**Windfarm Panel**

**Minutes of Meeting of 25th January 2021**

**Meeting held by Zoom**

**1 In Attendance**

Trust representatives (leaving meeting at 8.46pm) Jill Patrick, David King

Community Council representatives David King, Julie Cole, Douglas Barr

Community representatives

Mark Evans, Alison Younger (Chair), Chloe Bruce, Jackie Campbell (from 7.30pm), Fiona McCartney.

* 1. **Apologies**

There were no apologies, but Alison Younger intimated that Ian Young had notified her of his resignation to concentrate on other, outside, interests. She thanked him for his participation in the Panel during the recent trying circumstances and asked that Panel members use all endeavours to find a suitable replacement for him (Bugle, canvass contacts…). **Action ALL**

Alison Younger directed Panel Members to a new document (Wind Farm Panel Members) in the Official Documents > Conflict of Interest section of the Dropbox. This documents members’ known start dates and anticipated retiral dates. Membership of the Panel was for a maximum of 4 years for community reps with those from Community Council and Community Trust subject to a 2 yearly review.

1. **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes were approved however Jackie Campbell subsequently requested some minor corrections to be dealt with subsequently.

1. **Declarations of Interest**

The following Panel Members took no part in discussions in applications where they had an interest.

Application Number 56.GWF 2-21 Litter Pick

Interest – Chloe Bruce – Family connection with the applicant

Application Number 58.GWF 4-21 GCT (Paths Subgroup) - Charlies Loan

Interest – David King (member of Paths subgroup)

Application Number 59.GWF 5-21 GCT (Paths Subgroup) – Under the Craigs

Interest – David King (member of Paths subgroup)

Application Number 54.GWF 47–20 GCT Community Centre - Sinking fund

Interest – David King and Jill Patrick - Gargunnock Community Trust members

1. **Balance of Funds**

Bank Balance £31,120.00

Grants committed but not yet paid (£2,938.10)

VAT due to be repaid (£367.00)

Advised Balance £28, 434.84

1. **Applications**

No.55.

GWF 1-21 SWRI – Zoom meetings £400.00

This application was to support ongoing meetings for the Gargunnock Women’s Institute through provision of a zoom licence, speakers’ fees for six meetings and cost of supplies of materials to support meetings and other community activities this season.

The group’s accounts demonstrated that the Group holds no surplus funds with costs being covered and no more. The WRI Treasurer, Grace Smellie, advised that the group generally supported its activities through raffles and other fundraising activities which were currently not possible. She mentioned that they had initially considered whether it could continue during lockdown, but realised there was a clear and urgent need for members to keep in contact with each other. After some initial difficulties, many were now embracing new technologies and keen to ‘meet’ more. Grace reported on activities that had successfully taken place – including a car treasure hunt and the advent window displays – and advised that they had plans for further activities to cheer up the village in coming months.

Decision

The Panel approved the application in full and agreed to award £400.

No. 56

GWF 2-21 Litter Pick £461.09 including VAT

Gilly Bruce sought funds to purchase litter picking equipment and protective clothing for volunteer litter pickers to help keep the village litter-free.

Her idea was based on schemes that she had witnessed in other areas, and upon consultation with the Council. She does not represent a formal group - instead, she had canvassed opinion on social media and found there to be interest from potential volunteers. Each volunteer would be issued with the necessary equipment to keep them safe. Gilly would keep a record of who had been issued with equipment and monitor their use perhaps half yearly. She would ask for the return of any unused equipment, clean it and re-issue it to later volunteers. She suggested that equipment might be stored at the Community Centre before it was issued. She hoped that, once lockdown was over, that group litter picks might be promoted.

Discussion

Was this an application by an individual or a non-constituted group? It was agreed that as more than one person would be involved in the litter pick it could be seen as a ‘non-constituted group’. Was this a statutory responsibility of the Council? Yes, but not exclusively.

Decision

The Panel approved the application in full and agreed to award up to £461.09 and asked the Trust to consider whether they could purchase the equipment, thus saving on the VAT element.

No. 57

GWF 3-21 Callander Young Farmers Club - club clothing - request for £500

The application is for embroidered club logos on clothing for members. The proposal is that the club and its members would meet the cost of the clothing, but that the application would then pay for embroidery of club logo and name on them (roughly £5 per item of clothing).

Club Treasurer, Eilidh Graham represented Callander YFC. She explained the club attracted around 40-50 members from a wide rural area covering Lochearnhead, Aberfoyle, Fintry and Dunblane. She thought that perhaps as many as 10 members had connections with Gargunnock. This was their first application for funding, but she was open to considering approaching other sources.

Discussion

The Panel commended the exceptional contribution that the Young Farmers movement made to young people from rural areas in general, and more particularly to the assistance that Callander YFC made to the Gargunnock Show. Reservations were expressed about Gargunnock representing no more than 1/5 of the Club’s membership and there being other Wind Farm funds that could be approached. There was also recognition that the age range of the group (14- 28) was under-represented in Wind Farm grants generally.

Decision

It was felt that a partial approval of the application was appropriate – to represent the interest of the village in the wider catchment. The Panel therefore approved the grant of 20% of the total cost of the clothing up to £319.36.

Conditions

* The funding is to go to the provision of clothing embroidered with the Club name and logo.
* The Club was encouraged to seek funding from other Windfarm Funds (e.g. Kippen /Fintry) which also fell within their Club catchment area.

No. 58

GWF 4-21 GCT (Paths Subgroup) - Charlies Loan - matched £497.00

This application was for the replacement of the current steps in the Charlies Loan footpath by a sloping (step free) path more suitable both for walkers and for buggies. After protracted negotiations, the group has been successful in securing agreement that Stirling Council will meet the bulk of the expenditure – around £6,000 for surface materials and side boarding – so long as the Paths Subgroup’s volunteers undertook the works themselves. The path would be re-modelled to have a steep camber to allow rainwater to drain freely away from the surface. The old steps could then be abandoned. The Paths Group would also erect a refurbished bench (originally from the Rest Garden) on the slope above the path. The application covered sundry costs associated with the works – pegs to hold the boards in place, membrane to hold gravel and restrict weed growth, screws, hire of equipment etc – without which, the works could not proceed.

Discussion

The Panel felt it was a most comprehensive application, noted the match funding and a worthwhile cause, but had some concerns that the drainage was going to be sufficient.

Decision

The Panel approved the application in full for £497 but encouraged the sub-group to ensure that drainage design was carefully considered to minimise wash off from the path surface. **Action - GCT Paths Sub Group**

No. 59.

GWF 5-21 GCT (Paths Subgroup) – Under the Craigs signposting £100.00

This application is to replace waymarking poles along the route of this path. The applicant (Gavin Fleming) did not attend the meeting.

Discussion

The Panel accepted the need for these poles as so few of the originals remained. There was discussion about general access to this area and the possibility, in due course, of exploring further works to assist accessibility.

Decision

Application approved £100 in full.

No. 61

GWF 8-21 Arnprior Nursery – Mud Kitchen and garden equipment £355.74

The application was submitted by Jolanda McNeill, Admin Assistant for Arnprior Nursery.

The Nursery is Council run and funded, but budgets for equipment and supplies are restricted. Arnprior Nursery, like other educational establishments, is expected to make good any shortfall by its own means. This application is part of a wider need to improve the garden area to offer more outside play for the pupils including the replacement of the surface likely to cost up to £8,000. The garden is limited in size and constrained by main road and buildings, so any improvement in the provision of equipment is greatly appreciated to make the best use of the space available. The applicant sought funds for a Mud Kitchen plus garden gloves, and garden spades, forks and rakes.

Pre-school places for Gargunnock children are available at both Arnprior and Cambusbarron nurseries however the majority of the village children currently attend the former. The Nursery roll is around 70 children of which there are around 15 from Gargunnock. Usual fundraising avenues are restricted at present, but the Nursery has recently been successful in securing a grant from Kippen Windfarm for sensory equipment to support children with additional needs.

Decision

Award of £355.74 approved in full.

No. 54.

GWF 47–20 GCT Community Centre - Sinking fund £5,000 p.a for three years from 2023

This detailed application was a continuation of discussions from the last meeting.

The original application was for £25,000 sinking fund to provide the Community Centre with a cushion for the next 5 years to meet both scheduled and unplanned maintenance and repair costs. £10,000 had already been agreed (for the first two years), but the Panel wished further clarification on the remaining £5,000 a year for the later three years.

Douglas Johnston, Fabric Convenor of the Community Centre, made a powerpoint presentation to illustrate the application. He explained that the Centre had commissioned a full condition survey to assess the condition of the property and advise upon the likely cost of future works, both over the next 5 years and the next 30 years. The projected costs for the next five years were around £69,400, covering planned / cyclical maintenance, major component replacement (the largest component being the roof), preventative action and backlog repairs.

Douglas advised that, in his experience, the programming of such works could be flexible. The request for a sinking fund was made so as to give the Centre both comfort and flexibility to respond to future events – whether a fundraising opportunity or an unplanned failure. There was no expectation that these funds would be exhausted over the five year period, but having such guaranteed funds available would also place the Trust in a better situation to lever other funds from government bodies, trusts, environmental bodies. The overall plan for the Community Centre was not just to maintain the structure, but also, in the medium term, for it to become as carbon neutral as possible. Douglas agreed that, should significant grant assistance be forthcoming from other sources, the Trust may well be able to repay some of the sinking fund, or carry it forward to support expenditure in subsequent years, subject of course to what the next condition survey (in 2025 or later) revealed. Once sinking funds were in place, he would be able to turn his attention to investigating alternative and external funding sources and creatively managing funds to the best advantage of the Community Centre.

He submitted income and expenditure budgets, and cashflow charts which demonstrated likely shortfalls over the planned 30 year term. He used the example of the Trust’s receipt of the Business Interruption Grant to demonstrate its flexibility in applying incoming funds to suit circumstances (in this case, prioritising fire safety and backlog repairs, using the opportunity to re-decorate the hall, as well as funding anticipated operational deficits for the next two years). He also explained some of the alternatives the Trust were considering for increasing income streams (including the possible re-examination of hall fees). Differential use of modelling had helped to show a range of cashflow scenarios depending on relative optimism of outlook.

Discussion

Whilst scrutiny of the proposal was important, the Panel felt a key role here was to represent what the views of the village might be here as the contribution would reflect 20% of all available windfarm funds over this period. Did the overall plan represent value for money? Was it the best use of Wind Farm funds to deal with under an application for a sinking fund or would it be better to have the large roof repair come in as a standalone application?

It was agreed that the Community Centre is the largest single asset of the village and confirmed that the fund guidelines allowed monies to be awarded for use as a sinking fund for key community assets. It is clearly important that the Trust had sufficient funds to keep the building in good condition at its disposal. The Panel recognised the need to be flexible and adaptive to circumstances, and respected both the time taken and the attention to detail in the proposal before them. Different ways of raising funds were discussed, and it was recognised that fundraising for repair and maintenance matters was substantially more difficult than raising funds for improvement or capital items. Having a sinking fund would however allow the Community Trust to approach external funders with match funding already in place and this would provide perhaps the best opportunity to lever in other funds. It was appreciated that raising funds through the increase of hall user fees was limited in the capacity of those user groups, many charitable, to pay.

Decision

The Panel agreed to fund the Sinking Fund by £5,000pa in years 3-5 of the Community Centre plan, subject to the Trust providing an annual account of the Sinking Fund – what they’ve used the monies for, details of ongoing works, and fundraising targeted, pursued, and achieved.

No. 60.

GWF 7-21 GCT Administrator £1152 p.a.

This application covered the cost of administration of Windfarm Matters for the next five years.

Discussion

Panel members sought clarification from the Trust on the percentage applied. The application requested 4.6% of the total budget, whilst the Terms of Reference (recently approved) stipulated 4%. Douglas Johnston (as outgoing Treasurer) advised that the figures were based upon actual time spent by the outgoing Administrator which would be reviewed after 6 months of the new appointment.

Decision

It was agreed to award 4% of the annual fund to cover administration costs as per the existing Terms of Reference. Following the scheduled 6 monthly review of admin support the Trust could apply for the balance of 0.6% if required - along with a proposal to amend the Terms of Reference as appropriate.

1. **Monitoring / feedback**

52.GWF 45-20 Gargunnock Girlguiding Covid Relief

The initial application for funds was granted in part with the possibility of further funds being made available subject to later actions. Alison Younger advised that Girlguiding were no longer seeking the remaining funds. Jackie Campbell advised that thanks to parental support, Girlguiding were no longer requiring the remaining half of the award.

53.GWF 46-20 GCT Community Centre Covid Relief

This element was not discussed in detail. Helen Hyland advised that she had received notification that the Community Centre had only managed to spend £960.31 to December 2020 out of a grant of £1,208.39. However, they wished to explore whether it would be possible to add January 2021 costs of paying the Community Centre Cleaner during this latest round of lockdown their submission of pre- October costs were ineligible because they were retrospective costs. This would be carried forward to the March meeting. **Action: HH to put onto March Agenda**

1. **Annual Review of Fund Allocations**

Alison Younger referred Panel members to the Grant Tracker document in Dropbox and hoped to be able to discuss this review of the allocation of funds between different age and interest groups at the next meeting. **Action All**

1. **AOCB**

None

1. **Date of next meetings**

Panel Members agreed to the following dates for meetings in 2021. These dates will be displayed on the village website in due course. **Action HH**

29 March

7 June and

4 October