

MINUTES OF MEETING

Meeting: Celtic Interconnector Community Forum

Date: Tuesday 14th September 2021

Venue: Online Zoom

Participating:

Irish Rural Link

EirGrid

East Cork Community Representatives

Compiled by: Irish Rural Link

Copies to: Draft copy to meeting participants for agreement.

Item	Description						
1.	<p>Introduction Seamus Boland (Chairperson) opened the meeting and introduced the agenda. The forum members were invited to introduce themselves and to give a background on their organisation.</p> <p>Apologies Churchtown North Residents Association and Cork PPN representative</p>						
2.	<p>Presentation from IRL and EirGrid Seamus Boland outlined the forum's terms of reference. Michelle Walsh from EirGrid provided an update on the Celtic Interconnector Project.</p>						
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">Questions/Queries</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Response</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>How will communities be able to benefit from the Fibre Optic Cable?</td> <td>Fibre Optic cables are included as a project need. They will be installed with excess capacity for commercial use however the details of this are not yet finalised.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>When does EirGrid expect a response from ABP?</td> <td>There is no exact date but it is expected in the coming weeks.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Questions/Queries	Response	How will communities be able to benefit from the Fibre Optic Cable?	Fibre Optic cables are included as a project need. They will be installed with excess capacity for commercial use however the details of this are not yet finalised.	When does EirGrid expect a response from ABP?	There is no exact date but it is expected in the coming weeks.
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When does EirGrid expect a response from ABP?	There is no exact date but it is expected in the coming weeks.						
3.	<p>Presentation from Jamie Moore (EirGrid) Jamie provided an update on Community Benefit</p>						
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		thematic streams. One is the general community fund, the second is a sustainability fund - focused on sustainable energy, community sustainable energy projects etc. The third stream is biodiversity. The intention is to have a broad approach.
	Is this an overall strategy or a strategy for each Community area/group?	It is an overall strategy for the full project area; within its contents it will look at the individual communities.
	Are approved projects expected to be funded across all phases, or would individual projects be 100% funded from a single phase of funding?	This is the new approach to Community Benefit funds, and it is evolving. The strategy that is put in place and agreed by this forum along with the fund administrators will determine the answer to this question. It is important that this forum nails down the priorities for the project area and how to maximize the fund.
	At what location is ground considered to be broken?	Answer confirmed since the vent is that ground is considered to be broken once civil works commence onshore in Ireland.
	Would the community fund buy ground for a community field for example?	It is too early to rule things in or out. When the call for projects is announced, communities will be required to demonstrate the need and value of the project to the local area. If communities can make the case and it's a sensible investment, it is possible.
AOB and Next Meeting		
<p>Suggestion made to have Sustainable Energy Association of Ireland (SEAI) in to speak on Sustainable Energy Communities (SECs) programme.</p> <p>Suggestion also made to introduce a speaker from an organisation that has set up community owned energy company.</p> <p>Forum members asked if they could hear from an organisation which has received money previously and hear of the ups and downs of the process at the next forum meeting.</p> <p>A poll was shared to investigate if the people would be comfortable to meet in person forum meetings would be remaining online or if they could be held in person. The poll results indicate a split decision.</p> <p>The next meeting will take place in November online.</p>		
Action		
EirGrid and IRL will identify a potential speaker for a future meeting.		