

HUNTINGTON LANE SURFACE MINE SITE COMMUNITY FUND SUB-COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON MONDAY, 7th NOVEMBER, 2011
AT 7.00 P.M. IN LITTLE WENLOCK VILLAGE HALL**

PRESENT: Peter Whittle (Chairman), Juliet Esp, John Ferrington, Janet Higgs, Councillor Tracy Hope, Sheila Hutchison, Julia Kaminski, Alan Lees, John Marcham, Councillor Angela McClements, Councillor Jacqui Seymour, Roger Seymour and Peter Thomas

IN ATTENDANCE: Michael Barker (Head of Planning & Transport- T&WC).
David Coxill (Principal Waste & Minerals Officer – T&WC).

CFSC32 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

CFSC33 CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

The Chairman asked the Sub-Committee to note that this was the final decision making meeting for a range of applications.

He outlined the process and the factors that should be considered:

The applications should all be given fair consideration and dealt with objectively.

Members were representatives of the communities affected by the mining and should consider how those communities would feel about each grant application.

Members would be asked to outline reasons where applications were rejected. This would ensure a transparent process with applicants being notified of the Sub-Committee's reasons for rejection of any application.

Members were advised to declare a personal interest in any applications which would be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Where a prejudicial or pecuniary interest was declared, that member would leave the room for the relevant application and would not take part in voting on that matter.

The number of votes cast for and against each application would be noted and recorded in the minutes.

The Chairman would not use his vote in the event of an equality of votes for and against an application. In such circumstances an application would not be approved.

**CFSC34 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY FUND
SUB-COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY, 5th SEPTEMBER,
2011**

It was agreed that these were an accurate record of the meeting with one amendment, raised by Roger Seymour and agreed by the meeting. Minute CFSC30 d) was amended to reflect that Jacqui and Roger Seymour's

concerns related to the long term financial viability of the application for solar panels for Little Wenlock Village Hall.

CFSC35 MATTERS ARISING

None.

CFSC36 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Alan Lees, Sheila Hutchison and Juliet Esp declared a personal interest in the Little Wenlock village entry signs, street signs and interpretation boards application (item CFSC38 a)

Councillor Tracy Hope declared a personal interest in the revised Wrekin Trundle application (item CFSC38 f)

John Ferrington declared a personal interest in the Scout Hut refurbishment application (item CFSC38 i).

Councillor Jacqui Seymour declared a personal interest in the New Works Wildlife project application (item CFSC38 d).

David Coxill declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the Miners Monument application (item CFSC38 j) and a personal interest in the Lilleshall Memorial Hall application (item CFSC38 l).

Peter Whittle (Chairman) declared a personal interest in the Coalmoor Road footpath application (item CFSC38 h).

CFSC37 NEW TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Chairman had previously circulated a proposed revised Terms of Reference document (marked as version 5a) for the Sub-Committee to consider. This dealt with the Sub-Committee's structure, membership, voting rights and procedures for assessing grant applications.

Following a brief debate the revised Terms of Reference were unanimously approved, a copy of the document was appended to the minutes.

CFSC38 APPLICATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

a) Little Wenlock Street Signs

Alan Lees, presented the application of Little Wenlock Parish Council. Alan reported that the Parish Council had agreed to provide part funding for this application of £1,000. This reduced the value of the current application to £29,493. The application included three elements:

Village Entry Signs £17775.37
Street Signs £9745.85
Interpretation Boards £2971.75

The project was for newly designed village signage, street signage and village entry signs. Village interpretation signs would be installed in Little Wenlock village and in New Works. The new signage would enhance the appearance of the village at the time of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and had community support. Following discussion of the merits of each part of the application a vote was taken on the application in two parts.

- a) **Village Entry Signs and Interpretation Signs – For: 13 Against 0**
The application was unanimously approved
- b) **Street Signs – For: 6 Against: 6 Abstention: 1**
With no majority in favour, the application was not approved.

The Chairman, in line with guidance provided at the start of the meeting, did not use his casting vote and this part of the application was not approved.

The meeting agreed that the part of the application for Village entry signs and interpretation boards be unanimously approved and that funding of £19747.12 (allowing for a contribution of £1000 from Little Wenlock Parish Council) be provided for this project, subject to final clarification from Telford & Wrekin Council Finance officers.

The meeting did not approve funding for the part of the application relating to Street signs

- b) **Little Wenlock Wooding: Hedge laying and woodland management skills**

Luke Neal from the Small Woods Association presented the application. This application was for a total of £18,474 and aimed to:

- Promote the management of small woodlands
- Create opportunities for diversification in farming employment within and on the Parish boundaries by training farm workers, council workers, environmental workers and the unemployed in hedge laying and woodland management skills.
- This would be achieved by linking current skills with woodlands and management schemes and business opportunities where relevant.

Luke answered a number of detailed questions from the meeting about the revenue costs associated with the application. Two staff would be required for 32 days to deliver the project as well as specialist trainers for 12 days. The meeting felt that the project was a laudable idea but had some reservations in that the success of the project was dependent on guaranteed support from the local landowners who owned the small woodlands in the area. Luke confirmed to David Coxill that a copy of the latest accounts for the Small Woods Association would be supplied.

Following detailed consideration, the meeting agreed to defer the application until the following information on viability of the project could be provided by the applicants:

Evidence of employment prospects with owners of local woodland resulting from and available after completion of the project
Written agreements from owners of local woodland that they would agree to employ local people who had gained the necessary skills from the project training.
Confirmation of the availability of local people who could benefit from the skills gained and confirmation of how many of those people would benefit from the training.

c) Wild Wrekin Trail

Marc Petty of the Wellington Local Agenda 21 Group presented this application. The application was for funding for a 20 page interpretation booklet. The booklet would introduce local people to the natural heritage, wildlife and fauna, that could be experienced on circular cycle route around The Wrekin. Marc answered a number of detailed questions on the application. After careful consideration a vote was taken.

**For: 13
Against: 0**

The meeting unanimously approved the application and agreed that funding of £1,875 should be provided, subject to final clarification from Telford & Wrekin Council Finance officers.

d) New Works Wildlife Project

The application from Shropshire Wildlife Trust (SWT) was for £50,137 and was presented by Pete Lambert. The project aimed to establish a local wildlife group to carry out ecological surveys, conservation, and promotion of biodiversity learning and positive appreciation of the natural environment. The project would run for 2 years and would be led by SWT. The project would be focussed around New Works to mitigate the effects of mining on the local area. Part of the funding would be for an officer to run the project and to engage with local communities. Michael Barker (T&W Council) noted that the project might provide both local and broader benefits to the wider communities affected by mining. John Marcham noted that this work would provide some environmental compensation for the scarring of the landscape by mining activity. He suggested that SWT should be asked to provide regular feedback on the project to the Sub-Committee. Pete provided further detailed information relating to the application in response to questions from the sub-committee.

Following consideration a vote was taken.

**For: 13
Against: 0**

The meeting unanimously approved the application and agreed that funding of £50,137 should be provided, subject to the proviso that SWT

provided regular progress updates to the Sub Committee and subject to final clarification from Telford & Wrekin Council Finance officers.

e) Wrekin Forest 4 All

An application had been received for a total of £24k for the restoration and repair to footpaths and bridleways, way markers and a visitor's map. Janet Mees-Robinson presented the application. Roger Seymour asked who would maintain the footpaths and bridleways in future years after the initial restoration had been completed. Michael Barker (T&W Council) confirmed that the local authority would only maintain footpaths on their own land; the authority had no right of access to privately owned land. There was a discussion on how maintenance might be approved on private land by way of modification and by orders agreed by landowners. The meeting was concerned over the legal position relating to ownership and ongoing maintenance of the paths and bridleways. A number of questions were raised as to whether this application complemented the Wrekin Trundle application which was to be considered later in the meeting. The meeting were of the view that some of the footpaths were in reasonable condition and not necessarily in need of urgent restoration.

Following detailed discussion it was agreed that the part of the application relating to providing way markers and a visitors map be considered in principle. The cost of these items was £8,500.
A vote was taken on this.

For: 13

Against: 0

The meeting unanimously approved, **in principle, part of the application for way markers and the provision of a visitor's map and agreed that funding of £8,500 should be provided subject to the final clarification from Telford & Wrekin Council Finance officers.**

f) Wrekin Trundle (revised application)

Richard Taylor-Murison, Equality Officer at Telford & Wrekin Council, presented this application together with Fiona and Steve Smith who were part of the Wrekin Trundle group. The application was for the construction of a multi user trail of up to 4km through the Wrekin forest, giving high priority to disabled people. Fiona told the meeting that she had previously accessed the area of the proposed route when able bodied. As a wheelchair user she was now unable to access this area of outstanding natural beauty. Rural and recreational access was not currently available to disabled people in the Telford & Wrekin area. She spoke passionately of the benefits and opportunities of a multi user trail. Alan Lees had concerns over gradients on various parts of the proposed route which would be of particular concern for wheelchair users. Richard Taylor-Murison told the meeting that he believed the initial environmental report would highlight any issues and identify possible solutions. Fiona Smith noted that she would, with the assistance of

her husband, be able to access some of the steeper gradients. Jacqui Seymour noted that the environmental report would identify variations to the proposed route where steeper gradients were encountered. Michael Barker (T&W Council) told the meeting that he had previously written to Veolia in support of the proposed route. The Council was satisfied with the proposed route and that the route would ensure the project could fulfil what it had set out to achieve.

The Chairman asked for clarification of exactly what funding was being applied for. Richard Taylor-Murison explained that the current application was for:

Environmental Report £10,000
Section 1 of route (Dawley Rd to New Works) £33,925
Section 2 of route (Limekiln Wood – UK Coal restoration site) £30,250
Total £74,175

Richard explained that the route had been broken down in to viable, self-contained sections. Match funding would be sought for additional sections of the route. Richard believed that if sections 1 and 2 were approved and completed then the likelihood of obtaining match funding was greatly increased. The project was for 2 years and ongoing maintenance of the route would be carried out by Telford & Wrekin Council. In response to a question, he confirmed that the project could not move forward without the initial environmental survey. Responding to a further question, Richard confirmed that the group would not request further funding from the sub-committee for this project. Janet Higgs did not feel that the proposal would directly benefit those people affected by mining activity. The Chairman felt that a multi user route would benefit all people, including the communities affected by mining.

A further discussion took place regarding the environmental report. Alan Lees felt that the report would find that parts of the proposed route were not viable due to the steep gradients. John Marcham felt that the report would cover the issues raised on gradients. Juliet Esp felt that the environmental report should be open to tender. Michael Barker (T&W Council) told the meeting that Entec had been engaged by Telford & Wrekin previously for similar projects and that they were extremely competent.

The Chairman told the meeting that if funding was granted for this project the sub-committee would have implicit oversight role.

Following the discussion a vote was taken.

Voting:

For: 7

Against: 5

Abstention: 1

It was approved that funding of £74,175 be provided for this project, subject to final clarification from Telford & Wrekin Council Finance officers.

Funding was to cover the initial environmental report and sections 1 (Dawley Rd to New Works) and 2 (Limekiln Wood – UK Coal restoration site) of the proposed route

g) Little Wenlock Village Hall solar panels

This application was for a total of £25,923 for the installation of a 10kw solar PV system on the rear roof of Little Wenlock Village Hall that would generate 'green' energy and ongoing income for community use. The project would provide a carbon free energy supply and generate an income of approximately £3200 in the first year.

The proposal was presented by John Marcham. The application was discussed, a number of the sub-committee felt that a recent significant reduction in the government's 'feed-in tariff' had now made the business case for this project less viable.

A vote was taken:

**For 1
Against 5
Abstention 7**

The application was not approved

h) Footpath on Coalmoor Road

The initial proposal was for the creation of a footpath on Coalmoor Road, near to Holding's Transport. This would be of great benefit to pedestrians using this area, improving convenience and safety. A quotation had been obtained for £14260 for the work. Unfortunately, it had emerged that the contractor was not approved to undertake this type of work by the Borough Council. The Chairman told the meeting that he was disappointed that, despite requests, he had not been provided with any further information on this project. He asked Michael Barker to ensure that competitive quotations were obtained as soon as possible in order that the application could be properly considered. Michael Barker agreed to chase this up with Jas Sidhu from T&W urgently.

Michael Barker to ensure competitive quotations are obtained for footpath work in order that the application can be formally considered

i) Refurbishment of Scout Hut – Wrekin Camp

John Ferrington provided details of the proposal for the refurbishment of the 2nd Wellington Scouts Wrekin Camp site hut at Spout Lane, Little Wenlock. The log cabin building had been built in 1936, the roof needed replacement and main support pillars needed repair. The application was for £5k.

The application was discussed and a vote was taken.

For: 13
Against: 0

The meeting unanimously approved the application and agreed that £5,000 funding be provided for this project, subject to final clarification from Telford & Wrekin Council Finance officers.

j) Miners Monument

This application, from Shropshire Caving & Mining Club, was for a total of £1,900 for the provision of a memorial to miners who lost their lives in Shropshire's worst mining disaster at the Dark Lane cage pit in 1862. The application was to cover services and materials to prepare a genuine mine truck which would be sited and given a suitable dedication plate. The application proposed that the monument be sited within Telford Town Park

The Committee had previously contacted the applicants to notify them that they would have preferred that the monument were sited closer to the area affected by opencast mining. The applicants had been asked to consider siting the monument in the area covered by the terms of reference of the Community Fund. Grants were provided for the benefit of the area affected by the Huntington Lane mining. The applicants had responded confirming their original proposal to site the monument in the memorial area at Telford Town Park. Michael Barker (T&W Council) told the meeting that he was not aware that any planning application had been received for siting of a monument in this area. The meeting agreed that, under the circumstances, the project could not be approved. The application would be deferred until the proposed site for the monument could be clarified and evidence of planning permission could be provided.

The application was deferred until the proposed site for the monument could be clarified and evidence of planning permission could be provided.

k) Little Wenlock Street Lighting

This application had been withdrawn as Eon were currently introducing a revised design of street lighting that may be cost effective and more suitable for a village environment. A new application would be submitted once more information was available on the new design.

The application would be resubmitted at a later date once more information was available on new street light design from Eon plc.

l) Lilleshall Memorial Hall

This application had been received too late for consideration with the current tranche of applications. However, the Chairman noted that the application related to a building outside of the boundary specified in the terms of reference of the grant fund. As such, the sub-committee would have no choice but to reject this application.

CFSC39 OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman told the meeting that UK Coal had previously covered costs of room hire but that he felt the sub-committee should now look to cover room hire, printing/copying costs. He asked Michael Barker and Dave Coxill to investigate whether the general running costs of the sub-committee could be met from the Community Fund itself.

ACTION: Michael Barker/Dave Coxill to investigate and report back to the Chairman.

CFSC31 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Chairman indicated that future meeting dates would be circulated in the near future.

All meetings to be held at Little Wenlock Village Hall at 7 pm

The meeting ended at 10.12 pm

Proposed working of the HSMCLG - Community Fund sub group. V5a

(Version dated 28th October 2011)

Voting Members

Ward Councillors: Jacqui Seymour; Tracy Hope; Angela McClements.

Parish Council representatives: Sheila Hutchinson; Alan Lees.

Little Wenlock village representatives: John Marcham; Julie Kaminski.

Huntington village representatives: Peter Whittle (Chair); Roger Seymour.

New Works village representatives: John Ferrington; Peter Thomas.

Arleston/Lawley representative: Janet Higgs.

Willowmoor representative: Juliet Esp.

Non-voting Standing Invitees

T&W Council: Michael Barker; Dave Coxill (administrator); Phil Griffiths (minute taker)

UK Coal: Craig Ball.

Structure

1. If any member decides to resign from or otherwise leaves the committee, a replacement from the community represented by that individual will be sought. The quorum should be 7 members.

2. Meetings will be fully minuted and, after approval at the next meeting, a formal copy of the minutes will be signed by the chairman and kept for filing by T&W. A copy will also be published on the Little Wenlock Parish Council website and Notice Boards.

3. If any member of the committee should have a personal or pecuniary interest in any proposal, they shall declare that at the start of the discussion and will abstain from voting on that proposal.

4. Meetings will be scheduled to dovetail the six monthly release of funding from UK Coal.

A three stage process will be followed with approximately one month between each meeting.

Stage 1. This is the initial meeting to assess each proposal against the aims and objectives of the fund allocation criteria. (see appendix) The proposer of a fund application will not be asked to present their proposal to the committee at this stage. The written proposal alone will be used to assess the merits or otherwise. The applications must, in particular, answer:

- a). How much or how many of the local community will benefit;
- b). The longevity of the scheme;
- c). What legacy it will leave;

- d) What investigation of market need has taken place.

The aim of this meeting is to produce a short list of projects for further consideration. The proposer of any rejected project will be informed as to the reasons for rejection by letter from the Chair.

Stage 2. This will be the opportunity for the projects on the short list to present their proposal to the committee. In particular they will need to address how they have met the allocation criteria. Each proposer will normally be allowed up to 15 minutes to make their presentation and in particular explain how they meet the selection criteria in this document. A further 15 minutes will be allocated to questions. These timings may be extended for a particularly complex or high value schemes with agreement from the Chair.

This meeting may result in further information being requested from the project proposer.

Stage 3. This will be the final decision meeting and, like the others, will be fully minuted. The committee will need to ensure that all of the criteria for fund allocation have been met, and that the fund is not over committed for each tranche. Not all of each tranche needs to be committed at each meeting, but each tranche must be committed to a project within two years of receipt of the money by Telford and Wrekin. It is important that the committee thoroughly reads all of the proposal papers. If for any reason, a member of the committee has not had a chance to read the papers, he or she should declare the fact and, while being able to take part in any discussion, will not be permitted to vote.

Appendix

Aims, Objectives and Fund Allocation Criteria

The following is an extract from Section 106 agreement.

“UK Coal have allocated a fund of £500,000 for the provision of (or funding of) environmental improvements or other benefits to local communities. The determination of allocations of payments will be made by a sub committee of the Liaison Committee, having regard to the desirability of allocating funds amongst the relevant civil parishes with regard to the size of their respective electorates and the impact of surface mining operations on their communities and environment.”

Eligible applicants will include Voluntary and Community Groups or Official organisations such as Community, statutory and voluntary agencies. However, if an individual wishes to make a proposal, he may make a submission setting out the basic proposal and how it would meet the essential criteria. If the committee felt it had merit, then, with the agreement of the Little Wenlock PC, it will then need to be fully submitted through the Parish Council. As this would NOT be a Parish Council proposal, the Parish Councillors would be allowed to vote on the project. If successful, the individual will delegate the actual running and management of the project to the Little Wenlock Parish Council.

The criteria that will be used to assess the relative merits of the various project proposals are as follows:

1. Projects will be given priority according to how close they are from the mining site. Projects centred outside a 2 mile radius circle of the site will not normally be considered. (see map)
2. Projects should aim to benefit a large section of the local population and that last for a long period of time. It must also be financially sustainable in the longer term if applicable.

3. Projects that involve young people, especially where it may improve employment prospects, will be favourably received.

4. Projects should aim to make tangible improvements to the environment where possible.

5. Where projects involve capital or revenue expenditure, evidence must be presented to show value for money. In most cases this will be by means of at least two quotations being received for the work.

6. Projects will not normally be considered where the work could, or should be funded by other organisations such as the local Parish Council or local Borough Council.

7. Spend to save projects will not normally be considered. An example of this is where a capital project would only result in an ongoing reduction in running costs but have no other benefit, visible or otherwise.

8. Projects with a high element of revenue (staff costs or rent for example) spend will not get priority.

9. Projects supporting the development of local community or recreation groups will be welcomed.

10. Evidence should be presented to demonstrate that the project has the support of the local people. In particular, the committee would like to see evidence that immediate neighbours who might be affected by any significant construction or similar work are aware of the project and support it.

11. There would normally be a £100k limit on any single project.

12. Projects must be presented in their totality so that the whole cost can be understood, even though the implementation may be in phases.

