

Northumberland Renewable Energy Group
Minutes of meeting held at County Hall, Morpeth
20 July 2005

Attendees

Alan Wann (Northumberland County Council) – Chair (AWa)
Clive Fagg (Northumberland County Council)
Mark Burrows (Business Link)
Stephen Calvert (EST)
Neil Harrison (Northwoods)
Colin MacDonald (TADEA)
Willie MacFarlane
Cameron Scott (Tynedale District Council) (CSc)
Hugh Clear Hill (Northumberland County Council)
Caroline Stewart (NSP) (CSt)
Trevor Walker (Castle Morpeth Borough Council)
Nikki Smith (North Energy Associates)
Nigel Moore (AMEC Border Wind)
Paul Fisher (University of Newcastle)
Adrian Wilson (NaREC) (AWi)
Steve Revell (Alnwick District Council)

1. Apologies

David Pike (Transco Awards)
Mervyn Anthony (REALL)
Jill Antrobus (Blyth Valley BC)
Peter Samson (North Pennines AONB)
Richard Pow (Forestry Commission)

2. Minutes of meeting held on 14/04/05 at Cragside, Rothbury

The minutes were accepted as a true record.

3. Matters arising

Stephen Calvert has tried to raise the issue of Clear Skies funding in Northumberland at a national level but has not been able to get a response.

Partners requested an update on the Biomass Business Case. *Subsequent to the meeting CF has spoken to Chris Maxwell at EIF. The Business Case has been agreed by the Biomass Implementation Group and EIF are working with OneNE to identify potential funding packages.* CM will keep the group informed of progress.

Action: CM

CF has been asked to attend the OneNE sub-regional programme network.

Action: CF & CSt

4. Northumberland Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Strategy

CF gave an update of work currently undertaken in role as Energy Executive. It was agreed that CF should prepare the Commissioning Framework for the NSP which draws on the actions identified in the NREG Action Plan. The Action Plan would be circulated after the meeting for comments. This was followed by a round the table sessions. The update and actions have are tabled in the appendix.

Action: CF

NS gave feedback on the launch of the Tynedale Renewable Energy Trail earlier this week at Falstone. This was attended by about 30 people and the trail and leaflet were very positively received. NS said that this was the completion of phase 1 and that phase 2 included the identification of a further 6 sites together with funding.

PF informed the group of a New Energy centre at the University of Newcastle. This will co-ordinate activity in renewable energy and act as a focus for future energy research.

5. Presentations

Biomass Business Case

TW gave a presentation on the hydro project which forms part of the Coast, Castle and Woodlands project on the River Wansbeck.

There followed a discussion on the presentation. This focussed on the conflicting advice between clearing waterways to assist fish migration and the potential for hydro to produce energy. HCH is to set up an initial meeting between interested parties to discuss this issue.

AW thanked Trevor for the presentation and asked that the group be kept informed of progress. A copy of the presentation is available from CF.

Action: HCH

South East Northumberland Woodfuel Study

NH gave a presentation on the above report commissioned by NSP.

It was agreed that CF would hold a meeting to develop the proposal for capital funding in 2006/07 from the NSP. This meeting would also include a discussion on how to develop the biomass industry and to ensure that projects are developed within Northumberland.

AW thanked Neil for the presentation. A copy of the presentation is available from CF.

Action: CF/NH/NS

6. NaREC update

NaREC have now completed the building and commissioning work associated with the electric lab and the PV centre at NaREC in Blyth. This includes the installation of a number of test installations. It was agreed that the next NREG meeting would be at NaREC and include a site visit.

Action: CF / AWi

WM said that grid connection for renewables is still an issue in Northumberland and asked whether NaREC could look at this issue, in particular on how to reduce costs.

Action: AWi

7. NE Region Renewables Sector Update

SC said that progress was being made on the Secretariat and it is likely that this will be advertised in September. SCt also mentioned that there would be an Energy Forum on 21 October – more details to follow. The North East HECA report has been published – copies are available electronically from CF.

Action: SC

8. Comments and Updates not included in item 4

AW wished to pass on NREGs congratulations to Econnect on their 10th anniversary earlier this month.

AW also said that National Trust were investigating the potential of combining public art and renewable energy at Cragside. AW to keep group informed

Action: AW

9. Date & time of next meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on 17 October 2005 at NaREC in Blyth. This will include a site visit to the NaREC facilities. **The meeting should therefore start at 13:00.**

Appendix – Partnership Update in Item 4

Northumberland Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency Strategy

(Numbers and italics refer to Action Points in the NREEES Action Plan)

1.	OVERVIEW
1.1.2	<i>Create a well designed NREEES dedicated web site...</i> Initial website is live at www.northumberlandenergy.co.uk It is anticipated that the project map and database and a section on frequently asked questions will be completed before the next NREG meeting. It was suggested that this should draw on existing work already undertaken.
1.1.4	<i>Develop RE projects within Northumberland schools from pilots to wider programmes</i> HCH – A Strategic Environmental Assessment has been undertaken of the Schools for the Future project and this includes reference to the inclusion of energy CF – An initial meeting has taken place and schools seem keen to explore opportunities
1.2.1	<i>Develop good practice projects</i> SR – Rivergreen development are looking to include RE&EE in a new development. Tynedale RE trail was launched on 18 July 2005
1.3.1	<i>Training analysis – skills support & development for Level 2+ and Level 5+</i> NH – Bid to LSC for training in SRC has been successful - Ignite programme has exceeded targets
1.3.2.	<i>Training provision – skills support & development for Level 2+ and Level 5+</i> CF – Bid for a regional COVE in sustainable energy is being developed in partnership with Tees Valley with a deadline of November 2005. Should seek capital funding from NSP
1.5.1	<i>Continue to drive forward & co-ordinate NREEES strategy delivery</i> CF to submit bid to NSP for continued funding
1.5.2	<i>Encourage innovative developments which help deliver regeneration</i> Clear Skies bid for hydro at Morpeth was unsuccessful but project will be taken forward through the Castles, Woods and Woods project.
1.5.3	<i>Promote the NREEES approach at a regional, national and international level</i> AW – Linking with regional push on renewables to promote NE, in particular as a priority with the Newcastle Science City Region. CF to co-ordinate consultation on draft NREEES Action Plan
2.	DOMESTIC
2.1.1	<i>LPAs to adopt a positive planning approach...</i> HCH – Building design guidance for NNPA includes sustainability - Working with Districts on development of LDFs
2.1.5	<i>Identify private sector champions ...</i> AW – A number of projects have been nominated for Transco awards
2.1.7	<i>Research and develop NaREC</i> AW – Test labs will soon be operational to operationally test domestic and micro renewables.
2.2.5	<i>Target fuel poor to make homes more thermally efficient</i> CSt – Warmzone is developing an strategic affordable warmth strategy for the County
3.	INDUSTRY
3.1.1	<i>Continue to support Business Link PBA</i> MB – 2 SMEs and 2 large businesses have been identified as having potential for embedded wind turbines
3.1.5	<i>Engage Northumberland companies to promote RE</i> MB – Continuing discussions on conclusions of SE Northumberland Wind Study. SR – Entering dialogue with business clubs and associations
3.2.1	<i>Integrate up-to-date RE&EE issues into Business Link advice and training</i> MB – Business advisors are able to give generic advise

4.	<i>WIND</i>
4.1.1	<i>Use the website to produce balanced information</i> CF – Producing a list of FAQs to be published on website.
4.2.1	<i>Develop a portfolio of local RE projects</i> SR – Develop links between Market Towns Initiative and NREG as source of long term income stream
6.	<i>BIOMASS</i>
6.1.1	<i>Encourage demonstration projects in Northumberland</i> CF – To arrange a task group to explore potential content of proposal to NSP Commissioning Framework.
6.1.5	<i>Investigate potential of... biomass resources</i> NH – ‘Woodfuel Resources in SE Northumberland’ study will be available mid-August. It determines the available timber resource within South East Northumberland and the options available for its cost-effective utilisation in woodfuel markets.
	<i>Investigate potential of agricultural waste biomass resources</i> WMac – Gave an update on progress of the Cockle Park Farm concept. Application to be made to Commissioning Framework for NSP to assist in making the business case for OneNE bid.
7.	<i>ALTERNATIVE ENERGY</i>
7.1.4	<i>Develop biofuels business in the County</i> CSc – Tynedale and National Park have signed up to use biofuels on their fleets
7.5.1	<i>Identify potential public and private sector projects</i> MB – Recognise work undertaken by MSD to reduce energy use