

## Westmill Solar Co-operative Minutes of board meeting

**Westmill Solar Board meeting Tuesday 27th October 2020, 15:30 – 18:00**

Location: Zoom Conference Call (due to the Covid-19 pandemic)

**Westmill Solar Directors:**

Tom Parkinson (Chair), Martin Allman, Mark Luntley (WW Chair), Nina Alpey, Mairi Brookes. Andy Crawford, Angela Bryant

**Westmill Wind Directors:**

Ruth Conchie, Douglas Parr, Dr Alan Ruddell, Josh Brown, Aude Duquesne, Ryan Rushton

**In attendance:**

Belinda Bramley (Ethex), Sam Parkinson (Ethex), Annette Heslop (Energy4All)

Agenda Item	Duration	<i>Action</i>
Welcome & Introductions	<p>TP welcomed those in attendance and outlined the agenda for the meeting.</p> <p>Conflicts of Interest:            AC – Councillor for Vale of White Horse (VoWH)            ML – Chair of Westmill Wind Co-op (WWC), Board member of Energy4All and REScoop            TP – Co-op Energy, Mid Counties Co-op</p>	
Approval of Minutes and matters arising	<p>The minutes of Q3 2020 Board meeting were approved subject to edits and comments from WW on joint meeting. (AGM mention and planning for current board meeting).</p> <p>AGM date for 2021 – to be discussed with both WSC and WWC</p>	
RINA report and presentation from BSR	<p>MA led with findings of the report.</p> <p>Generation continues to be greater than expected.</p> <p>Aerial thermographic study has been completed by BSR to identify hotspots on the modules. Identified string-end heating pattern (SEHP) anomaly on a number of modules. BSR to investigate further on site and come back with recommendations.</p> <p>BSR contract expires on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020 with provision to extend a further 5 years. MA commended BSR on their performance and recommended to the board that WSC continues using their services.</p>	

	<p>The SMA Warranty on the site’s inverters is set to expire in July 2021 but there is an opportunity to extend warranty for 5 or 10 years. MA again recommended to extend the warranty for a further 10 years.</p> <p>Peter Roberts from BSR was introduced to the Zoom call and talked about the work BSR had been doing recently and aims to do if their contract is extended.</p> <p>TP queried whether the damage localised on the site or is it spread across the modules and other generators? PR confirmed that these anomalies are common amongst panels of this age and assured that any work wouldn’t require the site being switched off.</p> <p>TP commended and thanked PR for all the work that the BSR team had done.</p> <p>PR left the zoom call.</p> <p>RINA contract is scheduled to expire at the end of October. We have received alternative proposal from other asset managers (AMs) as well as RINA.</p> <p>Current contract with RINA has been extended on current terms for 3 months. MA and Ethex to be involved in Zoom calls with proposed AMs to help determine future service.</p> <p>The board were happy for MA to proceed with extending BSR contract and SMA warranty.</p>	<p>MA/Ethex</p>
<p>Ethex report &amp; Q3 accounts (inc. FiT &amp; PPA issues with Octopus, 2020 outlook)</p>	<p>SP led with the finding of the Ethex report.</p> <p>Only thing of main highlight was the delay in receiving the Q3 income from Octopus Energy. Issue now appears to be resolved and progressing normally.</p> <p>There was no member withdrawal request to approve this quarter.</p> <p>BB took over regarding the Q3 accounts.</p>	

	<p>Numbers continue to look good. Continue to be ahead of budget by £0.5m due combination of high generation figures in Q2 and lower operating costs.</p> <p>Regarding the 2020 forecast, AC, NA and BB to discuss Community Funding for end of the year.</p>	<p>AC/Ethex/ NA</p>
2021 Budget	<p>BB and AC led on the 2021 budget discussion.</p> <p>First draft has been completed. Final copy of the budget needs to be sent to LPPI 45 days before WSC end of year (16/11/2020).</p> <p>Ethex and AC have budgeted for two cases of incomes, one using the financial model as before and the second using an average generation figure for the last 5 years. The board agreed that budgeted income should be based on previous year's average.</p> <p>The board fed back some comments regarding the budget. Need for possible inclusion of WSC capital repayment to shareholders.</p> <p>AC, NA and BB to discuss Community Funding budget for 2021. MA to feed figures to AC and BB in regarding the O&amp;M and AM contractual costs.</p>	<p>AC/Ethex/ NA/MA</p>
Community Funding update (inc. Community Grants scheme and Visitors Centre update)	<p>NA led with the report regarding the Community Grants scheme.</p> <p>The pilot scheme went well with 31 applicants asking for ~£117,000 worth.</p> <p>The board thanked NA, the panel and Ethex for their work with this pilot scheme.</p> <p>The recommendations from the panel meant that the total amount recommended exceeded the initial £30K allotted to the scheme by ~£13.5K. NA asked whether the board were happy to exceed this initial amount and authorise additional funding?</p> <p>The board were happy to approve all recommendations and allot the additional funds. NA and Ethex to take approval back</p>	<p>NA/Ethex</p>

	<p>to the panel and to the move ahead with distributing funds to applicants.</p> <p>The board iterated that it was important to make sure that applicants provided updates on their progress. Ethex and NA to request regular updates ahead of the 2021 AGM.</p> <p>AB and Ethex to prepare announcement to members and website regarding the success of the scheme and the organisations who have received funding.</p> <p>MB led with the Visitor Centre update.</p> <p>The Visitors Centre is currently behind schedule and may require an additional £17K of funding based on latest budget forecast.</p> <p>The board thanked MB for all the work she has done.</p> <p>Board is happy to commit the additional £17K needed to go ahead and for MB to proceed with project management.</p>	
AOB (One Planet Living Workshop)	Due to time constraints of the meeting, NA asked the board to read the accompanying paper and for anyone interested to follow up by email.	
	<p>BREAK – rest of meeting held jointly with Westmill Wind Directors.</p> <p>Both boards approved the minutes from the last joint meeting.</p>	
Marketing/Comms update	<p>AB and RR led on the discussions.</p> <p>Energy4All have purchased additional domains to set up joint landing page for the Co-ops and will be organising the necessary hosting. Landing page for both coops to be created on westmill.coop and will add a redirect to WSC, WWC and WeSET websites.</p> <p>Autumn Newsletter content has been agreed by both Chairs and is being sent to Ethex and Energy4All to build the communication. Launch date has been agreed to be pushed back to 10/11/2020.</p>	<p><i>AB/RR</i></p> <p><i>Ethex/E4All</i></p>

	<p>Fair Tax accreditation press release to currently be launched on 03/11/2020. Boards asked whether release could be pushed back to 10/11/2020 also to match Westmill newsletters? Chairs and RR to follow up.</p> <p>ML and TP thanked RR and AB for all the work that they had put in.</p>	<p><i>ML/TP/RR</i></p>
<p>Virtual Trading Dividend and Home Surveys</p>	<p>As agreed at the July Board Meeting, the boards requested legal advice from Wrigleys regarding our proposals for a virtual trading dividend offered to members who partake in the Co-op Community Power Tariff.</p> <p>In summary, Wrigley's have confirmed that our proposals for a virtual trading dividend can be implemented through a resolution of members but without any changes to Wind or Solar's Rules. Would also be beneficial in reaffirming both WSC and WWC's co-operative status and developing the co-ops.</p> <p>Important to trial these proposals ASAP and so give members a better opportunity to provide feedback before the proposals are finalised.</p> <p>Both boards were positive with continuing with the development of the idea until a barrier is encountered or a decision point is needed.</p> <p>TP, ML and JB to investigate additional tax advice regarding the tax treatment of the dividend</p> <p>MB to investigate options for a facilitator to how we can develop the Co-ops.</p> <p>ML updated the board on exploring the possibility of providing members with Home Energy Surveys.</p> <p>Current issue with provider only being able to cover certain areas meaning that not all members would be eligible for the service.</p> <p>At this time ML suggested this be parked due to other priorities with the Virtual dividend and return to when less busy.</p>	<p><i>TP/ML/JB</i></p> <p><i>MB</i></p>

Project LEO	<p>MB reminded the boards as to the process which Westmill has been invited to join with Project LEO which is involving communities, providing a wider benefit to these communities and flexibility services in local markets.</p> <p>Currently we are at the project scoping stage of identifying challenges related to the areas that Westmill is interested in supporting.</p> <p>After much discussion, Westmill group has pulled together a number of possible objectives and options to proceed with.</p> <p>At this stage there is nothing for the board to sign off on. MB and DP to move ahead and feed back to the boards when further input needed.</p>	MB/DP
Zero Petroleum (Possible demo facility on site)	<p>TP has been introduced by David Johnston MP to Paddy Lowe, co-founder of Zero Petroleum.</p> <p>Zero Petroleum is a start-up business that is seeking to make green synthetic fuels from (renewable) electricity, water and carbon dioxide.</p> <p>Paddy Lowe is keen to build a demo site on the Westmill site due to our combined wind and solar generation providing clean electricity.</p> <p>Adam has indicated that he would be happy for the co-ops to take discussions forward. The board were happy for talks to continue and to investigate the idea further.</p>	TP/ML
	End of Joint Meeting	