

Meeting Minutes

Doc No	LN000046-COM-CA-MOM-0009 - Viking CLG minutes 19/04/22	
Meeting Title:	Viking Community Liaison Group	
Date/Time/Venue:	19/04/22 at 7pm – Microsoft Teams	
Issue Date:	10/05/22	
Attendees:	Chair Andrew Archer, Tingwall, Whiteness & Weisdale Community CI	Vice-chair James Garrick, Sandsting & Aithsting CC
Willie Simpson, Nesting & Lunnasting CC	John Priest, Sandsting & Aithsting CC	Alastair Cooper, Delting CC
Neil Grant, SIC director of Development Services	John Douglas, SSEN Transmission	Sharon Powell, SSEN Transmission
Gary Tait, SSEN Transmission	Aaron Priest, SSE Renewables	Carolyn Wilson, SSE Renewables
Julie Graham, SSER	Aimi Munro, SSE Renewables	Pauline McGinty, SSE Renewables
John Robertson (minutes), SSER	Media – Ryan Taylor, Shetland Times	

Item	Agenda Item	Action	Due			
1.0	Welcome and introductions Group chair Andrew Archer presided.					
2.0	Apologies – from councillors Moraig Lyall and Neil Leask					
3.0	Approval of previous minutes - Formally approved.					
4.0	Matters arising					
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Previous actions</th> <th>Status</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>None</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Previous actions	Status	None		
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5.0	<p><u>Project update presentations by Viking/SSER and SSEN Transmission</u></p> <p>SSEN Transmission update on construction of the HVDC Converter Station</p> <p>SSEN T began with a report from Gary Tait. It is the 20th month of the project and work is on programme and progressing well with no serious incidents. Cladding on the main converter works is complete with some minor flashing finishes ongoing. Windows and doors are due to be fitted in the near future. The AC Filter Hall has its cladding completed and is having ventilation fitted.</p> <p>Hitachi Energy started in February with installation of valve cooling pipework and is focusing on fans for the valve chiller area. They are</p>					

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	<p>preparing for transformer deliveries in May with some temporary works to the public roads and completion of a laydown area close to site where the transformers will be transferred to a different vehicle to come up the Kergord Access Track. NKT came to site in April to begin cable-pulling works.</p> <p>John Douglas is the project manager for the land cable installation. He said all the duct installation and joint bay construction is complete. Four out of 16 cables are now installed, having started at the converter station and working down to the landfall at Weisdale Voe. Cable jointing will continue through May and June. A fibre optic cable will be installed in September.</p> <p>On the main A971 road, final reinstatement works are planned for August and September.</p> <p>Offshore, the boulder clearance from the cable route is about 80 per cent complete. The MV Sima is clearing out-of-service cables from the seabed. Cable laying is due to start on 6th June off Caithness using the vessel NKT Victoria. Trenching work is due to start in late July using the vessel Grand Canyon III.</p> <p>The chair asked when cable-laying would happen in Weisdale Voe. SSENT said it was due to be in 2023 but Mr Douglas would check. There will be liaison events to keep inshore boats, fishermen and others informed.</p> <p>John Priest asked if the A971 might be completed early, removing the need for traffic lights all summer. Mr Douglas said the contractors NKT and sub-contractor Tulloch Developments had often improved on their due completion dates but there was no guarantee that the date could be brought forward. Only the north-bound lane will be resurfaced.</p> <p>SSER update on construction of the wind farm</p> <p>Aaron Priest discussed a series of slides showing works in progress. He said wind farm construction was about halfway through. About 300 people are expected to be on site from May on the wind farm side of the works. The track network is largely complete except for capping and verge reinstatement.</p> <p>Of the 103 turbine bases, 36 have had concrete poured. Cable trenching is taking place with cable drums being deployed around the site ready to be laid in the trenches which will be backfilled and the peat reinstated. Turbine components will start arriving in January 2023. The total direct spend with the local supply chain is approaching £20 million involving 55 local contractors and suppliers.</p> <p>The Mid Kame area is expected to become very busy in the coming months and to be the first part of the site to be finished.</p> <p>SSER's four grid transformer halls will receive their transformers over the summer on four large indivisible loads. There will be public notifications ahead of them arriving on site.</p>	<p>JD to check info</p>	

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	<p>Julie Graham said that in March there was a successful rollout of Science, Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM) activities for schools. Forty-one students from four different schools took part in designing a virtual wind farm using specialist software from 3D Webtech and did a presentation about its viability.</p> <p>Mr Priest and Ms Graham said financial support from SSER to local clubs had reached £23,500 while community benefit fund grants to 78 projects had been worth almost £400,000.</p> <p>Neil Grant asked about changes to proposed works at Scord of Sound. Mr Priest said discussions were still taking place but potentially the track and borrow pit in the area might not go ahead and the area previously excavated would be reinstated. There are no plans now to use the A971 for the delivery of turbine components.</p>		
6.0	<p>Questions from community council representatives</p> <p>Questions were submitted in advance via community councils and others were added on the night.</p> <p>1. Why is traffic associated with the project still using the B9075 rather than the new Sandwater relief road? We have reports from residents that even HGVs are still using the old road.</p> <p>Mr Priest said SSER/Viking prohibited all wind farm vehicles over 3.5 tonnes using the old Sandwater road but smaller vehicles taking people to and from work etc could use it. This had been made clear to contractors.</p> <p>The chair said it was frustrating for local residents meeting these small vehicles which could use the new road and avoid the stretch from the Halfway House to the Setter corner.</p> <p>For SSEN Transmission, Mr Douglas and Mr Tait said it had permission to use the B9075 as far as Setter corner for construction traffic over 3.5t for cable works. For some smaller vehicles it was quite harsh on them to use the new construction road due to its rough surface. However, relaxation of covid restrictions now meant that more people were travelling by worker buses, which would reduce traffic on the public road.</p> <p>2. What drugs testing of project workers takes place? Does this apply to all contractors?</p> <p>Mr Tait said BAM Nuttall undertakes regular drug and alcohol testing at the Kergord site, sometimes testing a sample of the workforce but also all of the workforce. There is a zero-tolerance policy. Mr Priest said testing was carried out every three months by random selection of employees. Between times, testers are brought in to do additional random testing. Also, if there are any suspicions, people are tested. Every month there are sweeps by Dogs Against Drugs. On Loganair charter flights the workers are subject to the same tests that passengers on scheduled flights undergo.</p>		

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	<p>3. Some of the solar panels associated with traffic monitoring equipment have not survived the winter gales. Does this mean there will be no record of traffic where this has happened?</p> <p>Mr Priest said all the monitors had battery backups which allow them to function and maintain ongoing traffic counting records.</p> <p>4. Has the RSPB been asked if they approve of the extensive use of bird distractors in the wind farm area? Also, will blasting be allowed to continue during the nesting season?</p> <p>Mr Priest said NatureScot and the RSPB were aware of the distractors. They are used on lots of construction sites and encourage the birds to nest outside of working areas. Where birds do nest in the path of construction, work can be delayed until nesting is over. Screening and micro-siting can also be used. There were numerous cases last year where nesting birds meant works had to be diverted elsewhere until chicks had fledged. The Ecological Clerks of Works have the powers to stop works. On blasting, all blasts are fully monitored and set well within statutory limits for noise and disturbance. All birds are continually monitored on site and there is no noticeable effect from blasting or any of the ongoing construction work.</p> <p>5. Several people have said to us that simply tipping the excavated peat into the degraded areas and sticking the turves on top does not count as restoration. How long will it be before the success or failure of this strategy will be known?</p> <p>Mr Priest said placing the peat into bare and eroding peat flats was only phase one in a longer-term process. Phase Two is due to commence this year using a local business to knit these areas into the surrounding landscape. Eventually there will be further work to control and manage hydrology and drainage in the area to seek to create long-term conditions to encourage restoration of blanket bog. There will be longer-term monitoring beyond the commissioning of the wind farm with the outcomes of that being reported to the Shetland Windfarm Environmental Advisory Group (SWEAG). Ultimately all the restoration areas will be protected by stock-proof fencing. He stressed that this was different to verge reinstatement which involves tidying up along the sides of the road, making sure there is a professional finish to everything.</p> <p>6. People out walking on the site towards Aith have been concerned about the amount of litter they are seeing. This appears to be discarded wrappings of various types. When will this be cleared up?</p> <p>Mr Priest said he was disappointed if anybody was finding litter. Any complaints would be taken seriously. There is an ethos instilled in everybody on site to See it. Sort it. Report it. At toolbox talks everybody is encouraged to be aware of their responsibilities. SSER insists that people contain their rubbish and bring it back to the compound for disposal. Ultimately, in a place as windy as Shetland, items can become loose and airborne and swept away. But SSER would redouble its efforts to maintain a litter-free site. There are also plans to take part in the Voar Redd-Up along the road in the Central Mainland.</p>		

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	<p>The chair said he would tell the person who had complained that they should report specific incidences to Mr Priest at Viking Wind Farm.</p> <p>7. What measures have been taken to improve driving behaviour of contractors using the B9075 between Setter and Weisdale (following a recent incident)?</p> <p>Mr Douglas said NKT held regular toolbox talks on driver behaviour and had invited the police and council representatives to present a driver safety awareness campaign.</p> <p>The chair said the person who raised the matter was happy that action had been taken.</p> <p>8. Please can you clarify why the traffic management plan for the HVDC project did not apply to cable deliveries to Setter when the plan covers the whole route of the HVDC cable from Cott to Kergord? The chair added that he was slightly disappointed that it seemed what was convenient for SSEN Transmission was more important than the disturbance to local people.</p> <p>Mr Douglas said the cable works were being done under Permitted Development rights, which don't require planning permission. The chair said it seemed strange that SSEN T could say it didn't have to adhere to the traffic management plan, when the plan had been submitted to and approved by SIC. Mr Grant said that it was correct that the council could not enforce the traffic management plan, but that it did expect SSE to adhere to it.</p> <p>Mr Douglas said that, on the issue of disturbance, it was about trying to strike a balance to minimise disruption for all. When concerns were raised they did bring forward the delivery time for some cable drums to make sure that the transportation was done earlier.</p> <p>9. A resident from Setter said a trailer carrying a cable reel slipped off the edge of the track yesterday. How are the reels attached to the trailer? If this happened behind the houses at Setter or Kergord and the reel came off the trailer they would roll down into the houses with obviously fairly catastrophic consequences. What measures are in place to ensure this doesn't happen?</p> <p>Mr Douglas said the drums were secured to the trailer with a mechanical locking pin which is in place for the transporting of the cables and the installation. The trailers are designed for these activities and the cable drum remains securely fixed to the trailer. There is an investigation taking place and the outcome is awaited from the contractor.</p>		
7.0	Any other business – no items raised		

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8.0	<p>Date and time of next meeting – members agreed to meet on Tues 19th July 2022 at 7pm. It is hoped that this can be a physical meeting rather than confined to Microsoft Teams.</p> <p>The chair thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 8.23pm.</p>		