

MINUTES OF MEETING

Meeting: Celtic Interconnector Community Forum

Date: 4th July 2023

Venue: Online

Participating:

Irish Rural Link – James Claffey, Brendan Mulry

EirGrid - Michelle Walsh,

SECAD – Nuala O’Connell

East Cork Community Representatives - Evelyn Forde Carrigwohill Community Council, Fred Whelan Curtin Imogeela Community Sports Hall, Jim Barry Carrigwohill & District Historical Society, Maria Walsh Youghal Chamber of Tourism and Development, Robert Barry Knockraha Area Community Development, Anne O’Neill Killeagh Community Council, Marguerite Cremin Knockraha Environmental Group, Cllr. Anthony Barry Cobh MDC, Paudie Lee Glenbower Wood and Lakes, Killeagh Inch Community Council, Michael de Buitelir Cork County PPN

Apologies Ivor Knowles, Ballintotis Area Community Council,

Compiled by Irish Rural Link

Item	Description		
1.	<p>Introduction and Minutes of Previous Meetings</p> <p>James Claffey (Chairperson) opened the meeting, facilitated participant introductions, and introduced the agenda.</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting (April 5th) were agreed, proposed by Anne O’Neill and seconded by Evelyn Forde.</p>		
2.	<p>Update on Celtic Interconnector Project Progress - (Presentation Attached)</p> <p>Michelle Walsh from EirGrid provided an update on the Celtic Interconnector Project. Key messages included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project has commenced construction which has enabled the fund to be opened.• Enabling works to develop the project site are due to be completed this summer.• Main construction works will commence in autumn.• Construction information days will be held towards the end of the summer.		
	<table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Questions/ Comments</th><th>Answers/Response</th></tr></thead></table>	Questions/ Comments	Answers/Response
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	No questions or comments arose	
3.	<p>Presentation from EirGrid on opening of Community Benefit Fund. (Presentation Attached)</p> <p>Michelle Walsh (EirGrid) gave an update on the opening of the Community Benefit Fund. Key Messages included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Benefit Fund opened on 29th June. • Closing Date for applications is Friday 15th September. • Fund will be released, 40% at construction phase, 30% mid project and 30% when the project goes live. <p>Underlying principles of the fund strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects must be community led. • Projects must leave a positive community legacy. • Projects must align with Sustainable Development Goals. 	
3.	<p>Presentation from SECAD on Community Benefit Fund (Presentation Attached)</p> <p>Nuala O’Connell from SECAD provided an update on the Celtic Interconnector Community Benefit Fund. Key messages included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Fund has a total value of €960,000. • Area of benefit is within 2km of the cable route and clearly serve people within the priority area. • The Online Application process is available on the EirGrid Website with links in the presentation attached. • SECAD will be available to answer all project concept queries while submit.com will answer technical questions (with contact to SECAD in the first instance). • Funding from €500-€125,000 can be applied for. • Applicants are encouraged to maximise match funding opportunities. • Applications with a value of up to €5000 are encouraged to be submitted under an ‘umbrella application’. This is expected to be especially of benefit to smaller and newer groups. • Evaluation criteria is clearly defined. • Not every applicant will be familiar with an online application process. SECAD will provide guidance where necessary. • SECAD Staff are available to provide guidance in person or remotely on, 12th July, 19th July, 23rd August, 30th August. 20 minute sessions between 9.30am-6pm should be booked by contacting SECAD at info@secad.ie or 021 461 3432. • Forum members are as always, encouraged to spread this information widely across the community. • An online webinar is scheduled for Thursday 6th July from 6.30-7.30pm and will be available online afterwards. This should be especially of benefit to groups unfamiliar with the fund. 	

	Questions / Comments	Answer/Response
	Why do applicants need to be members of the PPN?	Applicants should be a member of the PPN or be in the process of applying. This is to ensure that groups are linked into the best information available and are formally constituted bodies. Applicants can be supported in the membership process if need be.
4	Any Other Business	
	No items arose	
	Questions / Comments	Answer/Response
	When is the expected commencement of the construction stage of the converter station?	The exact date is not yet available but will likely be in Autumn.
6	Next Steps	
	The next Community Forum meeting will be arranged for October/November. Date to be confirmed.	
	James Claffey (Chairperson) closed the meeting, thanked members for attending and their assistance in getting to this stage. Members were requested to continue to share information about the fund widely in their community.	