



exeter community energy

Minutes: Board Meeting Thursday 1 April 2021 17.00 – 18.30

All participation via Zoom.

Present:

Andy Extance (AE) (Chair)
David Thompson (DT)
Tara Bowers (TB)
Rory McNeile (RM)
Stacia Ryder (SR)
Hertha Wood (HW) (until 18.15)
Sonya Bedford (SB) (until 18.15)
Alastair Mumford (AM)
Patrick Devine-Wright (PDW)
Trevor Crawford (TC)

1. Apologies

None

2. Minutes of previous meetings

- 2.1 Minutes from 1 March 2021 were agreed
- 2.2 Actions from previous meeting minutes were reviewed if not on agenda

3. Directors' matters

- 3.1 Introduction of new finance director
Trevor Crawford was proposed as finance director by AE, seconded by AM and duly elected.
- 3.2 New directors/volunteers

- RM said that he may be moving out of the area later in the year for family reasons in which case he would resign. He will keep the Board informed.
- AE has talked to Lenka Hill about becoming a director with specific responsibility for managing the Community Fund. Further meeting with her next week. The intention is to invite her to join as an external independent director, and co-opt her at the next meeting.
- AE said that AM has been approached as next Chair. In this case TB might take responsibility for responding to the info@ecoe email address and AE might take on O&E.

4. Review of current projects

4.1 Current Projects

4.1.1 Healthy Homes for Well Being

Project Delivery

February project report is updated in the folder for March board meeting. Can't provide with March figures yet.

LEAP closed 10 days earlier than planned, as they had reached targets and had no desire to overspend. They are still planning to reopen for 1/7.

We have clients who did not get their LEAP call before the closure and we are now helping them in house. Teignbridge council also have a batch of clients who have not been helped via LEAP yet. These clients are being contacted by TDC to advise them their LEAP call/visit will take place after 1/7. By way of background these clients were contacted by TDC with an offer of new central heating with Warm Homes Fund grants. The clients were also offered a LEAP call. Sadly TDC did not liaise with us about this in advance which is a shame. By working with us in advance we could have avoided these clients being on hold for 4 months.

The good news is that we have been offered work with LEAPs sister project, Connect for Help (CFH), across the summer. CFH offers a telephone advice service much like LEAP, but without any home visits and no easy measures. LEAP have switched the Devon area to the CFH service for 3 months (while LEAP is closed) to ensure new enquiries are handled speedily. The HH team will be covering all calls for the whole of Devon as none of the other CE groups are available to help on the project. I don't expect volumes to be as high as with LEAP, so only 4 of the team will be handling these calls.

Matthew and I will not be doing the CFH calls, to allow us more time to work on the LAD project.

This additional work gives us some extra income for the summer, and means we won't have to dip into our projects quite as much.

We will be paid £35 per CFH call, the HEAs will be paid £25.

BESN/BESW

This project is now over, and I await to hear whether we will be awarded any further funding. We already had £19,500, there is potential for us to be given an extra £3,500 based on our high outputs during the project period.

DCC LAD scheme

Surveys have now started again, 7 survey visits were completed in March, and more are lined up for April. The first batch of homes is now almost ready for works to start and we will be able to submit our first invoice to DCC.

PEC/WPD

PEC closed the project a week earlier than planned, as WPD wanted to get their invoicing done before 31/3. Our final submission was made and in total we reported 516 clients for this project, 16 more than our target, and we should receive full payment for the 516 clients. That brings the total funding for the project to £25,800. WPD have confirmed the next 24 months funding to PEC. We have been awarded £60,000 for the 2 years (assuming we hit targets). This will be split at £28,000 for 2021/22 and £32,000 the following year.

For WPD project, the extension I reported last month has now been confirmed.

Apr-June

The next 3 months will see the team working on:

DCC LAD – Matt and I will be pushing hard on this to get 40-50 homes through the scheme.

CFH – 4 HEAs covering calls for Devon

220 extra clients for big energy which may produce extra income.

Aftercare calls – 6 HEAs conducting aftercare calls. We have around 800 calls to make before 1st July. Each HEA needs to do 10 per week. They are now being monitored closely to achieve this target.

Social impact study – to start 6/4/21

Funding applications – Now that Fiona has put the HH budget on Quickbooks, I can work on budgeting for the next 12 months, and apply for any funding shortfall accordingly. I anticipate that I'll need to find c£20k for next winter to be comfortable.

Promotion and events

The second Evolve webinar took place on 18th March and was well attended.

FLW training sessions are going well, we have now done 10 for the season, training 121 FLW about fuel poverty and our services. We have more sessions booked in April, including the East Devon Poverty forum, and the EDDC benefits team.

Hardship Fund

We received £100 donation via Just Giving this month, and also a freezer which we have already passed on to a needy family.

We gave hardship grants to 6 families in March – 2 fuel vouchers, 1 cooker, 2 washing machines, and we paid a handyman to lay some rolls of insulation for another household.

Question – If we are paying a 3rd party like the handyman in the above example, is there anything we should be doing to protect ECOE from any potential claims of bad workmanship etc?

SB said that provided he has own adequate insurance and DBS checks there shouldn't be a problem.

Social Impact

Roll out of the social impact study will start from 6/4/21.

Charity Status

I have not had the spare time I would have liked in March to progress this.

Team

Sadly George, who I had lined up to start with us from 1st April has been headhunted from under our nose! He was offered a salary with a Cambridge based tech firm that was simply too enticing. He spent 2 weeks deciding what to do, in the end we lost out. I now need to advertise for a new HEA for next winter. If anyone knows of any possible candidates do let me know. Ideally looking for someone to cover the Teignbridge/Torbay area.

Question – Is the Board happy for Gill to represent HH/ECOE at events? Clinics and events are likely to start again during the summer and I need to start planning who will do what. It would be good to know if you are all happy for me to include Gill in this area.

TB confirmed another director or HEA would always also attend such events
SB wondered whether Gill's relationship with ECOE might colour her approach? TB does not believe this is an issue.

PDW said Gill's work level would need to be monitored to ensure she does not become stressed. TB said that the work level will be lower in the summer so this shouldn't be a problem, but that she will monitor the situation

DECISION – Board agreed Gill could deliver clinics and events.

Other news

Fuel Vouchers – Covid support

We were supporting CA Devon in March with referrals from our client base for fuel vouchers being paid out from Devon Covid support funds. 58 of our clients benefited from these extra vouchers.

Rogue traders

Most of our incoming phone calls at the moment are from residents seeking advice following doorstep sales men or cold callers offering them heating or insulation deals. It's revealing a lot of unscrupulous activity which is being reported to the LAs and trading standards. It's making more work for us, but in some cases it is bringing us new vulnerable residents to help.

Sustainable Hub Tiverton

This project is progressing. I have been to look at the space available. There is an opportunity for us to have a permanent presence in the Hub. Part of the building is

likely to be a vaccine centre. and the social prescribers from Tiverton Health Group will be based there. This will be a good opportunity for us to work with them and other healthcare professionals more.

Tamar Energy Community

Kate Royston at TEC has been successful in a funding bid for a new project to develop a more strategic approach to addressing fuel/health poverty based around developing village multi-lateral partnerships. Built into this funding is for us to work with Kate to get a version of our Airtable table database up and running for them. Margaret and I are looking at how we can deliver that this summer, and what to charge them!

I am meeting with Kate to further discuss how we might work with her on this new project, and/or to work on other projects going forward.

4.1.2 Solar PV 1, 2

Glasshouse Lane Medical Centre (GLMC)

GLMC have advised their electrician visited on 12 March and a report is awaited. Once we have that it will hopefully be possible to determine next steps and decide whether we can make an insurance claim.

Quarter 1 2021 results:

Meter readings were completed on 15 March. I estimate our generation income will be approx. £7,000, broken down as follows.

Site	Account no	Usage kWh	Usage PP/Gen FiT	Export FiT	£PPA	£FiT	£export
Beacon	69940	1790	11	0.0412	0.055	197	79
Beehive	47006	1614.1	7.14	0.13272	0.055	115	78
Exeter College	44931	8385.4	5.57	0.10914	0.055	444	300
Exeter Library 20				0.1282	0.055	-	28
Exeter Library 9				0.1501	0.055	-	22
Exeter Library COMBINED TOTA		1620	6.71			109	-
Glasshouse	46946	0	7.14	0.13272	0.055	-	-
Great Moor House		7887.1	6.71	0.1091	0.055	529	219
PRBC	47024	484.25	8.34	0.04995	0.055	40	56
Shillingford Org	39095	1870	7.14	0.13968	0.055	134	78
Shillingford Org	38851	1490	7.14	0.13968	0.055	106	45
Westbank	70181	2526.9	12	0.04119	0.055	303	108
Wonford Comrn	38984	854.8	7.04	0.13968	0.055	60	49
						2,037	1,062
							7,039

4.1.3 Solar PV3

No developments on licences to sublet, despite one year elapsed since initial request.

Action: SB's paralegal to contact Michelle Ellis to ask if she needs help to complete.

4.1.4 Solar PV4

Exeter College: awaiting their approval for suggested rate

One site is Falcon House which would be a very large project and possibly require additional funding either via loan or share issue.

4.1.5 Retrofit

- RM has completed the retrofit course. If he does leave ECOE, he offered to refund the costs of the course. The Board accepted this offer.
- Matthew is half way through the course and Tara will enrol soon.
- Carbon Co-op approach to retrofit has been approved by DCC.
- ECOE may need to acquire certain tools eg thermal imaging camera, humidity meters and thermometers to deliver retrofit activities

4.2 Strategy developments

4.2.1 Strategy day date

Date agreed as Friday 21 May afternoon, plus morning for those who can manage.

5. Finances

TC confirmed he has started on preparation of the annual accounts.

6. Community Fund

6.1 TRIP Honiton application

- TRIP Honiton want £1,000 contribution from ECOE for the purchase of an electric disability access vehicle, total cost around £30k. They have other funds coming from elsewhere.
- They are not seeking costs for a charging point as EDDC or DCC may provide this facility.
- TB has been involved with TRIP – they are interested in fuel poverty so she considered the connection may generate additional work for HH.
- PDW suggested we would like an ECOE logo on the vehicle.

DECISION – Application accepted.

ACTION – AE to check whether TRIP will permit ECOE logo on vehicle

AE said he hopes Lenka will take over responsibility for the CF.

7. Events

7.1 Inequality webinar

8. Communications

We're having items about us put up on a couple of websites. One is Art and Energy, for our support of their 'Moths to a Flame' project, see:

<https://www.mothstoafame.art/news/thank-you-to-ecoe-for-supporting-the-creation-of-our-activity-packs>

We're also due to appear on Exeter City Futures as one of their 'Net Zero Heroes'.

Webinars

Exeter City Council have turned us down for our ward grant application, so it's up to us when we proceed with this.

Second webinar with Evolve and HETAS was on March 18, run by HH.

Wednesday 19 May proposed for next webinar. TB suggested someone from citizens' advice as speaker.

ACTION - AE and SR to consider potential speakers

Website update:

We have now completed the transition between hosting companies. Apologies for the disruption to emails while our hosting was suspended. I have secured three months free hosting as it was the host's fault.

Our web designers have resolved one fault arising from the redesign and are working on the other. Once they're done I'll start working through remaining fixes needed. One issue is that the licence for our Profile Builder plugin where we store member data is expired. This may be a security risk.

Social Media Data (as of March 29th):

- **LinkedIn Last 30 day activity**
 - Unique visitors 13 – down 31%
 - Post impressions 381 – down 19%
 - New followers 7 – down 22% – to 299
- **Twitter 28 day summary with change over previous period**
 - Tweets 59 up 3.5%
 - Tweet impressions 9,550 down 16.4%
 - Profile visits 323 down 36,9%
 - Mentions 20 up 17.6%
 - Followers 1,848, up 10
- **Facebook 28 day summary**
 - Post Reach 7504 People Reached – down 34%
 - Post Engagement 112 – down 62%
 - New page Likes 5 same as last month – currently at 918 likes

9. AOB

9.1 AGM venue

- Provisional booking for 6-9pm Weds 23 Jun in the Exeter Community Centre Northernhay room which can accommodate up to 60 people in a 'theatre'

seating arrangement or fewer if a table layout is used 25 people can be accommodated with social distancing.

- They can supply a projector
- Wifi is available
- Cost £55.

9.2 [Devon Climate Declaration](#)

AE said that a prerequisite for joining the DCD is for ECOE to commit to review of our greenhouse gas emissions.

AE formally proposed ECOE joins DCC and the Board approved it.

DECISION – Agreed ECOE should join DCD

10. Next Meeting

10.1 Board meeting – Monday 26 April 2021