

# Meeting Minutes

<b>Doc No</b>	LN000046-COM-CA-MOM-0001	
<b>Meeting Title:</b>	<b>Viking Community Liaison Group</b>	
<b>Date/Time/Venue:</b>	20.04.21 at 7pm – Microsoft Teams	
<b>Issue Date:</b>	27.04.21	
<b>Attendees:</b>	Chair Andrew Archer, Tingwall, Whiteness & Weisdale Community CI	Vice-chair James Garrick, Sandsting & Aithsting Community CI
Alastair Cooper, Delting Community CI	John Priest, Sandsting & Aithsting Community CI	Neil Leask, Tingwall, Whiteness & Weisdale Community CI
Neil Grant, SIC development director	Theo Smith, SIC councillor – West	Moraig Lyall, SIC councillor – Central
Davie Sandison, SIC councillor – Central	Ian Scott, SIC councillor - Central	Chris Finnigan, SSEN Transmission
Fionan Doonan, SSEN Transmission	Sharon Powell, SSEN Transmission	Greg Clarke, SSEN Transmission
Aaron Priest, SSE Renewables	Jamie Watt, SSE Renewables	Ryan Maclean, RJ McLeod
Julie Graham, SSE Renewables	John Robertson (minutes), SSE Renewables	

Item	Agenda Item	Action	Due								
	<p><b>Welcome and introductions</b></p> <p>Group chair Andrew Archer presided and sought introductions from those present.</p>										
2.0	<b>Apologies</b> – SIC councillor Steven Coutts										
3.0	<b>Approval of previous minutes</b> - Formally approved.										
4.0	<p><b>Matters arising</b></p> <p>The chair asked whether a proposed meeting with crofters’ representatives had taken place. Aaron Priest confirmed that it had.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Previous actions</th> <th>Status</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. SSER to email the four community council chairs seeking their consent to the proposed change in CLG membership and role to double up as the Construction Liaison Committee (CLC).</td> <td>Completed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. SSER to discuss all planned outdoor access signage with SIC outdoor access officer before being finalised.</td> <td>Ongoing</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. SSER to consider publishing an article in its next newsletter explaining the measures and precautions contained in the Bird Protection Plan.</td> <td>Introductory article on bird protection included in Newsletter No.2, published on 2<sup>nd</sup> April.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Previous actions	Status	1. SSER to email the four community council chairs seeking their consent to the proposed change in CLG membership and role to double up as the Construction Liaison Committee (CLC).	Completed	2. SSER to discuss all planned outdoor access signage with SIC outdoor access officer before being finalised.	Ongoing	3. SSER to consider publishing an article in its next newsletter explaining the measures and precautions contained in the Bird Protection Plan.	Introductory article on bird protection included in Newsletter No.2, published on 2 <sup>nd</sup> April.		
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5.0 5.1	<p><b>Project updates from Viking/SSER and SSEN Transmission</b></p> <p><b>SSEN Transmission update on construction of the HVDC Converter Station and the HVDC cable link.</b></p> <p>Mr Doonan said good progress had been made over the past three months and activity was starting to ramp up. The workforce will increase to around 134 by July. Blasting to obtain stone for the platform had been completed, concrete pouring began last week for building foundations and steelwork has arrived for the building structures.</p> <p>The workforce hopes to move into the onsite welfare facility in May for the next three years. The HVDC contractor and the AC Substation contractor will then start to arrive to assemble the remainder of the buildings from late 2021 and into 2022.</p> <p>On the HVDC cable installation, Mr Finnigan said the contractor NKT had set up its base, pegged out the cable route and would start fencing along it in the next couple of weeks. Tulloch Developments has the contract for the cable installation. Marine survey works are due to start in May 2021. There will be liaison with stakeholders, including fishermen and the aquaculture sector, once it's known when the work will be within 12 nautical miles of Shetland and within Weisdale Voe. On land, the first duct installation is likely to be from the Kergord site to the Setter corner.</p> <p>Councillor Smith asked if staff would be staying overnight in the welfare facilities. Mr Doonan said it was for use by all the workers and office staff onsite but there would be no beds.</p> <p>John Priest asked about plans for digging up the A971 main road, which will cause disruption for the community. The chair asked if the traffic management plan for the works along the A971 was ready yet. Mr Finnigan said there was no date yet for the roadworks to start but there would be full information for the local community. The traffic management plan is nearly complete and SSEN T is working closely with the council to get the Section 96 agreement signed off to approve construction traffic on the public road, including arrangements to cover any damage caused. He said the intention was to minimise traffic on the Cott road and to avoid activity around school bus times etc. Most traffic will be kept within the cable corridor. The chair asked whether the plan was to do as much of the work as possible from the top access point in order to minimise additional traffic along the Cott Road. Mr Finnigan confirmed that this was the case.</p> <p>The chair asked Neil Grant (representing SIC planning) for an update on the request for information about risk of land beyond the wayleave path of the cable being sterilised for development due to the presence of EMF radiation etc. Mr Grant undertook to pursue an answer.</p> <p><b>SSER update on construction of the wind farm</b></p> <p>Mr Priest discussed a series of slides showing works in progress. He said Siemens BAM had been selected as the contractor to build the SSER AC substation at Upper Kergord and would start around August. The wind farm workforce will rise from 140 at the moment to around 300 by late 2021 as concrete works ramp up. Around one-third of the 70km of tracks have now been built to a standard for use by construction traffic. Excavation of turbine foundations is due to start in May.</p> <p>At the north end of the Mid Kame ridge a new junction is being formed onto the A970 at Hamarigrind with blasting starting on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> April when traffic</p>	NG	

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	<p>controls would be in place. Works are also starting at Scar Quilse to open up a compound and a road into the north-eastern section of the wind farm.</p> <p>The new Sandwater road would be open to the public from late 2023 or early 2024. Currently, works traffic from SSEN Transmission, SSER and their contractors are using the new road instead of the public road. The road cutting through the hill is being benched and will be reinstated with peat from June.</p> <p>Borrow pits above Flamister and Scalla Field are providing rock for the hill tracks with many of the excavators and dump trucks being supplied and operated by local contractors.</p> <p>The 140-strong workforce on the wind farm is split roughly 50/50 between locally resident and travelling workers. To date, around £7.6m has been spent in the local supply chain with 18 local contractors engaged and 19 other service suppliers plus accommodation providers.</p> <p>Julie Graham provided an update on the grants, administered by Shetland Community Benefit Fund with 26 applications in the first month of which 4 had been approved so far.</p> <p>Vice-chair James Garrick asked how growth would be encouraged on the tops of the hill where peat was being reinstated. Mr Priest said that in areas where there was turf it would be re-laid. In areas that have suffered substantial erosion previously, with no surface vegetation present, there would be a programme of hydroseeding. Ryan Maclean said a specific seeding mix would be used, as set down in the peat management plan. Talks were taking place with local contractors about reinstatement.</p> <p>Neil Leask said peat had to be kept moist to retain the carbon and asked what was being done to stop it drying out while being stockpiled. Mr Maclean said the peat was stored for as little time as possible and taken to restoration areas quickly. Storing and moving it a second time was not good for the peat so the aim was to avoid stockpiling unless necessary.</p> <p>Councillor Moraig Lyall asked about the recent peat slip at Scalla Field. Mr Priest said excavated turf for reinstatement was piled at the side of the road and slipped down the hill, taking some of the surface material with it. It was a relatively short distance and within the work corridor where more digging will take place anyway to bring the road down to the required level. The slipped material sits in the centre of an area of search for a borrow pit where exploratory drilling will take place. A tidy-up was underway, he said.</p> <p>The chair said SSER had been given permission to build the wind farm on the condition that it complied with all the published promises and policies. There is a huge document on peat management which states that peat should be stored where there is minimal risk of a peat slide. The area where the slide occurred was marked as medium or high risk and stacking should be avoided. What had gone wrong? He said residents at Cott had been in touch before to raise their worries about the risk of peat slides on the hill above them. People would be rightly concerned if SSE were not following their own published safety procedures. In reply, Mr Priest said he expected details of the incident to feature in the next Planning Monitoring Officer report, which would be made public.</p> <p>Mr Leask said SSER should be more proactive to avoid bad management like this where such incidents shouldn't be happening in good, dry weather.</p> <p>The chair asked SSEN T to provide a map of the cable route to help the group understand where was being referred to. Mr Finnigan agreed to share it with the CLG.</p>	CF	

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6.0	<p><b>Questions from community council representatives</b></p> <p>Five formal questions were submitted in advance via Tingwall, Whiteness &amp; Weisdale Community Council and two further issues were intimated for discussion on the night, in addition to the question about the Scalla Field peat/turf slip raised above.</p> <p><b>1. Is everybody still being COVID tested before travel and are people being temperature tested at the start of every shift?</b></p> <p>On behalf of both projects, Greg Clarke said there had been no change to policy. Everybody is tested pre-departure to Shetland and temperature testing is applied each time someone arrives on site. Updated government guidance would be reviewed and any changes to the approach would be communicated to the CLG. He thought compliance within the workforce had been excellent. Mr Maclean said the local workforce had been pleased to be part of the testing regime too.</p> <p><b>2. In order to make a proposal on the size of the decommissioning bond, SSE must have made decisions about what will be left in place. What will be left in the ground that is man-made? (e.g. cables, pipes, terram).</b></p> <p>Mr Priest said all aspects of decommissioning were governed by a detailed SEPA and SNH-approved Site Decommissioning, Restoration and Aftercare Strategy (SDRAS), which can be found on the SIC planning portal as well as the Viking Energy website. Ultimately, what is eventually left in the ground would be decided by the detailed plan that has to be produced around three years before the end of the project. The value of the guarantee and the details surrounding it are founded on the SDRAS and, once set, the guarantee will be subject to five-yearly review. It was agreed to send a link to the document to the CLG. [Link <a href="#">here</a> and scroll to 6<sup>th</sup> Dec 2019]</p> <p>Mr Leask asked if that meant it wouldn't be known what infrastructure was to remain in place until three years before the end, to which Mr Priest replied that the strategy sets out what would typically be removed and the detailed plan would set out what was to be left and taken away. The financial guarantee from SSE will be put in place to cover everything that is in the strategy at the moment.</p> <p><b>3. What is the status of the decommissioning bond?</b></p> <p>Mr Priest said initial proposals for a value and a mechanism for a decommissioning guarantee were provided to the SIC towards the end of 2019 and discussions have continued since. SSER is aware that the SIC has taken independent expert advice, as has SSER. An SSER report will be ready soon and is expected to be shared with the SIC.</p> <p>Guarantees are required as standard on all SSE projects. Viking is expected to go into production in 2024 with a 25-year consent, so three</p>	AP	

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	<p>years prior to 2049 would see a process to finalise the decommissioning plan and finalise the financial guarantee which underpins it.</p> <p>Both SIC and SSER are keen to see an agreement in place, he said, but it was a moving picture so values and circumstances could change over the years, as could what requires to be removed from site.</p> <p>Mr Grant added that the SIC was taking some further advice and had looked at guarantees provided for other wind farms. He was hopeful that something acceptable – and which protects the community – would be put in place as soon as possible.</p> <p><b>4. What work is now happening on the weekends that are supposed to be quiet? Which weekends are these?</b></p> <p>Every second weekend is the rest period when all major works are suspended. Mr Maclean said the next break was this coming weekend with RJ McLeod's workforce away on chartered flights to Inverness and Edinburgh. A skeleton staffing arrangement would be in place of 5-8 people working around offices, signage and possibly one excavator working. He said it was a massive benefit to the staff to get a break. These last from Thursday afternoon to Monday morning.</p> <p>Councillor Davie Sandison asked if it was likely there would be a request to extend this pattern beyond the four-month temporary permission for the remainder of the project. Mr Maclean said it worked well for RJ McLeod to maximise work and downtime so he would like to see it continue.</p> <p>John Priest asked if it would possible to work seven days a week when it comes to digging up the A971 and laying the HVDC cable in order to keep the disruption to West Side road users as short as possible. Mr Finnigan of SSEN Transmission said he shared the desire to get the work done as quickly as possible and would be making every effort to do that.</p> <p>Mr Grant asked if the monitoring for noise and nuisance during the temporary extended working hours was picking up anything untoward. Mr Priest said he wasn't aware of any issues as the work was moving further from areas of population and into the hills. The chair said some residents in Setter had told him it was not as noisy now as it had been.</p> <p>Councillor Lyall remarked that she had met a cement mixer lorry on a Sunday and wondered why it was working on a closed weekend. Mr Doonan said SSEN Transmission had approval to work seven days a week with hours reduced slightly at weekends in line with the approval from SIC.</p> <p><b>5. Does SWEAG have an independent chair yet?</b></p> <p>Mr Priest said an independent chair had been nominated at the last meeting in December but he had subsequently declined. SWEAG members had been written to recently with a view to nominations by the end of April. The next meeting is face-to-face in Shetland in July and he hoped a chair would be in place before then. Failing that, they would try again in July.</p>		

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	<p>The CLG chair said people might be surprised that the temporary SWEAG chair was from SSE rather than the SIC or another organisation. Mr Priest said it was up to the group to appoint a chair. SSE was merely chairing in the meantime to run meetings, take minutes and set out agendas.</p> <p><b>Added questions</b></p> <p><b>6. An issue with dust coming off the access tracks has been reported to the planning enforcement officer. Could you give an update on plans to minimise nuisance to people and the landscape?</b></p> <p>Mr Priest said a response would be going to the planning enforcement officer shortly. He said dust mitigation was an expected measure, but the early very dry conditions had meant such measures were having to be brought forward earlier than had been planned for. To tackle it a 600-metre perforated hose has been deployed as a sprinkler system along the new Sandwater road and a similar one 250m long for the Kergord access track. RJ McLeod has also sourced two new tractor-and-bowser units.</p> <p>Mr Maclean said site health and safety rules required that the towed units have secondary braking systems, which not many bowsers have. Suitable equipment is being brought up from south. He said he had been quite surprised by the early occurrence and levels of dust on certain parts of the site. A speed test showed that staying within the 15mph site speed limit minimised dust being raised. Tracking devices are being deployed for all HGVs that can go over 15mph, including concrete mixer trucks that come to site. These can be monitored remotely.</p> <p>Mr Leask said that, again, this was reactive rather than proactive and should have been predicted. SSER had been caught out with wet weather flooding last year and now this. He said it was poor that SSER had to wait until there was a complaint before anything was done. Mr Priest said he would convey that view back to the project team.</p> <p><b>7. From the chair: The Sandwater road junction looks a bit of a mess with peat and white sheeting. What are the plans to tidy things up?</b></p> <p>Mr Maclean said talks were taking place with an experienced local contractor who does a lot of seeding and can also carry out reinstatement along the Sandwater road. This would possibly be in June.</p>	AP	
7.0	<b>Any other business</b> – no items raised		
8.0	<p><b>Date and time of next meeting</b> – members agreed to meet on Tues 20<sup>th</sup> July 2021 at 7pm.</p> <p>The meeting ended at 8.33pm.</p>	JR send invitations	