



Ardersier Community Liaison Group

Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting: Wednesday 30th March 2022

Location: Meeting held via Microsoft Teams video conference

Present:

- Kevin Reid - Chair (KR)

Ardersier and Petty Community Council

- Jenn Maylin (JM)
- Christine Wood (CW)

Scottish Water (SW) and ESD

- Graeme Campbell, Project Manager, ESD (GC)
- Gavin Steel, Corporate Affairs Manager (GSt)

Apologies: Cllr Trish Robertson (TR)



Community Liaison Group Objective

'The aim of the community liaison group is to minimise any negative impact and maximise the positive impact on the local community.'

The group will provide feedback and guidance on Scottish Water's programme of engagement and communication with the local community, elected representatives and other stakeholders throughout the construction element of the approved projects. This will facilitate feedback and enable informed debate that will help Scottish Water identify areas of concern, explore solutions, aid communication and progress the projects.'

Minutes

1. Welcome & introductions

KR welcomed members to the meeting.

2. Review of previous minutes and actions

GSt noted that the minutes of the previous meeting had been approved via email and had already been published, but that any comments or amendments would be noted.

Actions were reviewed as follows:

Action 1: GSt to circulate details for the meeting in March and request shoe and jacket sizes from those planning to attend who would need PPE.

GSt noted that he had done this and thanked members who had responded. He apologised that the site visit had not been able to go ahead as intended, but suggested this could be returned to later in the meeting with a view to giving members a tour of the site once it had started to operate. GC would provide an update on progress shortly.

Action 2: Ardersier & Petty Community Council to be asked to confirm whether it wished to put forward a new chair for the CLG's remaining meetings.

GSt understood there had been a discussion about this at the Community Council which had led to JM being appointed as a new representative to join the CLG. He had not had feedback on the charring of the group.



JM noted that the Community Council had wished for a new Chair to be appointed as KR no longer lived in Ardersier. She believed the Community Council's view was the CW should be elected as chair in the interim. She added that the Community Council felt there was not enough community representation on the CLG and they would like to open it up to other members of the community.

KR indicated that he was happy to step down as chair if that was the Community Council's preference, although he noted that he would like to attend the site visit when it happened.

GSt sought confirmation that CW was willing to take over the role of chair. CW confirmed that she was willing. She agreed that more community involvement in the CLG would be positive but was unsure whether it would happen.

KR noted that a lot of members of the community were invited to CLG meetings but didn't attend.

JM felt there were reasons for this and hoped there would be more community involvement in the future.

Action 1: CW to take over as Chair of the CLG from the next meeting.

GSt noted that the previous meeting of the CLG had preceded the Community Council's regular meeting, but that it had been discussed that the CLG's remit was expected to conclude once Scottish Water's project at Ardersier WWTW was complete. There had been discussion about the potential to continue meeting for the initial period of the site's operation if the community felt that would be helpful. Beyond that, Scottish Water's expectation was that it would engage with the Community Council as and when required, but there was scope for this to be discussed further with the Community Council. He explained that, once the project was complete, activity at the site was expected to be limited to the operation of the infrastructure that had been built.

JM said that she understood the project had to be complete before the CLG could finish its work. She felt there had been very little communication with the wider community rather than with the CLG and that people were still very angry with Scottish Water and wanted much more communication. She was keen that consideration should be given to more regular engagement with the wider community and felt a lot more effort was needed by Scottish Water.



GSt said that he thought Scottish Water expected the main focus of its efforts over the coming years would be on operating the WWTW well and on serving customers in Ardersier as well as it could, just as it sought to serve customers in all communities. He reflected that the CLG's focus had been primarily on managing the delivery of the projects rather than revisiting the principle of the development where it had always been acknowledged there were strongly held views within the CLG and the wider community.

JM felt that there had not been a lot of communication and did not think an information day had been held in the last 5 years.

CW noted that there had been events held more recently.

JM said that some of the people who had been involved in the CLG had moved away and she felt it should be opened up. She felt the times when meetings were held were difficult for many people who were still commuting at 5:30pm. She added that there was a desire for Scottish Water to be more active in its engagement with Community Council meetings.

GSt explained that he was happy to speak to representatives of the Community Council if they wanted to get in touch to discuss what would be helpful. He agreed with CW that information events had been held more recently than 5 years ago and that the most recent event had been very poorly attended.

CW thought that the last information event had been held in October or November 2019 and that a newsletter had gone out before it, but she understood people didn't necessarily read it. JM indicated that she hadn't received any communication from Scottish Water for years – and said she would have attended if she had been aware.

GSt noted that Scottish Water had also written to every address in the village in 2021 about the planning application for changes to some of the structures within the site. He suggested it would be best if a discussion took place in due course with CW, JM and perhaps also with Janet Scorgie to identify what the Community Council would like to see for the future.

Action 2: Scottish Water to follow up with representatives of Ardersier & Petty Community Council about future engagement.



3. ESD project progress update

GC noted that there had been some Covid cases on site, reflecting the workforce's contact with the general population which had seen a high level of cases in recent months. This had some impact on the final testing and commissioning.

The landscaping / planting discussed at previous meetings had been completed before the end of February and was starting to come into leaf. The majority of the site hoarding had been able to come down. There was one area in the vicinity of the transformer on the old access road, where landscaping hadn't yet been completed.

Electrical testing was the main ongoing activity at the site – ensuring that everything was connected up properly and communicating successfully via telemetry.

GC explained that the Picket Fence Thickener (PFT) was undergoing testing. He explained that the handrail was currently in an upright position, but would be in its stored position once testing was complete. The handrail had been up and down on numerous occasions, but was being left upright at night until the testing phase was finished.

The next stage would be the commissioning of the WWTW itself. This was expected to begin after the Easter holidays. Once electrical testing was complete, better access around the site would be possible for the proposed site visit.

4. Feedback and discussion

- **Questions**

KR asked what the reason was for the handrail being left up during the testing process – and felt it would be better if it was down when it was not in use.

GC explained that he was not electrically skilled, but he understood it was to do with the actuators and the fact that there was not a continuous power supply while electrical testing was ongoing. Testing was due to be finished by mid-April and the handrail was then expected to remain down except when Scottish Water needed to carry out work on the motor system that operated the Picket Fence Thickener.

KR thought that there was a potential for complaints about this if the handrail would be up for another 2 weeks or more.

GSt said that the point had been heard and asked GC if he would have a further look at whether there was any opportunity to minimise the times when the handrail was upright during its testing.

Action 3: GC to raise this point with the commissioning team and explore whether anything could be done to minimise times when the handrail was left in its upright position.

- **Proposed site visit**

GSt suggested that the most obvious potential date for a site visit would be the next scheduled CLG meeting on Wednesday 25th May. He thought the site facilities were no longer large enough to accommodate the formal part of the meeting, so suggested this could take place at a venue within the village before or after the site visit. He noted timings were a consideration.

JM suggested that the timing of the meetings should be taken back to the Community Council to see if a consensus could be found.

Action 4: Ardersier & Petty Community Council to discuss the best timing for the site visit and future CLG meetings; and feed back to GSt.

- **Gala Day**

GSt noted that CW had been in touch about Ardersier Gala Day. He hoped there would be scope for Scottish Water to support the event in some way – and he would follow up with CW to establish what would be helpful.

Action 5: GSt to follow up with CW about support for the gala.

5. Future meetings

KR suggested this be resolved once feedback was received from the Community Council. Members agreed to keep the date of Wednesday 25th May as the expected date for the next meeting, subject to the Community Council's feedback.

CW thanked KR for his work chairing the CLG over the previous 5 years and JM echoed this. KR closed the meeting.