



## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Held at 6pm on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Via Zoom

8 members were present, including four directors:

Directors: Caroline Jackson, Alan Marsden, Gill Fenna, Anne Chapman

Other Members: Dave Brookes, Simon Gershon, Hugh Kidd, Frank Ledwith,

Also present: James Sommerville (Green Rose CIC)

The meeting was chaired by Gill Fenna.

The accounts and report were presented by Anne Chapman

Questions: the accounts show £20K in cash. Do we want to have that much or do we want more to withdraw shares?

Anne: we keep hoping we will have a new project to spend this on, but Gill thinks that is unlikely, so this is a time for people to make withdrawals. Economics does not make new solar installations viable in the North yet at small scale. More building going on connected to Co-housing microgrid but unclear whether the developers will want to fund new solar themselves or us to pay for it. Gill pointed out that the community organisation we were talking to in Lancaster have decided to pay for solar PV themselves. Situation is probably similar for others. That way they avoid the costs of two organisations working together.

Caroline: City Council likely to want to encourage community-led developments. They have been impressed by Halton developments. So opportunities for future developments might arise.

Conclusion: we will continue to ask members each year if they wish to withdraw capital. Our projections assume 5% will be withdrawn each year which equates to about £7K per year.

The following motions were proposed and all were carried unanimously:

**Motion 1:** to approve the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 23 April 2020.

Proposed by Gill Fenna, seconded Dave Brookes.

**Motion 2:** To approve the payment of share interest to members at a rate of 4%, and 25% of the total share interest paid as community benefit.

Proposed by Dave Brookes, seconded by Alan Marsden.

**Motion 3:** to receive and adopt the Report of the Directors and the unaudited financial statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020.

Proposed by Dave Brookes, seconded by Caroline Jackson.

**Motion 4:** to disapply the obligation of the co-operative to appoint auditors pursuant to Section 84 of the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 so that an audit of the accounts of the Co-operative shall not take place for the Co-operative's year of account ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021.

Proposed by Anne Chapman, seconded by Simon Gershon

**Election of directors.** Anne Chapman is an existing director who is standing down in rotation, in accordance with our Rules, and is offering herself for re-election.

**Motion 5:** to reappoint Anne Chapman as a director of the Society.

Proposed by Gill Fenna, seconded by Hugh Kidd. The motion was passed unanimously.

**Presentation by James Sommerville of Green Rose CIC, recipients of the Community Benefit fund in 2020**

Our funding has been used for a Green Homes Advice Service: Telephone advice for anyone in Lancashire on how to lower their energy bills and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and in particular on how to apply to the government's Green Homes Grant launched in September. [GR also run LEAP local energy advice partnership, and Energy Ambassadors, funded by Energy NW – training for households and frontline staff.] 66 residents supported with advice by phone or email. 26 Lancashire-based contractors identified.

The Green Homes Grant scheme was a disaster and cancelled at very short notice at the end of March. The advice service has given advice on how to make homes more energy efficient and had good feedback from clients. Lots of respondents said they heard about the advice service through the Green View newsletter. Pandemic made it difficult to enthuse people. Very difficult to get people to change tariff.

21/22 plans: to continue advice service for >= 30 additional clients. To continue to develop ambassadors and other outreach.

Gill says great they have been able to achieve anything in this difficult year.

Gill asks whether installers have capacity to deal with stone-built houses. Not really answered, but the govt. Trustmark scheme weeds out the worst companies.

There continues to be a shortage of trained staff for retrofits etc.

Green Rose has been able to make use of Council funds and hopes to assist Council in applying for more.

Proposals for future work using MORE Renewables funding:

More of the Green Homes Advice Service, advertising more widely across Lancashire, with closer links to other agencies and projects, e.g. LAD (GHG Local Authority Delivery Programme, which Lancaster City Council are involved in).

Working more with installers, e.g. to achieve Trustmark accreditation and/or to pay the first year of registration fee.

Green mentoring, working with Oaklea Trust to support 11-14 year olds to learn about renewable energy and sustainability. Funding for staff and resource packs.

Discussion of what to do with the Community Benefit Fund:

Gill thinks support for installers is very important; Anne concurs. Simon Gershon talked about the Housing Advisory Group. Simon and Anne (plus James) have all contributed. Anne also says measures to encourage retrofit-coordinator training would be good. Caroline reported that Housing

Advisory Group is potentially a powerful body, but is not there yet – after the election, maybe. Caroline also agrees there is a dire shortage of people capable of doing the work required for improving the energy sustainability of local housing stock. Hugh also reports that coordination is needed, not just installers who know one bit. No support for work with 11-14 year olds.

James left the room.

Caroline reports that Green Rose seem to be the only local group capable of doing work on energy efficiency advice. Gill is happy to continue to support Green Rose, it carries on the work that was done by LESS that MORE Renewables was set up to support. Anne: in the past we have given funds to CAB but this was less satisfactory and they did not give feedback.

General agreement on continuing to support Green Rose with our community benefit fund, but need to use our small amount of money to fund something useful not funded by others, perhaps in the area of improving retrofit skills.

Agreed that Green Rose would send a proposal in a few months, when it is clear what this might be. We would then consult our members by email.