

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on 26 May 2016

- PRESENT:** Councillor Robert G Parry OBE FRAgS (Chair)
- Councillors Lewis Davies, Ann Griffith, K.P. Hughes, Vaughan Hughes, Victor Hughes, Llinos M. Huws, A.M. Jones, H.E. Jones, Raymond Jones, Alun M. Mummery, Dylan Rees, J.A. Roberts, Nicola Roberts and Ieuan Williams.
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Executive,
Assistant Chief Executive (AM),
Head of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer,
Head of Democratic Services,
Chief Planning Officer (EGJ),
Lead Case Officer (AO),
Committee Officer (MEH).
- ALSO PRESENT:** None
- APOLOGIES:** Councillors R Dew, John Griffith, T LI Hughes, W T Hughes, Carwyn Jones, G O Jones, R.Meirion Jones, Richard Owain Jones, Alwyn Rowlands and Dafydd Rhys Thomas

1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None received.

2. ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO NATIONAL GRID ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION LTD. (NATIONAL GRID) FINAL DRAFT STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY CONSULTATION (SOCC)

Submitted – the report of the Head of Regulatory and Economic Development together with a draft formal response to National Grid by the Chief Executive.

The Chief Planning Officer gave a brief presentation to the County Council on the Statement of Community Consultation. He reported that this is the process with regard to the Planning Act 2008. Section 47 of the Planning Act 2008 requires an applicant to prepare a 'Statement of Community Consultation' (SoCC) which sets out how the applicant proposes to consult with the local community about a proposed application for development consent. It was noted that the report presented to the Committee are the comments of the Isle of Anglesey County Council in respect to the process. Under Section 47(2) any local authority within whose boundary the proposal fall has 28 days from receipt of information about the applicant's proposals for consultation to make representations about what is to be

included in the SoCC. Once the SoCC is published, applicants are required by s47(6) to make the SoCC available for inspection by the public and publish a notice setting out where and when the statement can be inspected.

He stated that it is anticipated that National Grid will release a consultation document regarding the Menai Crossing in June/July. A Stage 2 Consultation Feedback Report should be available in the Summer of 2016. Statutory consultation will take place in October 2017 regarding Section 42/47 consultation and a Statement of Common Ground will need to be agreed with National Grid. It is anticipated that planning applications, if any, will be dealt with by the Council in October 2017 under the Town and Country Planning Applications (TCPA's).

The Lead Officer outlined the main themes identified within the SoCC by the County Council :-

- **Consenting Process** - There is no clear distinction between Development Consent Order (DCO) application and the Town and Country Planning Applications (TCPA) and the explanation of the associated development is felt to be inadequate within the Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) to determine which works falls into different categories. National Grid have submitted within the final draft SoCC a process/flow diagram of the DCO process. It is felt useful to have a more of an indicative timeline for submission and examination of the DCO which includes the construction phases so to allow the public informed of the next steps in the process and the likely timeframe. He noted that the consultation document needs to be clear to the scope of the DCO timings in respect of any applications and needs to be reinforced.
- **Engagement Plan** - The Officer referred to the Engagement Plan and stated it will accompany the SoCC prior to consultation; this will highlight the details of venues and public exhibitions of the National Grid's intentions. It is essential that the Council receives an early viewing of the Engagement Plan and agree on how the document will be made available to the public.
- **Consultation Zone** - More details are required from National Grid with regard to the Consultation Zones on how they intend to consult outside the identified consultation zones. At present it is difficult to identify the outside consultation zones before the National Grid affords the Council's a plan of the consultation zones first. There should be a clear and transparent linkage between the predicted effects arising from the proposals and the extent of the consultation zone. The proposal by National Grid to extend the consultation zone from 2km to 3km in the vicinity of the project continues to lack an evidence basis on which this could be deemed appropriate. The Council will require a rationale of why National Grid extended the original consultation zone from 2km to 3km and why a 5km consultation zone is not being considered as requested by the Council.
- **Consultation Timing** - The National Grid needs to be mindful with regard to Consultation Timing to other local projects such as Horizon Nuclear Power's Wylfa Newydd proposals. Confirmation is required as to the publication date of the Stage 2 Consultation Feedback Report, ensuring that this takes place before the statutory consultation commences in autumn 2016.

The Lead Officer further stated that work needs to be done with regard to 'hard to reach' groups/visitors/local interest groups. He noted that there is no Tourist Information Centre on the Island only tourist information points within key settlements and the County Council would expect National Grid to make full use of these facilities/hubs within the community.

- **Mitigation** – The SoCC lacks details by the National Grid on how the company intends to consult with the local community on proposed mitigation measures and opportunities for environmental enhancement or compensation. Sufficient information is required how processes for developing mitigation upon which the local communities can provide informed consultation feedback.
- **Effective Consultation (will the SoCC deliver effective consultation?)** – National Grid has carried out 2 non-statutory consultations in 2012 on its strategic options and route options in 2015. However, it appears from the SoCC that National Grid only intends to carry out a single stage consultation on its chosen cable route and this raises a number of issues with regard to its scope of the consultation included within the SoCC. It is critical the consultation engages as many people as possible. The extent to which the consultation documents will need to clearly set out how the preferred route has been identified and the regard that has been had to the previous non-statutory consultation in arriving at that route.

The Lead Officer stated that there are a number of matters that require further consideration and detail before the Council can be confident that the SoCC will deliver effective community consultation.

Members of the County Council considered the report and made the following comments thereon :-

- National Grid need to respond as to why a 5km consultation zone is not being considered as was requested by the County Council previously.
- The National Grid should be further made aware that the stance of the Council still remains that no additional electricity transmission lines and cables are constructed across the Island and the Menai Straits.
- Questions were raised as to the suitability of tourist information points due to the lack of a Tourist Information Centre on the Island. The Chief Planning Officer responded that within the Engagement Plan the Council will raise questions as to where the National Grid intend to advertise information in respect of this important development. It was reiterated that information needs to be available to all the residents of the Island.

RESOLVED :-

- **To accept the report and to request a further revised draft SoCC from the National Grid before it is finalised;**
- **With reference to the above, to grant authority to the Chief Executive to agree to the further revised document before the SoCC is finalised;**

- **To delegate authority to the Chief Executive to carry out amendments and variations which are identified and deemed reasonably necessary prior to the formal issuing of the Council's response;**
- **To delegate authority to the Chief Executive to sign off National Grid's Engagement Plan;**
- **To endorse the Council's previously established position in that no additional electricity transmission lines and cables are constructed across Anglesey and the Menai Straits.**

The meeting concluded at 10.30 am

**COUNCILLOR BOB PARRY OBE FRAgS
CHAIR**