

Oil company prickly over our questions

From Sylvia May, Totland:

IT WAS encouraging to see a good number of Islanders attending the UKOG Community Liaison Meeting.

Feedback from those attending has been varied as reported on Drill or Drop.

With regard to the slick "factual" handout created for the occasion and the panels within the room it was disappointing to see that UKOG felt the need to make derogatory statements in the opening paragraph about their information being accurate and "to counter the fiction being circulated by well-known and ill-informed scaremongers".

This seems more like a tactic to dismiss legitimate concerns on topics that deserve detailed scrutiny.

Frack-Free IOW has previously provided detailed rebuttal of similar claims, including documented evidence from publicly available videos and written statements to investors made by Stephen Sanderson on behalf of UKOG, and would be happy to do so again.

We witnessed some UKOG representatives were less than happy to answer questions about concerns or have them recorded.

One of our subscribers stated: "Their language was not user friendly and they were quick to use terms and wording that would not be of common use to those outside of the organisation."

Another said: "I asked if they had been in contact with Hampshire and IW Wildlife Trust and Gift to Nature to gain their views and expertise about the biodiversity of the Island; they said they had not but the trusts would have the opportunity to put their objections in after planning had gone in."

One troubling statement, in response to my question regarding an Environmental Impact Assessment, was their view it would not be required but it would be up to the IW Council planning department to insist one was undertaken.

We hope to be able to influence this decision in the future.

Another was the statement made by Stephen Sanderson that they would need to generate cash from their Horse Hill site to be able to fund their IW projects.

We will see whether a profit from that venture actually materialises.