

FOE Meeting 14.06.16
Quaker Meeting House.
York.

There were thirty people in attendance. Simon Bowens was facilitator. Various fracking groups and towns were represented Pocklington, Ryedale, Harrogate and District, Hambleton, East Yorkshire, York, Kirby Misperton and Cleveland.

The Agenda included a Public Relations offensive and the waste and Minerals plan.

It was explained that a legal route was being taken. A Judicial Review had been requested on 27th May 2016. This takes 6 weeks. FOE are awaiting a response from NYCC this takes 2 weeks. Then, it is up to a Judge to decide if there is going to be a Judiciary review. If he/she decides on this it will take place October /November 2016. The NYCC and 3rd Energy have to re decide the planning application which will bring everything nearer the Council Elections. So, Councillors could have more to lose in the voting stakes.

Usually once a Judicial Review is on the scene this would put 3rd Energy on hold. More delays and time is money. By November it is estimated that 3rd Energy will be £23million in the red. There is a scarcity of financial backing which is Barclays and it was mooted as a risky investment. In a Court of Law it will be impossible to prove bias in the planning committee decision so there is no point pursuing this course in over turning the planning decision to go ahead with fracking Ryedale. If the planning application is proven to be invalid it will be rerun. This will cause more delays.

The financial costs of a Judicial review will be around £10,000 with expert legal advice costs to be added. However, all other legal costs will be pro bono. Bearing this in mind it will be essential to fund raise to cover bills incurred.

Due to use of the Aarhus Convention if the case is lost only the above financial amount will be lost we will not have to pay 3rd Energy costs also. There is a window of 2 to 4 weeks when Judge will decide whether there is a case. The method of choosing a Judge and criteria used is unknown.

The Possibility of a camp at Kirby Misperton was discussed. Although the villagers were unhappy about the prospect of fracking, they were also unhappy about a camp being held. There had been a lot of time and effort put into gaining the support of residents from KM and it was thought that it may not be quite the right time to approach this subject as all was in limbo at the moment anyway. There was a feeling that all the public relations put in by the fracking groups to gain the confidence of the residents would be destroyed by the suggestion of a camp.

A walk from Middlesbrough to Kirby Misperton is being organized but no one from Middlesbrough group was present to give any details on this event. However, it is planned for 16th July leaving Middlesbrough at 6am and arriving very late in KM with a candlelit vigil.

Another event is a large rally in York with an estimate of 2,000 people attending. The date for this gathering will be 30th July. It is hoped that many celebrities will come. Anne McIntosh, Judy Dench, Councillor Blackie Jon Ashton and Vivienne Westwood were the suggestions. The aim of this is a feeling to protect Yorkshire and to make new contacts and of course cake.

On September 2nd there may be a FOE event involving a visit to Drifffield where Cuadrilla, Ineos and Rathlin have interests.

Neil will make further investigations into Robin Hoods Bay licences and Middlesbrough water treatment plant.

It was emphasised that one of the most important actions one can take is to nip the Extreme Energy companies in the bud. To outreach as many farms and residential properties with leaflets informing the public of the lies they will be told about seismic surveys on their land. Apparently, in hindsight if farmers had known they were going to frack on their land instead of believing the lies about it just being about conventional wells, the farmers would have refused permission.

Also, some members of the group told the others that it is very difficult convincing residents of Sheriff Hutton about the reality and consequences environmentally of fracking in their village. It was suggested that those who had been hoodwinked could give talks to the potential residents near fracking sites.

However, there had been an article in Farmers Weekly warning farmers to say no to PR oil and gas employees knocking on their doors.

It was also important if anyone hears any rumours about seismic testing in their area to inform the Parish Council immediately. Seismic testing must be thwarted as they are capable of being carried out a swathe of land between designated areas in one fell swoop. If they are unable to carry out seismic testing then they are stopped at the first hurdle. The PR teams will use every trick in the book to deceive land owners and householders to perform these preliminary tests.

It is possible to disrupt these tests if they have begun. Dislodging marker flags. An incident in Romania was related when activists had removed all the equipment used in their seismic testing. In itself seismic testing is not an innocuous procedure. It includes drilling and explosive charges. Also, Trucks are used to cause vibrations beneath the surface.

It is up to the Free fracking network to warn farmers and locals and it was suggested that one may be able to obtain names of farmers and landowners and leaflet drop at cattle markets.

Keeping an eye on Frack Off website was a good idea as they were keeping records of new ventures.

It was stated that when damage had been caused by seismic testing and homeowners had been given compensation this had been given on the understanding that a gagging order would be part and parcel of the deal. The film 'Voices from the gasfields' had a piece in it about this topic.

Greenpeace had become involved in Seismic Surveys as it had discovered that the explosions had raised pathogens in the soil. There was a lot of protocol to proceed with seismic surveys A) The Company has to give information on a Planning Portal of their intentions. B) They have to gain permission from Police Department to give approval for the use of explosives.

Outreach with Soil Association and farmers markets were suggested and FOE had already made contacts with Look North, Yorkshire Post(who had previously been sceptical of the anti fracking movement but were slowly coming around to our stance) There was a countryside section in the YP which people were encouraged to write into. Press Releases could be sent to all these media outlets.

PR Offensive.

FOE spoke about the successful gathering outside the Spa in Scarborough which was unexpected by the Fracking companies.

Ineos had held a PR event in May in Malton, Chesterfield and Chester. Ineos had invited both public and Parish Councillors.

Their PR presentations were the same as the ones in Scotland and were not bespoke to Yorkshire area.

Apparently, someone had said that Ineos had informed an activist that Ineos were sharing information on the anti frackers with Police Intelligence.

On the 6th July in Manchester there is to be an Oil and gas Industry briefing to local Authorities on how to successfully get the public on ones side.

This could be an opportunity to protest outside the venue also FOE had purchased a ticket for £200 to attend.

On 23-24th June there is a coach organized to Liverpool for Tina Rotherys trial. Maybe someone could contact Emma Thompson to attend. Tina Rothery T shirts. Graham Martin will have these with him on the bus.

On Wednesday 22nd June at 7pm there is a Fracking Information evening in Scalby. St, Lawrence Church hall. As this will give members of the public to ask the energy companies questions Neil and Annette volunteered to attend and give feedback.

The equipment used in ascertaining methane emissions had been found to be faulty. These inaccurate figures had been the ones used in the proposals for KM8 and at Lancashire. This makes an absolute mockery of the allegedly gold standards which 3rd Energy spoke about at the KM 8 decision meeting.

It was reiterated that we should keep our eyes and ears open all the time to monitor Extreme Energy Companies activities. Always distribute any information to Parish Councillors.

There is to be a Minerals plan meeting 27th June in West Offices opposite York Station. People are encouraged to write to the Scrutiny Committee before the meeting to ask questions. It includes the City of York and North York Moors National park. Our main concerns are sections 16,17,18 on 3 policies which are to do with waste water /re injection. It would be good to have a lot of people in the public gallery.

An event on 23rd July in Manchester. No venue as yet but will be kept informed. It will be a gathering/conference and skill share. Also an FOE planner to be present.

It was also discussed that Groundswell Rising is to be screened at City Screen in York.

Someone spoke about the problem of insurance where there was fracking taking place. Someone was to contact Andy Rowell who was freelance journalist and is a useful contact. If your home is damaged by fracking you are not insured.

A member of the group said that someone had already lost 2 potential buyers in Kirby Misperton when they heard about fracking.

Meeting ended 9pm.

Minutes taken by Annette Hudspeth.

Member of Frack Free Cleveland.