

Annual General Meeting 2018

Saturday 23 June 9.00am-9.45am

Renold Building, University of Manchester

Present in person: 18 members

Participating on-line: 9 members

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

Afsheen Rashid, Chair of Community Energy England (CEE), opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.

2. Minutes of the previous AGM

Approval of the minutes of the previous AGM was proposed by Ollie Pendered from Community Energy South and seconded by Malcolm Lynch from Wrigleys Solicitors. No questions were raised.

3. Motion 1

The Chair reported on the proposal to amend the Community Energy England bye-laws to include a person appointed as Director ex-officio, the holder of the office of Chief Executive Officer. Mark Kenber of Mongoose Energy proposed the motion and Mike Smyth from Energy Prospects seconded it.

4. Voting for appointment of directors

The Chair reported that, as per the organisation's rules, Directors are obliged to stand down after thirty-three months' service. She confirmed that no Directors were obliged to stand down by rotation this year and that Paul Monaghan from Co-op Energy, and Giovanna Speciale from South East London Community Energy were standing down. Dan Nicholls, acting as independent board advisor also stood down and did not seek re-election.

One candidate stood for election; Mark Billsborough from Co-op Energy, further details of the candidate can be found at:

(https://communityenergyengland.org/files/document/179/1529933064_DirectorNominations2018.pdf). The ballot was not competitive, so members were asked to vote for, against or to abstain from voting for the nominee. Member organisations unable to attend the AGM were given the opportunity to vote online prior to the AGM.

As the candidate was not able to attend the meeting, Joshua Brown from Co-op Energy spoke on his behalf, giving an overview of Mark's skills and the strengths that he would be able to bring to the CEE Board.

Voting was then completed and counting began to enable the results to be announced before the end of the meeting.

The Chair thanked the outgoing directors for their work.

5. Reports by the Chair, Chief Executive

Afsheen Rashid, in her role as Chair of CEE, briefed members on key CEE activity and priorities over the last year. She updated members on key policy changes that have influenced the community energy sector and CEE's data gathering work that has been turned into evidence of the importance of the sector. She updated members on CEE's representation on several working groups and the recognition that CEE has gained from working with various DNOs and policy makers. In the last year CEE has begun working with a broader range of networks, including NGOs and partners from the private and public sectors, to further engagement with and knowledge of community energy.

Afsheen updated members on key CEE communications activities over the last year, case studies, social media and a variety of interviews including a large-scale media campaign with CEE member Solarplicity. Afsheen also informed members about the success of the first State of the Sector Report, and its reach and impact; it was mentioned in Parliamentary debates and articles, gaining wide recognition and raising the platform of community energy. Other key activity Afsheen reported on included the Community Energy Fortnight 2017, which was led for the first time by CEE, the increasing development of the Community Energy Hub and the increased number of guides that CEE has produced or fed into over the past twelve months.

Afsheen then updated members on the change in fees that CEE has put in place in the last year and the rationale behind this change. She then invited delegates to ask any questions; none were asked.

Chief Executive Emma Bridge then set out CEE's strategy and informed members of CEE's new vision - 'putting people at the heart of the energy system' and mission to 'support and accelerate the transition to a fair, low carbon and community-led energy system'.

Emma then covered the rationale behind CEE's priorities, which are:

- Advocacy
- Capacity Building
- Communications and PR

She explained that policy would be a secondary priority, but that advocacy needed to be a primary priority in order to increase the likelihood of supportive policy and regulation. CEE would be investigating options for increasing capacity to lead on policy development for the sector. She also drew members' attention to CEE's Annual Report.

Emma then invited questions from members, none were asked.

6. Financial accounts

Emma outlined the draft accounts for the year ended December 2017 (available https://communityenergyengland.org/files/document/182/1529933064_CommunityEnergyAssociationEnglandLtd-31December2017-Full.pdf). She reminded members that CEE currently does not have a Treasurer and asked members to consider anyone who may wish to act as Treasurer for CEE. She went on to give details on turnover, cost of sales, grant income and retained earnings. Emma noted that income from membership fees reduced from the previous year due to non-renewal of membership by some corporate members. Emma then expanded on the balance sheet, noting that 'debtors' includes members whose fees were overdue, and 'creditors' included membership fees that were released throughout the year due to fluctuations in membership income. Emma also highlighted CEE's risk, as the business model has been to become self sufficient through membership fees, however, this has not yet been achieved due to swift policy changes and core funding was about to finish. Further funding and income diversification was being looked into and already had some success, with event income up from the previous year.

Emma then invited questions from members. Jon Halle from Sharenergy asked if CEE had ever considered doing projects to generate income, Emma Bridge answered that this would potentially mean competing with members, which CEE does not want to do.

Following a question about the auditing of accounts, Emma then clarified that CEE does not have its accounts independently audited because it clarifies for exemption. The proposal not to have the accounts independently audited was proposed by Jon Halle from Sharenergy and seconded by Chris Rowland from OVESCO.

The accounts were approved (motion put forward by Peter Capener from Bath and West Community Energy and seconded by Giovanna Speciale from South East London Community Energy).

7. Election of Directors

Ginevra Papi and Charlotte Heywood, who had supervised the count, passed the results to the Chair, who announced that Mark Billsborough had been appointed to the board.

8. Any other business

No other business was reported.

Afsheen thanked all members for their continued support and closed the meeting.