Questions posed and answered after the formal minutes of the FDT AGM (held 8th February 2023) had concluded.

FDT Members discussion

Q. Roy Dennis asked if FDT will support protesting against SSE's plans to put powerlines through part of the Finderne countryside as part of the upgrade to the wind farms?

A. In short…Yes. Agreement that this was a topic to be taken forward by FCC in the first instance, rather than FDT. Mike Crutch noted that there had been a public consultation in September 2022 when a leaflet was sent out to all households in the affected area.

Q. Howard Davenport asked how members can get involved in the decision-making process and selecting new projects?

A. Any member can petition the board with a suggested project, and it can be discussed, and a strategy proposed if it will benefit the community and is in line with the A of A. Members could become part of working groups for specific projects, without the need to join the board. The more active FDT members can be – the better. SM noted an example of this would be FCC petitioning FDT for financial support towards the installation of Vehicle activated speed signs in Rafford.

Q. Howard Davenport asked what should FDT do with the surplus capital?

A. BH advised that the current financial reserves had accumulated principally as a result of reduced project activity by the Trust during the COVID lockdown. There was no actual strategy in place to accumulate funds and the Board would be content to disburse the funds as projects are developed. KA also noted that the Winter Support Grant came out of an acknowledgement that FDT had an underspend due in part to the effects of the CV19 pandemic.

There also is a requirement to maintain a small reserve of funds to cover overhead costs.

Q. Mike Crutch asked if the WSG will be ongoing?

A. SM noted that hopefully the energy cost crisis will be resolved before next year, but that it is a dynamic process to be decided on by the board as part of due diligence and good governance.

Q. Suzanne Quinney noted that the role of Finlay was very helpful to the community around energy efficiency in homes. Would it be possible to get funding for a similar role in the future to help those who are 'in the pipeline' of making applications, or to consider for example bulk buying of solar panels on behalf of interested Finderne residents to achieve a better price ?

A. Yes, if the opportunity arises FDT will investigate and implement if reasonably practicable.

Q. Howard Davenport. A section of the community in Upper Rafford are against the Brockloch development, can the field be used for something else?

A. No, as noted in the Brockloch section of the AGM minutes the land was allocated for housing by Moray Council and the funding from SLF was provided on the condition the land is used for affordable housing. FDT have partnered with Communities Housing Trust, experts in this area, and the affordable housing project at Brockloch will benefit the whole community throughout Finderne.

A. Andy Hall noted that the provision of affordable housing is key to any area, and he could not understand HD's concerns about the Brockloch project.

HD stated that he felt people did not want the place they have chosen to live in, to change into something different. MD noted that 'people who have lived here the longest have seen wave after wave of change.'

Informal post AGM discussion concluded at 8.10pm.