa for 20/25 years

Q. How can the applicants claim that there will be little visual impact when the turbines will be seen from the ANOB and virtually the whole of the coastal footpath?

A. An assessment has been carried out by an independent landscape architect on all the wind turbine sites and the reports conclude there is no significant landscape or visual impact on the surrounding area or adverse impacts on the AONB landscape, largely due to the small scale of the turbines and the landscapes ability to accommodate appropriately sized developments.

Q. Many of the local residents were unaware of the applications as there had been little or no advertising. FREE should have used some of its £64K grant money to notify every household in Fowey and Polruan about their proposals, given that they would have a huge impact on the area. Why not?

A. FREE had staged two public exhibitions in the Town Hall. The grant money had been spent on the preparation and submission of the applications. FREE was a very small organisation and did not have the manpower to undertake a big mailout. Cornwall Council had posted on site notices and, once received, the applications had been advertised on the FTC notice board and website as agenda items. Both events were advertised in the Parish newsletter, posters were put up around the town and huge banners were outside the town hall and entrance to Fowey before the second consultation event. The local media has also promoted both events

Among others, the following additional points were made by members of the public

- Whilst there were obviously strong feelings against turbines, everybody must do their part to reduce carbon emissions.
- PV panels are an excellent way to produce green energy but wind turbines damage tourism and the landscape.
- Wind turbines are noisy and intrusive and impact on the living conditions of nearby residents.

Christine Wharton confirmed that the turbines proposed for Fowey were relatively small compared to ones sited in other areas and can be taken down in 20 years if no longer viable.

Cllr Hughes explained that Cllr Bain would have to declare a prejudicial interest in these applications but that he would be happy to provide advice if required, although as a member of the Cornwall Council Planning Committee he would not be able to express any opinion. He appreciated that the proposals were highly emotive and would do his best to ensure that the applications were heard by the Planning Committee, with a public session beforehand, rather than decided on officer delegated powers. Cllr Hughes urged everybody, both for and against the applications, to attend the meeting and to appoint a spokesperson to speak on their behalf. Objectors must remember that any objections must be based on planning grounds. He confirmed that any impact on the ANOB was a material planning consideration.

12/26 Planning

1. PA12/03159. The installation of a small community owned Endurance E-3120 wind turbine. Hub height 36.4m at centre, blade tip height 46m. Temporary installation of an anemometer on a 10m mast. Penhale Caravan & Camping Park. Cllr Mason stated that it was obvious that the people of Fowey were against the installation of wind turbines and he proposed, Cllr Mrs Vincent seconded and it was RESOLVED that a recommendation of objection should be made to Cornwall Council. *Reason: 1. The siting of a wind turbine at this sensitive location would be detrimental to the landscape and the adjoining AONB. 2. The application was premature as there was no supporting information in respect of wind speed/efficiency at this location.* Cllr Gudmunsen abstained from voting.

2. PA12/03171. The installation of a very small Aircon 10kw wind turbine on a 15m mast. Penhale Caravan & Camping Park. Cllr Vincent proposed, Cllr Mrs Vincent seconded and it was RESOLVED that a recommendation of support should be made to Cornwall Council. *Reason: This small turbine would have little visual impact on the AONB.* Voting was 3 in favour and 2 against. Cllr Gudmunsen abstained from voting.

3. PA12/03166. The installation of a 49.92kw solar photovoltaic array on a corrugated asbestos roof. Penhale Caravan & Camping Park. Cllr Mrs Vincent proposed, Cllr Mason seconded and it was RESOLVED that a recommendation of support should be made to Cornwall Council.

Reason: The installation would reduce carbon emissions and would have no significant impact on the landscape and AONB. Cllr Gudmunsen abstained from voting.

The Mayor rejoined the meeting and took the Chair. Cllr Findlay arrived.

4. PA12/03192. The installation of a small community owned Endurance E-3120 wind turbine. Hub height – 36.4m at centre, blade tip height – 46m. Lescrow Farm, Passage Lane. Cllr Mrs Vincent proposed, Cllr Willmore seconded and it was RESOLVED that a recommendation of objection should be made to Cornwall Council. *Reason: The siting of a turbine at this sensitive location within the AONB would be detrimental to the landscapes within a protected area.*

Voting was 4 in favour and 1 against. Cllrs Berryman, Finlay and Gudmunsen abstained from voting.

5. PA12/03143. The installation of a 7.2kw roof mounted solar photovoltaic system. Lankelly Fowey RFC, Lankelly Lane. Cllr Boosey proposed, Cllr Mrs Vincent seconded and it was RESOLVED that a recommendation of support should be made to Cornwall Council. *Reason: The installation would reduce carbon emissions and would have no significant impact on the landscape and AONB.* Cllrs Berryman, Finlay, Gudmunsen and Mason abstained from voting.

6. PA12/03164. The installation of a 4.5kw and 6.72kw solar photovoltaic array on two barns. Tregaminion Farm, Polkerris. Cllr Boosey proposed, Cllr Mrs Vincent seconded and it was RESOLVED that a recommendation of support should be made to Cornwall Council. *Reason: The installation would reduce carbon emissions and would have no significant impact on the landscape and AONB.* Cllrs Berryman, Finlay and Gudmunsen abstained from voting.

7. PA12/03149. The installation of a 7.2kw and 3.4kw solar photovoltaic array on two barn roofs. Menabilly Barton Farm, Menabilly. Cllr Boosey proposed, Cllr Mrs Vincent seconded and it was RESOLVED that a recommendation of support should be made to Cornwall Council. *Reason: The installation would reduce carbon emissions and would have no significant impact on the landscape and AONB.* Cllrs Berryman, Finlay and Gudmunsen abstained from voting.

8. PA12/03146. The installation of two ground mounted rows of solar pv modules that will be raised to incorporate storage facilities for use by allotment owners. Total system size of 30kw using 128 REC 240w modules. The panels forming the roof will sit at 15 degrees beginning 1.8m from ground level. Readymoney Allotments, Hanson Drive. Concern was raised about the positioning of the proposed modules, which could cause significant shadowing to several of the allotments. The Mayor confirmed that there were over 40 people on the waiting list for allotments and highlighted the need to balance the community need in reaching a decision on this proposal. Cllr Boosey proposed, Cllr Mrs Vincent seconded and it was RESOLVED that a recommendation of objection should be made to Cornwall Council. *Reason: the modules sited in the proposed positions would have an unacceptable, shadowing impact on some of the allotment spaces, which would significantly reduce their viability when there was a proven community need.* Cllrs Berryman, Finlay and Gudmunsen abstained from voting.

9. PA12/03139. The installation of two rows of 8 double car ports with a 30.72kw integrated solar photovoltaic roof system. The roofs will incorporate 384 thin film 80 watt modules. Squires Field Car Park, Park Road. It was noted that there would be no reduction in car parking spaces, but Cllr Mason voiced concern that no provision had been made for rainwater run-off. Cllr Boosey proposed, Cllr Mrs Vincent seconded and it was RESOLVED that a recommendation of support should be made to Cornwall Council, conditional on provision being made to deal with rainwater run-off. It was recorded that some of the diagrams provided with the application were misleading and showed the car ports as having solid, rather than open, walls. *Reason: The installation would reduce carbon emissions, provide electricity for Fowey*

Primary school and would have no significant impact on the landscape. Voting was 4 in favour and 1 against. Cllrs Berryman, Finlay and Gudmunsen abstained from voting.

The Mayor recorded thanks on behalf of the community to Christine Wharton and the members of FREE for their hard work in coordinating the applications.

Meeting Closed 7.25pm