

## DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING

**Meeting:** Celtic Interconnector Community Forum

**Date:** 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023

**Venue:** Online

**Participating:**

**Irish Rural Link** – James Claffey, Brendan Mulry, Seamus Boland

**EirGrid** - Michelle Walsh, Jamie Moore

**SECAD** – Katie Kearns, Elaine Barrett, Nuala O’Connell

**East Cork Community Representatives** - Evelyn Forde Carrigtwohill Community Council, Orla McGovern Castlemartyr Community Council, Fred Whelan Curtin Imogeela Community Sports Hall, Jim Barry Carrigtwohill & District Historical Society, Maria Walsh Youghal Chamber of Tourism and Development, Robert Barry Knockraha Area Community Development, Anne O’Neill Killeagh Community Council, Grainne Furey, Youghal Blue and Green Community Network, Ivor Knowles, Ballintotis Area Community Council, Marguerite Cremin, Knockraha Environmental Group, Cllr. Anthony Barry Cobh MDC

**Apologies** Michael Falahee Castlemartyr GAA,

**Compiled by** Irish Rural Link

Item	Description
1.	<p><b>Introduction and Minutes of Previous Meetings</b></p> <p>James Claffey (Chairperson) opened the meeting, facilitated participant introductions, and introduced the agenda.</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting (December 6th) were agreed, proposed by Orla McGovern and seconded by Grainne Furey.</p>
2.	<p><b>Update on Celtic Interconnector Project Progress</b></p> <p>Michelle Walsh from EirGrid provided an update on the Celtic Interconnector Project. Key messages included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The project is on schedule.</li><li>• Main contractors have been appointed for the Cable and Converter Station. The Main contractors are Siemens Energy for the converter stations and Nexans for the cable.</li><li>• In March 2023 Sorensen were appointed as the civil subcontractor by Nexans for the cable works.</li><li>• Site investigations to inform the design are commencing in April at Knockraha heading towards Youghal. These will involve minor works and some temporary lane closures.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trenching and Duct work to commence in Knockraha in late May and those affected will be contacted by Nexans and Sorensen directly. Information events will be scheduled on the works in the coming weeks.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Questions/ Comments</b>	<b>Answers/Response</b>
	Can the presentation be shared?	The presentation will be shared with the forum.
	Can this presentation be subsequently shared by forum members with their networks?	Yes, sharing this information is encouraged. EirGrid also have a large database that information is shared with and will be relying on the forum to spread awareness of the information days when scheduled. A core function of the forum is to ensure a two-way information channel back from the community.
	Are EirGrid responsible for Broadband being down in the Youghal area yesterday (April 4th)	No works were being carried out by EirGrid. EirGrid have put in place a clear signage system that Sorensen will be using with contact phone numbers. Michelle Walsh (EirGrid) to be contacted if this is not evident.
	The first community newsletter will be available in the coming weeks.	
3.	<p><b>Presentation from SECAD on Community Benefit Fund progress</b></p> <p>Katie Kearns from SECAD provided an update on the Celtic Interconnector Community Benefit Fund. Key messages included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Strategy document was shared with the forum in the previous week and sincere thanks to the forum for their critical role in the strategy development and providing local knowledge and sharing information with their communities during the process.</li> <li>Thanks also to EirGrid for their flexible response to the various ideas and proposals put forward.</li> <li>SECAD are now developing the online application system and fund guidelines to facilitate applications.</li> <li>The fund will open in early summer with date to be confirmed.</li> <li>Community Groups are encouraging to start planning project ideas now and to work with SECAD.</li> <li>Once opened the fund will open for six-eight weeks and SECAD will be available to assist with guidance support and training as needed.</li> <li>The fund will be publicised widely and the forums support for dissemination will be needed as well.</li> </ul>	
	<b>Questions / Comments</b>	<b>Answer/Response</b>
	No questions or comments were raised.	
4	<b>Forum Agreement Sign off of the Strategy Document</b>	

	<p>James Claffey (Chairperson) requested that the forum consider sign off on agreement on the Strategy Document with a proposer and seconder called for. Amendments if necessary to be facilitated by email after the meeting. Comments and questions were invited from the forum at this stage. Two queries were raised and addressed (below).</p> <p>The Strategy Document was proposed for agreement by Cllr. Anthony Barry and seconded by Gráinne Furey.</p>	
	<b>Questions / Comments</b>	<b>Answer/Response</b>
	How was the figure of €125,000 grant ceiling arrived at?	Looking at the spread of communities across the cable area to arrive at a balanced figure is the rationale for the figure. There is however scope to exceed this amount in exceptional circumstances. The fund is envisaged to provide part financing in large scale capital investment projects.
	In relation to the 2km range, how are organisations like UCC and St. Itas GAA club outside of this range involved?	A limited number of groups outside this range had an input into the online consultation. 95% of the input was locally based on from a service to be delivered with the range.
5	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
	No items arose.	
6	<p><b>Next Steps</b></p> <p>The next Community Forum meeting will be arranged for the end of May. Date to be confirmed. This can be online or in person and in this regard forum members are asked to make suggestions.</p> <p>James Claffey (Chairperson) closed the meeting and thanked members for attending.</p>	