

Cruach Mhor Windfarm Trust

Minute of the meeting held on Wednesday 27th August 2025 at 6.00pm in the Glendaruel Village Hall.

1. Sederunt:

Michael Russell (MR, Chair), Charles Dixon Spain (CDS), Ros McKenna (RM), James Hamilton (JH), Andrew MacVicar (AM) (Trustees), Amy Aitken (AA, Scottish Power Renewables), Amy Groom (AG, Secretary)

Cllr William Sinclair not in attendance

2. Minute of the AGM and Meeting of 14th May 2025:

Adopted.

3. Matters Arising from the Minute:

None.

4. Reporting from Grant recipients, Secretary update:

When writing to successful applicants we have been requesting acknowledgement of funds, details of final expenditure, return of any unspent funds and a report on the project. This has not always been received but they are now being recorded and followed up. Less than half of the applicants in receipt of funding have provided these responses, although some for example the River Ruel Improvement Association are a longer term project and have let us know when they expect to report back. The reports that we have received are of a high quality and informative and we are grateful to those applicants.

It was discussed that we should provide a short report template when writing to confirm a grant, including a GDPR clause relating to any images provided. AG to draft. Also noted that the application form needs updating with our quarterly meeting timetable and details of new Trustees and Chair.

5. Financial Statement:

a) MR ran through accounts to-date. After grant spending and secretarial costs since the last meeting in May - including receipt of annual benefit payment from SPR, bank interest paid in and return of unspent grant funds - the three accounts stand at:

Current account: £29,715.58

95 Day Notice Account: £20,162.35

Business Reserve: £51.06

Discussed whether to call on funds in the 95 day account before the next meeting but it was felt the current account funds were sufficient and there is a good rate of interest paid on the 95 day account.

b) Outstanding or Potential calls on funds

Since agreeing £5,500 funding in principle for the CGDT installation of an EV charging point at the Kilmodan Acre, no more has been heard on them securing the remaining funding for this.

6. Applications received:

a) Glendaruel Village Hall

Final payment £1,500 of original June 2024 application towards electricity costs. Approved in advance by correspondence.

b) Colintrave & Glendaruel Development Trust

£5,500 towards installation of EV charge point and electricity connection at the Kilmodan Acre (dependent upon securing additional funding). Approved in advance by correspondence.

c) McKirdy War Memorial

£192 for purchase and installation of new handrail chain. Approved in advance by correspondence. £29.75 spent on a new chain which was installed by volunteers. Email request received to keep additional funds for work on a new second handrail. It was decided to maintain consistency between all applicants and ask for return of unspent funds from the initial application, pending a new application for further work.

The Trustees discussed a complaint received about the applicant, regarding use of information gained via previous involvement with the Windfarm Trust against a member of the ColGlen community. A letter will be drafted and sent to the applicant. (MR declared an interest in the complaint)

d) Voices of Argyll

£3,938.30 to support a winter concert in Glendaruel. Discussion had around the benefit of the event to ColGlen residents given the higher value of grant being sought. Trustees wish for clarification of costs in the application, ticket sales in particular, and feedback

on numbers of ColGlen residents participating in/attending the event, after which a grant of £2,400 is suggested.

e) ColGlen Growers

£1,000 sought towards a new table, benches and shed for the community organisation run by volunteers. £400 match funding. Application approved.

f) Colintrave Village Hall

(RM declared an interest)

Grant £2,221 sought for installation of solar panels (20% of the cost with the rest match funded), and two short-term interest free loans to facilitate a building warrant application (£443) and deposit (£5,331) to be repaid on receipt of CARES funds on completion of the project. The Trustees considered that they have approved similar loans in the past. Application approved.

g) ColGlen Halloween Party

It was noted that an application is expected for the ColGlen Halloween Party and will be considered (on receipt) by correspondence, as the event will take place before the next meeting.

7. Re-powering:

a) Memorandum of Understanding with Cowal Community Energy

The three organisations involved (the CMWFT, ColGlen Development Trust and ColGlen Community Council) have agreed to work together to negotiate the financial side of the Cruach Mhor Windfarm re-powering with the new leaseholder Belltown and Forestry Land Scotland (FLS). Belltown is offering 1% equity share to the ColGlen community, with the right to buy a further 4% at cost and further equity share available to purchase at market value. Community benefit of £5,000 per mWh is proposed. With fewer larger turbines this may result in circa £250,000 annual community benefit for the Windfarm Trust to distribute.

ColGlen has sought advice from Community Energy Scotland regarding direct investment in equity above 5% purchased at market value. This could be possible but at no small effort and we may not be able to muster the forces to accomplish this as a community.

Cowal Community Energy (a bidder for the lease) is seeking to take investment in the equity above ColGlen's 5% share themselves, and as such they propose a Memorandum of Understanding between the ColGlen organisations and themselves.

CCE have only admitted Development Trusts in the Cowal area as members, however the CGDT are working with the CGCC and CMWFT. The MoU proposes CCE negotiate the purchase of a minority stake of up to 44% which may be available at market value above ColGlen's 5% share. CCE's offer is for them to include negotiating for the 4% at cost on behalf of ColGlen and pay the community the benefit.

It is felt legal advice should be sought on the Memorandum of Understanding with Cowal Community Energy. AA to explore whether the CMWFT is in a position to fund legal advice, if not the Community Council could take this forward.

b) Possible Community Meeting on 5th October

Community consultation is needed. This will likely require more than one meeting but initially 5th October is proposed, arranged by the Windfarm Trust, ColGlen Community Council and Development Trust. Points to discuss are firstly negotiation; do we work with Cowal Community Energy or do we as a community seek to negotiate directly with Belltown. If we are to negotiate directly we would have to decide upon the equity % to pursue, be it 1%, 1+4% or more.

Question raised of what happens if there is a low turnout to community consultation. This is a novel situation so we may have to make a judgement at that time as to whether we should consult more widely. It is a long timescale ahead as it is speculated Belltown may not be generating power for 6 or 7 years or more.

c) Transitional Funding During Re-Powering

The gap in funding between ScottishPower Renewables' lease ending and the Windfarm becoming operational again was raised with Belltown at the first meeting with them and is under discussion. This could be 2-3 years and might be bridged by receiving a proportion of the new community benefit payment in advance, at a base level of our current index linked community benefit figure.

8. Due Diligence Statement from ScottishPower Renewables

AA confirmed this has been sent to us annually during the previous seven years. Although it would not be practical to ask Trustees to leave the room when a declaration of interest is made, we are otherwise happy to sign the statement.

9. Training Requirements and Requests

The Due Diligence Statement raises the question of whether all Trustees feel equipped and informed to make the decisions involved in CMWFT operations. Decided AA will source and provide to us example information on Trustee obligations to help inform our decision making.

10. AOB

a) Grant Application Form

We have not yet updated the grant application form with details of the new Trustees. AG to update and check meeting periods given (quarterly at present).

b) Correspondence Received

i) The meeting discussed an email from Jennifer Dave Smart received the day before the meeting which was in response to one from the Chair on 25th May. Trustees were strongly committed to transparency of decision making and to encouraging engagement with the Trust and welcomed community interest in the work they were doing. However they remained of the view that the points raised by Ms Davie Smart had been answered by the previous board. They therefore confirmed that they regarded the matters raised as being concluded, as had been indicated in the Chair's email in May and by previous correspondence.

ii) The Trustees considered an email from the CGDT regarding unspent grant funds and reporting. It was maintained that there should be consistency in requiring unspent funds to be returned to the Trust. Felt that it would be helpful to discuss potential applications from the CGDT in advance of them applying to help facilitate any future funding.

11. DONM

The next meeting is to be held on 19th November at 6pm in the Colintrave Hall.