

South Brent Community Energy Society Limited

Minutes of 2024 Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 8th October 2024, 7.30pm, South Brent Old School Community Centre, South Brent, Devon and via Zoom.

Members present or joining via Zoom: P Kelly* (Chair), E Chapman* (Secretary), R Hancock* (Treasurer), F Macnaughton*, N & G Goodey, D Parnell*, H Gabriel (SSB), A Lovett, A Hope Johnson, P Stevens, J Rawlinson, J Thomson, A Spring, R Wylie, L Fox, D Butcher, R Willoughby, P Wainwright, M Brampton, J Aust*, G Richards, P Richards, Z Richards. (*directors).

1. Welcome to Members: Peter Kelly welcomed everyone to the AGM, in person or via Zoom.
2. Apologies for absence: L Rawlinson, C Evans, A Hall, L & R Kennerley, A & M Cuthbertson, T & F Ferry, A Brindley, C & Y Elliott.
3. To receive and adopt the Minutes of the 2023 AGM: approved.
4. To receive and adopt the accounts, balance sheet and reports of the Board: approved.
5. Resolve not to undertake a full professional audit of the society for the year 2024-25: approved.
6. To retrospectively approve the payment of 6% interest to members in April 2024 and apply the remaining surplus to the continuance of the society and the awarding of grants for energy saving and generation projects. J Rawlinson expressed concern over retrospective approval. The Treasurer explained the requirement that members' interest should be paid from surplus in the year it was generated rather than from retained profits and that the decision on interest had to be made and communicated to members before 31st March, before the Financial Statements could be created and approved. The secretary suggested that if the following motion was approved then Sharenergy may have a solution. The motion was approved.
7. To authorise the Board of Directors to negotiate with Sharenergy Administration Ltd to subcontract the Society's public and financial affairs to Sharenergy Administration Ltd and commit the Society to a 12 month rolling contract for the services of Sharenergy Administration Ltd effective from 1st April 2025. A Hope Johnson asked what oversight there would be. The Treasurer explained that Sharenergy was a registered co-operative that provided administration services to over 40 community energy societies and that our society would have access to the accounts at all times since they used the same software, Quickbooks that this society currently uses. He added that although it would cost around £4,000 per year it would include the cost of preparing the financial statements and the Quickbooks subscription. The Secretary added that it would also reduce the business continuity risk to the Society since it would no longer be dependent on key individuals. A Hope Johnson asked how this would affect the maintenance of the wind turbine. The Secretary replied that the operation and maintenance contract with Earthmill was completely separate. The motion was approved.
8. Election of Directors. In accordance with the Rules, one third of the board stands down each year. Edward Chapman and Francis Macnaughton stood down and, being eligible, were re-elected.

The Board for the next year comprises: Peter Kelly, Francis Macnaughton, Edward Chapman, Rupert Hancock, Dan Parnell and Jack Aust.

Following the formal business the Chair invited Hayden Gabriel from Sustainable South Brent to give members an update on the South Brent Primary School PV project, which the society had made a significant grant towards. Hayden explained that the initial proposal had stalled at the stage of a pre-works site meeting, shortly before the installation was due to start. After the long school holiday she had now got the various parties involved (school, academy trust, roofing contractor and PV installer) to come forward with an alternative proposal, on a different part of the school. The Society's members thanked Hayden for her hard work and perseverance with this project.

The Secretary then gave a resume of the wind turbine's runaway failure at the end of May and the actions taken by Earthmill to repair the turbine. The latest being that after reinstalling the generator and running the turbine, the gearbox made excessive noise and would most likely need to be replaced. P Armstrong expressed concern for the safety of directors visiting the turbine and D Parnell replied that this was an active matter for the board.

The meeting closed at 20.15.

EJC Chapman, Company Secretary, 10 October 2024.