



Notes from meeting January 4th 2022

Link for the recording:

https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/x7ZVtW77c4xTQX8_u53CK7dy5BAv7Q7QT3eAqgYbyM-N5rU5f7vJ4u37RcB4YO-e.6XKxIHxmmyzJeV83

Access Passcode: 3.3SYhM!

1) Welcome

2) **Present:** Lucy Stephenson, Marlen and Tony Goodwin, Edward Lever (SYF), John Herbert (RCC), David Lewis (Fair Trade), Carolyn Cartwright, Cllr. Andrew Brown, Cllr. June Fox, Cllr. Dave Blanksby, Cllr. Marc Oxley, Mike Harley (LRWT), Cliff Bacon, Trevor Burfield, Duncan Ball, Judith Oakley, Mary Cade, Joan Edwards, Debra Thatcher, Chris Read, Lynn Powell, Claudi Cockburn, Elsa JJ, Anna Firth

Apologies: Sarah Furness, Allison Glover, David Wood, Kate Hiseman, Helen Pickett, Cllrs. Joanna Burrows, Miranda Jones, William Cross, Paul Ainsley, James Mulvaney, Louisa Finch

3) **Previous Notes:** noted

4) Matters Arising:

- a. Community action plan up-dated to include comments from the November meeting; still gaps with data and needs final presentation; next step (under work plan: individual groups to take an element and develop an implementation plan/campaign)
- b. Waste Strategy Consultation: 1000 + responses, stakeholder group, social media comments collated; analysis stage, report due in January; final options appraisal / strategy to go to Cabinet in February
- c. Bus Service improvement Plan: still waiting to hear from the DfT
- d. Future Rutland Vision: due to Full Council
- e. Website: volunteer needed from each village / parish / community group to be the point of contact for the website; training (2 hours) to be offered to develop Wordpress skills so information etc can be put on the website

5) Items of Business:

- a. **Youth Sustainability Forum:** Edward Lever
 - Introduction form Edward: aims of YSF to be active across all schools in the county (state and private) to have 3 united campaigns / academic year – e.g. reduction in single use plastic
 - Aim of the campaigns: reduce carbon footprint, encourage behaviour change, inspire
 - Actions: easy / quick wins and with no financial cost (noted that the recent campaign at UCC resulted in savings)
 - Work to date: all schools contacted (including ones in Lincolnshire); 4 responded so far.

Comments from the floor:

- All present were incredibly impressed by the work done to date, plans for future work, presentation by Edward
- Invitation from Cllr. Andrew Brown to YSF to visit his farm to see how modern farming meets sustainability criteria
- RCA: synergies noted regarding campaigns, happy to support with work / engagement with the community – mutually beneficial -
- Engagement with all youth groups and the Home / School sector

b. Pension Investment in Fossil Fuels: Christopher Renner

- Introduction from Christopher Renner
- Aim: discussion within the group to determine possible next steps
- Noted that RCC's pensions are run by LCC
- Question asked at RCC Full Council: please see link here for question and answer:
<https://rutlandcounty.moderngov.co.uk/documents/g2438/Public%20reports%20pack%2013th-Dec-2021%2019.00%20Council.pdf?T=10>
- Responsible thing to divest
- Other ethical considerations should be taken – not just fossil fuels
- Balance needed: duty of care to protected pensions
- Sense of potential that by selling shares they are bought up by companies / countries that are not signed up to reducing their carbon footprint
- Possible fragility of fossil fuel companies in the future
- Sense of getting 'own house in order first' e.g. electric car fleet but also noted that electric cars are not the panacea
- Duty / role of companies to transition to a low carbon economy; plans need to be demonstrably in place and it won't happen over night
- Sense of possible 'smoke screens' / 'green washing' by fossil fuel companies

Next Steps:

- This topic is clearly important to the group
- Christopher to feedback with regard to a meeting of others within this area – sense of a united voice needed (RCC will not be able to work alone)
- LS: meeting with other Cllrs – LCC; Market Harborough, Melton to seek understanding of current view; gain better understanding of the reporting process regarding the stewardship element

c. Mallard Solar Pass Farm: Introduction from Trevor Burfield

- Cllrs. Blanksby, Brown and Oxley left the meeting for this section due to being members of the RCC planning committee
- Background covered including size; short notice of the initial consultation phase; indicative timeline – decision to be made by 01/22; Secretary of State decision due to size; details with regard to fencing needed (deer proof) and the HGV container sized battery

storage units; the application is impacting 7 parish councils as well as cross border into South Kesteven

- Aim: to discuss and debate the issue around this proposal

Points covered in the discussion:

- The scale of this proposal was a source for concern
- Conflict between land use: agricultural vs. solar (impact on need to import food so counter intuitive?)
- The decision maker – who and how
- Environmental impact: does this outweigh the benefit of generating renewable energy? Concern about the environmental impact
- Concern with regard to the manufacturing and maintenance of solar panels. Where are the panels being manufactured? Ethical standards around this (e.g. if manufactured in a country that does not have the same employment standards; carbon footprint; not signed up to reducing carbon emissions – panels manufactured using fossil fuels)
- Concern regarding the potential of a negative impact (in terms of publicity) for smaller scale solar farms
- We are in a climate emergency: we need to switch to renewable energy; these farms have to go somewhere
- Is saying ‘no’ a sustainable position?
- Next Steps:
 - Although the formal consultation has closed, the company are still happy to receive comments – please website for details: <https://www.mallardpassolar.co.uk/>

Action group contact: mallardpassactiongroup@gmail.com;

Website (still in early stages) : www.mallardpassactiongroup.com

- General: factual comparison of different energy sources: carbon footprint; infrastructure etc etc
- RCC: debate at the planning committee will inform the formal RCC response (as stakeholders not decision makers)

Items d and e: Environmental Bill and Ecology Emergency to be deferred to the next meeting

f) Forward Plan:

- shared – please note this is re – attached with the notes (addition of Sustainable Land Trust courses available, agenda items – changes in red)

- Ketton: planning for the Green Heart month

- Next Steps:

* Each village needs to take one of the Community Action Plan topics to develop a campaign – share next meeting (Ridlington – working on environmental mission statement; LS to share example of campaign planning sheet including possible partners e.g. supermarkets)

* Action Plan to be published on the website (data gaps noted but possible action content up to date)

AOB:

- Website: now need asap a lead from each village / town to be the content lead for own page
- training will be given (good opportunity to develop skills) – please contact Joanna Burrows: jburrows@rutland.gov.uk

Date of Next meeting: tbc Monday 21st February @ 20:00 – 21:30