

Open Meeting of Community Councils

to discuss Towy/Teifi, Towy/Usk & Vyrnwy Frankton projects

Including: Pylons, Wind Farms and Sub-station Proposals

01/12/25 - Minutes of meeting

Attendees:

Llanfair Clydogau and Cellan Community Council

Dave Bartholomew (meeting chair)

Builth Wells Town Council

Mark Hammond

Lampeter Town Council

Gary Thourgood

Llanllawddog

Havard Hughes

Meifod Community Council

Joy Sisley

Glascwm Community Council

Berwyn Jones

Aberedw Community Council

Gareth Jones

Apologies

Sue Lilly (Llangammarch Community Council)

Roger Daniel (Llanfair Clydogau and Cellan Community Council)

Nicola Jones (Llandyfaelog Community Council)

Steve Deeks-D'Silva (Llandrindod Wells Town Council)

Matthew Williams (Llangunnor Community Council)

Christine Jones (Llansadwrn Community Council)

Agenda.

1. Green Gen (Pylons) response to second consultation feedback
 - Standing item, review/discussion of any received
2. Nant Mithil planning application
3. Community funds offered by BellTown Power, Galileo Empower, and Bute Energy
4. Undergrounding options for cabelling.

Open

Welcome was given to Berwyn Jones (Glascwm Community Council) and Gareth Jones (Aberedw Community Council).

Green Gen (Pylons) response to second consultation feedback

No responses received.

Nant Mithil planning application

Several attendees will be attending the meeting called for Thursday evening. It was noted that all political parties have been invited (including Eluned Morgan) and Bute Energy although Bute could argue that the invite should not be to them but to Nant Mithil Energy Park Ltd, which are the legal entity used to own the development. The point was made that at consultations Bute regularly refuse to discuss proposals for specific companies such as individual energy parks or Green Gen, although it is widely acknowledged that the relationships between the companies are very close. *(Specific detail checked and added after the meeting: both companies (Bute Energy Ltd and Nant Mithil) share the same founders (Lawson Douglas Steele, Oliver James Millican, and Stuart Alan George), the same Company Secretary (Reed Smith Corporate Services Ltd.) and the same original registered address in London (although they were formed separately in Feb and Nov 2020. Green Gen was also formed in 2020 with the same founders, Co Sec and registered address but was originally named Bute Networks Energy Ltd and the initial share holding was held by Bute Energy (Cambria) of the same registered address. Links to Co House: [Bute Energy](#), [Nant Mithil Energy Park](#), [Green Generation Energy Networks Cymru](#)).*

Powys County council will meet on 18th or 19th December to discuss the impact assessment which they will be submitting before the end of the consultation period. At the moment it is not clear whether members of the public will be able to speak at the meeting.

The question was asked if the impact assessment would be carried out internally or passed out to a third party to complete on their behalf. At this point that is not known but it is suspected it will be outsourced as the council does not have the expertise required in-house). It was noted however, that there is minimal time

and a minimal amount of money (between £7500-£10000) available to complete the assessment. There will be similar problems with all assessments and for all councils going forward.

NATS (National Air Traffic control Service) have already put in an objection to the development (link to article [Shropshire Star](#). *Also after the meeting the NATS objection and an objection from JRC on similar grounds were downloaded and are attached – downloaded from: [PEDU - CAS-01907-D7Q6Z1](#)).*

Community Funds offered by BellTown Power, Galileo Empower, and Bute Energy

In Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire; Belltown Power (Waun Maenllwyd), Bute Energy (Lan Fawr and Bryn Rhuud) and Galileo Empower (Bryn Cadwgan) have started to approach communities, and specifically community councils to discuss their respective community fund offerings.

Each of the companies are contacting multiple communities as more than one community is affected by each of the developments. For example:

- Belltown have initiated discussions with six community councils. Some councils do not have a turbine within their boundaries but are considered to be impacted by the windfarm development (have a view of it etc). They have submitted a DRAFT Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) outlining community funds to be paid to a 'Candidate Community Representative' on a yearly basis, this is a charitable organization (in this case CAVO) to be distributed to 'Receiving Entities' (currently discussing with the various community councils on who/how this might be formed). A sum of £1500 has been offered to council as a contribution towards legal advice. This DRAFT has, apparently been accepted and signed by CAVO, but, as yet no community council has accepted or signed the MoU. All councils have met, elected to delay signing the document and as a group, contact Belltown to confirm if there is a 'deadline' for signing (currently it is not believed there is, it can be signed AFTER planning permission is approved – if approved) and to request an uplift in the legal donation, as £1500 is not very much for legal advice).
- Belltown are offering £5000 per MW of net generation capacity (rather than for the amount of actual energy generated).
- It is thought that Bute's offering is similar but:
 - they are offering £7500 per MW of net generating capacity and have set-up an independent 'Candidate Community Representative'
 - it is understood that they are adopting a 'two-tier' approach with one overarching governance body and then a governance body for each energy park.

- There may be other differences between the schemes in terms of community ownership and percentage of shares/costs, or other proposed benefits.
- A question was raised concerning the appropriate governance arrangements giving CAVO the power to sign this contract to act on behalf of the communities

It was also noted that:

- discussions are not being held exclusively with community councils, there could be representation from any community group to form the 'Receiving Entities'. In some areas it was stated, community councils are being excluded from the discussions and Bute will only talk to voluntary organisations.
- there is no legal obligation between the company and the community, nor is it guaranteed that specific amounts or proportionate amounts will be allocated to any individual community and there is potential for considerable disagreement between communities as they 'bid' for funds for local projects
- that whilst BUTE are offering £7500 per MW other energy companies (BellTown and Wind2) are only offering £5000 per MW. It was stated that the reason for this was something to do with the relative size (number turbines, generating capacity, etc.) as per government guidelines but this reason was disputed as windfarms of the same relative size have different payouts and that the guidelines state £5000. It was agreed this should be checked
- some 'recipients' of existing community fund schemes for operational windfarms have not received any money from their scheme, although there are some beneficiaries in the form of those employed to administer the funds!

Undergrounding Options for Cabling

Green Gen have explicitly stated that undergrounding is not a viable option on the basis of costs - a document from Green Gen was circulated and is attached.

There is an argument presented that cable ploughing is unsuitable for 132kv cables and that other, more suitable, undergrounding techniques are too expensive. It was noted however that ATP cable ploughing website ([ATP](#)) includes demonstrations and testimonials of work to cable plough 132kv cables. (*An alternative report which identifies that undergrounding can be more financially efficient given more time (beyond 2030) is also attached.*)

It was noted that undergrounding would require Green Gen to pay farmers a regular wayleave payment rather than a 'one off' compulsory purchase payment (making it more expensive in this respect to Green Gen); and that ultimately undergrounding (which retains full land use and amenity value) is more 'farm' and 'tourist' friendly – however it is not so easy to upgrade or 'tap-into' in the future as energy infrastructure grows and the transmission requirements increase.

In some areas Green Gen are offering double wooden poles to carry 132kv (this value was questioned) lines to a transfer station (which will take input from several windfarms) to be connected to a pylon line. However, often the companies are guarded about the connection between the windfarm developments and the pylon lines.

Additional discussion points

It was noted that:

- Many people still seem to be unaware (or uncaring) of the scale of the development, the scale of the development work, including travel disruptions, new access for the large delivery lorries and equipment which will be needed for construction, storage depots, site offices, etc. Nor the effect it will have on local counsel spending and council tax rates. There is a significant amount of apathy as people believe ‘..there’s nothing near here, it won’t affect us..’ (the I-nimby’s- It’s not in my back-yard!)
- Conversely it was noted that there are members of the community who are not against the proposals some of which will benefit from the developments. These are very close-nit communities with close-ties between family members and lifelong neighbours. This could cause disunity and animosity between people and could be damaging to the community as a whole.
- A campaign is underway to increase awareness of the scale of this and other energy park/pylon line developments including information on the devaluation of prices for properties affected including an idea to hold ‘reevaluation coffee mornings’ in January where people will be able to review/discuss
- Fforest Fields Campsite ([Fforest Fields](#)) is in danger of closure due to its proximity to pylon lines. This would lose approximately £1,000,000 per year to the local economy. It is doubted that the community funds offered by the companies would in any way adequately address the damage to local communities or the economy (including loss of council tax from property devaluations) and amenity of the areas affected
- The companies make the claim that jobs will be created and there will be an upskilling of the local work force. It was agreed that whilst there may be a short term increase during development (and even then contract expertise from out of the area may be deployed more quickly/cheaply than retraining locally) that these jobs would not be required to keep the windfarm operational. The possibilities therefore are that; the ‘workforce is retained’ to build the next windfarm, the workforce relocates to locations where their new skillset(s) is/are in demand, the workforce is employed developing new industrial infrastructure which moves into the area

- The CPRW hustings was well attended and well received (although heated at points). Most political parties were represented. A video of the full meeting will be released (Post meeting note, it has, here is the link [CPRW Hustings](#))

Next Meeting 7.30pm on Tuesday 13th January 2026.