**Community Consultation Summary**

**Brenig Wind Limited Community Benefit Fund – Community Consultation**

Brenig Wind Limited is located in the Community Council area of Nantglyn and the electoral ward of Llanrhaeadr yng Nghinmeirch within Denbighshire County Council.

The developers, Brenig Wind Limited have installed 16 turbines each of 2.35MW, giving a total installed capacity of 37.6MW and is committed to paying a community benefit fund of £3000/MW index linked to RPI from April 2009.

Brenig Wind Limited became operational on 30th March 2019 and the annual fund will start at about £4055/MW, which equates to £152,468 per annum in total for up to 25 years.  The fund is to be distributed to local communities and bodies for environmental, socio-economic and educational purposes. The fund will be available from 2019 onwards.

Cadwyn Clwyd has been commissioned by Brenig Wind Limited to undertake community consultation, to set up and administer the Community Benefit Fund for Brenig Wind Ltd. The purpose of the community benefit fund is intended to provide benefits to the communities hosting and living with and around the windfarm.

The community consultation was held towards the end of 2018 and comprised of the following:

* An online bilingual structured questionnaire
* Two drop-in community consultation sessions one held in Canolfan Cae Cymro, Clawddnewydd, nr. Ruthin, Denbighshire LL15 2ND on Monday, 26th November 2018 and the second held at Henllan Church Institute, Henllan, Denbighshire LL16 5BD on Tuesday 27th November 2018.

1. **Results**

**1.1 Who Responded?**

A total of 261 responded to the questionnaire and attended the drop-in sessions. The drop-in session followed the structure of the questions in the on-line questionnaire. Of the 261, 75% represented individuals personal view.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Personal view | 75% |
| Community council | 8% |
| Third sector organisation | 5% |
| Local Business | 4% |
| Community group | 14% |
| Social group | 5% |
| Public sector | 2% |
| Other (please specify) | 11% |

Respondents were asked to state which Denbighshire community council they belonged to, those who responded through the medium of English provided an even spread across the listed community councils with 37% stating “other”. The “other” category included respondents from neighbouring communities in Conwy and wider Denbighshire. The Welsh language respondents had 70% which stated “other”, the vast majority of these were from neighbouring communities in Conwy county.

The respondents represented a reasonable spread across the age categories:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Under 18 | 0% |
| 18 – 30 years | 8% |
| 31 – 50 years | 43% |
| 51 – 65 years | 34% |
| Over 65 years | 15% |

**1.2 Respondents’ opinions of the area**

Respondent were asked about positive attributes in their area. Overall, respondents cited a strong sense of community, the area’s natural environment and the cultural and linguistic identity as positive attributes. The following is a list of key attributes:

* Tourism
* Close knit and Strong sense of community
* Natural beauty of the area
* School
* Social groups e.g. YFC, Churches, Merced y Wawr
* Rurality
* Welsh culture and identify
* Strong welsh speaking area
* Agriculture
* Clean air / quality of the natural environment
* Rural yet proximity to urban areas.

Respondents were asked to identify the things that should be changed or improved about the area. Responses included:

* Broad band and mobile coverage
* Facilities for young people
* Upgrading of existing facilities better community facilities
* Improvements to the built and natural environment
* Support incomers to learn Welsh
* Transport / community transport
* Opportunities and activities for young people
* Facilities which support health and well being
* Affordable homes

**1.3 Area of Benefit**

As part of the on-line and drop-in consultation sessions, respondents were provided with a map of a proposed area of benefit (included in appendix 2). This map reflected a suggested area of benefit with the aim of instigating discussion and further comments. The initial steer from the developer was that the fund is to benefit communities in Denbighshire, and as such, the map reflected a proposed community benefit area within Denbighshire.

Over 125 comments were received via the online questionnaire and the drop-in consultation sessions. The results show that 40% agreed with the area of benefit, whilst 60% disagreed.

The points raised are grouped as follows;

**1.3.1 Concerns about inclusion of Denbigh and part of Ruthin**

Respondents raised concerns that Denbigh and part of Ruthin are in the proposed area. Concerns were mainly centred around the possibility of the funds being taken up by the towns (Denbigh in particular), to the detriment of the rural communities and villages closer to the windfarm.

**1.3.2 Suggested Phased Approach**

Additionally, it was suggested that a phased approach could be adopted to ensure benefit to those villages and rural communities closest to the site.

**1.3.3 Conwy Communities**

The proximity of the site to Conwy, the visual impact, noise levels, pylon infrastructure, and construction traffic were all cited as reasons for inclusion of Conwy communities in the area of benefit. There was strong concern raised about the potential omission of Conwy communities which are in close proximity to the site.

This was voiced clearly and strongly in both the consultation sessions and the online questionnaire.

**1.3.4 Impact of the site to neighbouring communities**

Also of concern was the impact of noise, visual impact, construction traffic, pylon infrastructure on those communities which are closets to the site. As such respondents suggested the area should be tighter and closer to those communities surrounding the site. The point was also made about avoiding segregating communities where they are currently half in half out in the proposed area.

**1.3.5 Area too large**

Respondents also raised concern that the proposed area was too large, also reiterated was that concerns of Conwy communities directly adjacent to the site being potentially omitted. Some respondents suggested a 5 mile radius from the site was suggested as a parameter for the area.

**1.3.6 Visual Impact from AONB**

Conversely, visual impact alone was cited as a criteria for expanding the area towards the boundary with Flintshire thereby including communities and villages within the Clwydian Range AONB.

**1.4 Grant Thresholds**

Respondents were asked of their views regarding a £10,000 small grants threshold and a £10,000 to £50,000 large grants threshold. 82% of respondents were in agreement with the grant thresholds proposed. Those who were against suggested that the fund does not preclude larger projects which are strategic in nature and which may benefit the area as a whole.

Also suggested was that the community should be able to apply more than once.

**1.5 Grant Applicants**

Respondents were asked their views on the potential applicants for the fund. The following were suggested as the types of organisations may apply for funds: Voluntary, community groups, Community Councils / Town Councils, Social enterprises provided they operate on a not-for-profit basis (including credit unions, co-operatives, social firms, community owned enterprises, companies limited by guarantee, community interest companies and development trusts), Charities, Third sector organisations.

The respondents were in agreement with the above, with some suggestions of benefits to schools in the area.

* 1. **Priorities of the Fund**

Respondents were asked whether they agreed with the following as priorities for the fund. Over 90% Agreed with the suggested priorities.

* Community transport
* Access to services
* Support for community social activities
* Digital Inclusion (e.g. broadband, mobile coverage)
* Access to employment (e.g. through working from home or better transport links)
* Supporting young people and potential entrepreneurs into business
* Developing and supporting social enterprises (e.g. community shop, community pub)
* Developing and supporting local business partnerships (e.g. tourism groups, agriculture groups, local food producers)
* Maintain and improve the area’s natural environment for community benefit
* Maintain and improve the quality of the area’s built environment (including heritage)
* Support and develop the local tourism / recreation sector
* Support for Welsh language and culture initiatives
* Support for community-led small-scale renewable energy in the area

Additional comments received included priories such as education and affordable housing.

## **1.7 Decision Making Panel**

A suggested panel of 6 comprising of 2 from each of private, community and public sector was suggested.

76% agreed with the representation, however other comments received are summarised below:

* More from community sector
* Youth represented & third sector
* Review panel membership every three years
* Should be a reflection of the community, people that know the area
* More community involvement on the panel
* More than 6 needed
* More community members to represent a wider area.