

Arncroach & Carnbee CDT
Meeting with Representatives of West Coast Energy
Inn at Lathones
5pm on 26th October 2011

Present

Jonathan Cawley, West Coast Energy

Mark Cummings, Invicta

Sam Parsons, Arncroach & Carnbee Community Development Trust

Tom Crozier, Arncroach & Carnbee Community Development Trust

Grahame Rogers, Arncroach & Carnbee Community Development Trust

Background

The public relations company Invicta has been retained by West Coast Energy.

West Coast Energy seeks to develop a five (5) turbine wind generation development at Lingo Farm.

Of the five turbines, two will be sited within the boundary of Carnbee & Arncroach CC area with the other three within the Dunino & Boarhills CC area. Other areas that may be affected due to geographical proximity are Largoward and Cameron.

Largoward is not currently represented by a CC.

Cameron CC has intimated that it will not engage with West Coast Energy at this time.

Purpose of Meeting

West Coast Energy is on the point of submitting a planning application.

Mark Cummings on behalf of the company represented that WCE is an ethical organisation and that it seeks to fully engage with the communities that may be affected by this development.

West Coast Energy is seeking to establish a Community Liaison Group comprising all interested community groups within the affected area.

Meeting Notes

Mark explained that there is no legal requirement for developers to offer affected communities any financial community benefit. However WCE believe it is their duty to do so.

He described the nature of the community engagement that the company had undertaken in the Highlands and Angus areas. Closer to home, he described the process and outcomes of the

Community Liaison Forum established in the Kennoway area to deal with the potential community benefits flowing from WCE's proposed development at Devonwood.

It was emphasised that a Community Liaison Forum's exclusive concern was to obtain the best community benefit possible for their 'constituents'. The formation of a CLF and any outcomes would not factor into the planning application and would not benefit the developer's cause.

On behalf of the company Mark explained that they are prepared to offer the communities the option to own 50% of one of the turbines. That is the communities would own 10% of the development with WCE owning the remaining 90%.

WCE would pay all up-front development and installation costs. At this point it is estimated that a 10% share in the development would be costed at circa £1.5 million.

The 'loan' from WCE would be paid back over 10 - 12 years, from the net operational profits.

After that time a full 10% of the profits (net) would come to the communities for the lifetime of the operation.

Should WCE divest themselves of the site, there is a binding commitment that a new owner will honour any existing partnership arrangements. This will be underwritten in law at Fife Council insistence.

Mark confirmed that the offer was the most generous made by WCE thus far. He reiterated that it was not a form of bribe and in any event could never influence the planning application. Rather, it was evidence of WCE being an ethical enterprise with proven ethical credentials.

WCE would only sustain this offer where there was a credible 'organisation' in place who the company could have faith in as appropriate business partners. That is, WCE could not in truth make such a commitment where the communities had not demonstrated that the appropriate mechanisms would be in place to manage this form of community benefit.

Where it was assessed that the community did not want to engage in this way, the company would still want to offer a community benefit. The potential however is that it would not be as financially attractive and would be based on £?? against generated output.

Where there is no local forum, the Scottish Communities Benefits Trust can manage any benefit on the community's behalf.

Mark sought our cooperation in forming and being part of a local Community Benefits Forum.

Our Response

In keeping with earlier pronouncements we confirmed that the CDT would want to be involved with any CLF that was established.

We confirmed the CDT position that it was appropriate for us, on behalf of our community, to explore all options and discount none.

That is: our position on this particular development remains neutral.

We believe that it is important, regardless of the arguments for and against wind generation developments, to secure the most appropriate outcome for our community in the event that planning permission be granted.

To that end we agreed that Arncroach & Carnbee CDT would participate in a CLF that was solely concerned with securing the most appropriate and beneficial outcome for our community.

As CDT representatives we will not participate in a forum that seeks to either support or oppose the development or planning application.

The meeting concluded at 5.50pm

Subsequent to this meeting Sam, Grahame and Tom attended the open meeting at 7.30pm.

Jonathan and Mark reiterated much of what is detailed above. The outcome of the meeting was that those present agreed to the formation of a local Liaison Group comprising local interest groups.

The group will have an independent Chair, who has been identified and agreed at the meeting.

Cameron and Largoward were not represented at the meeting. However it was the stated view of those present that we should continue to engage with these communities to encourage their future involvement.

Tom Crozier

26th October 2011.