

MEETING FOR SCHOOL BUILDING, ELPHIN

2ND December 09

Present:

Jan & Brian, James, Dave, Stephen, Rosie & Will, Simon & Lynn, Russell & Bridie, Tim & Wendy

Speakers: Alistair MacAskill, Stephan Lockhart, Clive Sheppard

Apologies:

Kay & Stuart, Kenny & Mrs Milne, Simon & Seu

Alistair spoke for Assynt Foundation, explaining that the work needed was on the toilets, exterior wall, ridging, 20 M guttering, odd slates; classroom window needs resealing and repair.

3-5K to do repairs, 10K max - can be met as part of renewable project/village hall grants

AF are stretched for next year on GC Lodge.

Legal costs of £1250 to be met immediately.

25 year lease offered from Highland Council. £1 a year rent.

If AF kept lease, profit would go to them for financial liability.

Stephan Lockhart of Assynt Renewables talked about community energy. Wind Power depends on how fast it blows. Double the speed = 8 X the energy.

6kW turbine efficiency is:

25mph - 10%

15 - 17 mph - 35%

Below 12 mph - 45%

No wind - 20%

Predict £1350 income a year

From April next year, there will be a feed-in tariff which ***could amount to £3600*** with a 10% on top for production.

And/or photovoltaic solar panels with an incentive feed-in tariff of 36p per kW, eg 4 kW panels give £1400 a year

Pqwer back into the grid - only if under 11kW generated.

Maintenance of £500 a year for a wind turbine, no maintenance costs for photovoltaic panels

aesthetics...wind turbine only 8M high

feasibility...3% de-escalator on generated income per annum

HEATING FOR BUILDING: a must

Options: wood chip or pellet (note renewable obligation certificates)

GRANTS

*Community Energy Scotland. Building needs to be as efficient as possible, so would need insulating **throughout**.*

CLIVE ON SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

Eday on Orkney have a fine example, wind turbine produces £4000 profit as power is fed back in, **also income from cafe there during summer**

Highlands & Islands largest age group is 50s to 80s. Need to get the kids interested. Small businesses/local enterprises too.

Need to lift profile of village and engage the community.

Lease of 25 years is ample and guaranteed.

Land it sits on? No problem. Get right of access written into lease.

Is the community ready? Some reservations. About 75% of folk are fairly new to area.

People need to get involved straight away. Coordination is difficult, but e-mail useful. Flyers too. Ullapool News, Assynt News, etc.

Need a committee minm 5.

Condition of building needs to be assessed. *The state the building is in when we take on the lease will be the state it needs to be in when [if] building reverts to Highland Council.*

Community needs a meeting place! This offers a strong case.

Need to get a constituted group formed.

Expenses include public liability An Talla Solais arts in Ullapool have an umbrella scheme with Highland Council

Note: One event in Lochinver raised £1500 profit recently!

Later, Could raise money from rooms. Central room for shows, functions, for internet, historical archive, winter events, camping in summer, nursery facility, doctor/vet, etc., rent to business visitors, artists, education use.

Needs someone to open & shut it. Subsidise rooms to encourage use.

NOONE BELIEVED IT SHOULD GO ON THE OPEN MARKET!

Alistair will ask AF if we can have **3 months** to sort out a committee, plans, etc. **as the timetable so far has been rushed and we have a lot to consider and research before taking on the lease.**

A fear around fund-raising expressed, but good intentions.

Need to collectively decide on priorities. Involve Councillors from Highland, they have a *discretionary fund* and may help.

Get a letter of support from Assynt Commiunity Council .

Plea on *no meeting place!*

Don't forget Awards For All Lottery Funding for small community ventures.

Other issues:

The more self-sustaining we can be, the more likely the community will survive in the future.

Form-filling help?...Leader project/Community energy Scotland will help
Simon offered legal help, conveyancing, constitution, admin of company, etc.

Clive: difficult/illegal to trade as a charity. No Trading subsidiary option.
Can use it only as a fund-raising base.

Necessary to form a Ltd Company, limited by guarantee. £55 to register.

This means each committee member would only be liable for one pound - £1 - in the event of everything going wrong.

Some grants will allow labour costs to be offset as match funding.

There are opportunities for courses on social enterprise, Clive left 2 booklets on these.

Alistair will report to AF then HC. ***He, Clive and Stephan then left, followed by Stephen, James and Dave.***

A Meeting followed to set up **a steering group** initially, to let people

know: **Brian, Jan, Rosie, Will, Simon, Lynn, Bridie, Russell**

Connect village by flyers (Brian), circulated by Jan & Brian. Simon will investigate legal matters and contact John Thurso (MP), Rosie will do a flyer on visiting speakers info, Jan follow up Community education (Fran), Bridie to contact George Farlow.

All agreed that our emphasis is to try and include everyone, that proposals should enhance and not compete with what exists here already, ie co-operation and encouragement not competition.

NEXT MEETING FOR STEERING GROUP IS 16TH DECEMBER at the school.

....Followed by a public meeting in January, explaining constitution, limited company, etc.

