**Gargunnock Community Trust**

**Gargunnock Windfarm Fund Panel Meeting**

**5th October 2020, at 7.30pm via Zoom**

**Adjournment Meeting 19th October, at 7.45pm via Zoom**

**Minutes**

1. **Apologies**

5th October: Ian Young and David King

19th October: Mark Evans, Julie Cole

1. **Attending and Welcome to new members:**

5th October: Alison Younger, Mark Evans, Chloe Bruce, Julie Cole, Jackie Campbell, Jill Patrick, Fiona McCartney, Douglas Barr, Carol MacGregor-Administrator

19th October: Alison Younger, Chloe Bruce, Jackie Campbell, Jill Patrick, Fiona McCartney, Douglas Barr, David King, Ian Young, Carol MacGregor - Administrator

1. **Minutes of 22 June 2020**

Minutes approved.

1. **Declarations of interest**

 GWF 45-20 - Jackie Campbell (Brownie Leader)

 GWF 46-20 – Jill Patrick (Trust member), David King (Trust member)

 GWF 47-20 – Jill Patrick (Trust member) , David King (Trust member)

1. **GASC Application GWF 40-20 – retrospective approval of funds as per 30 March 2020**

Following up on the GASC furlough payments where the award had been given without final Panel approval due to administrative error – payment totalling £563.30 has been made. Approval was agreed retrospectively for this payment as it does meet the funding criteria and the decision in principle that the Panel had previously made.

1. **Current Balance of Funds available**

Foundation Scotland lodged this year’s grant, £24,858.41 on 12th June 2020.

 Current balance at 28th Aug 2020 is £44,695.80

 Spend authorised but not yet transferred:

 Wind farm admin for 2020   GWF 11/18£1,290

Community Flagpoles GWF 23/19 £517.77 grant authorised £535 paid by credit card from another account £517.77 was actual cost.

Gala Committee Marquee GWF 35/20 £462 on hold until next year

 **Total £2,287**

 Balance available at 28th September 2020 =**£42,408.82**

 **Covid Funds – Balance remaining of £2736.70**

 It was noted that the Panel were able to use core funds as well as the Covid Funds for Covid

 applications and that the Panel were not limited by their recommendations to approve the Covid

 applications on this basis. Due to the volume of applications the money will be spent by the deadline.

1. Applications:

**50. GWF 43-20 Playgroup & Toddlers Playgroup Covid Relief (£1507.50) – Nina MacGregor**

Looking for funds to bridge the funding gap short term (6 weeks) due to not being able to carry out any fund-raising activities over the summer. The requirement is only required for short term because they have already secured funding via their long-term funding strategy from the Transitional Fund and Resilience Fund for PPE and outdoor play equipment which is likely to generate income in January 2021.

They have not asked for further short-term funds from the Panel as they are mindful that the amount is limited and there is going to be other applications which will also wish to benefit.

Also, they invoice in December so will be getting income generated from the parents at this point. They just need to money for the next 6-7 critical weeks and they are not concerned about the cash flow thereafter as the medium term fundraising plans to run a Halloween duck race are projected to bring in around £1000 and they will be increasing their fees to parents plus children numbers are increasing.

Debbie has been fundraising for the garden as this was a more engaging reason for potential funders than fundraising to cover cash flow. Also, this would support their other grant applications where match funding is a requirement.

Previous application - GWF 39-20 Playgroup Transition

Question raised as to the intimation in the current application that the previous application had been refused funding when this was not the case.

It was clarified that the refusal documented in the application was pertaining to the Cambusbarron playgroup board of Directors who were uncomfortable with the financial viability of running another satellite unit. Therefore, this partnership did not go ahead. This all occurred in tandem with the start of Covid and therefore this avenue is not being pursued and the committee are concentrating on making Gargunnock Playgroup a viable stand-alone concern. Gargunnock Playgroup is now better organised on a strategic level. One of the key drivers for a collaboration with Cambusbarron was because Gargunnock had lost its Playgroup Manager and Playgroup Assistant Leader and were struggling to fill those positions. As this situation has now been resolved the playgroup committee are now confident in the long-term sustainability of the unit. The parents are also happy with the current situation.

Now they are in a more settled phase and able to move forward independently, the future is looking positive. They have 13 children and it is forecast to increase over the next few months. The demand is positive also as parents working from home have a greater requirement for the service.

**Recommendation**

The Panel recognised the enthusiasm, confidence and hard work that has gone into putting Playgroup back into an even keel. They were also impressed with the application. It is also recognised as a key service for the village. The additional fund-raising efforts that are planned are also noted as being very positive. The Panel were surprised that the application request was not for a greater amount and appreciate that Playgroup were being respectful of other applications which would be applying for the finite amount of Covid Relief available.

Funding agreed in full- £1507.50 to come from the Covid Relief Fund.

* **51. GWF 44-20 GPS Picnic Table (£500) – Janine Rushton**

New government guidelines mean that the 3 classes cannot come together to have lunch. As the restrictions seem long term, it would be good to have the picnic tables/benches for each class to make it more comfortable also for those who wish to draw/read etc during the lunch break which is now wholly outside for the full hour. The benches cost around £700 each (£2100 for all 3) so they are looking to fundraise from a variety of sources to pay for all 3 such as the parent council for one bench, their own resources for a second bench and are asking the wind farm grant to fund £500 towards the third bench. 3 quotes were supplied for similar bench types. The benches are fabricated from recycled plastic which are more durable over several years. They would be utilised separately now but once Covid is not a threat they can bring the benches together for group sessions. These benches could also be used for other community events such as the Gala. They are open to guidance as to whether the benches should be secured to the ground.

Some concern was raised as to the number of times the school has provided applications to the Wind Farm Fund. It was agreed that the Fund Guidelines do not preclude repeat/regular applications from groups and there is no record within the minutes where an application would be refused on that basis. The Chair noted from previous conversations within the Panel it was agreed that they did not want to limit the number of applications per group and this has the support of the Trust and Foundation Scotland as per documentation circulated as part of Item 8. However, the point is made in the guidelines that the application will be strengthened by the evidence of match funding. It is also dependent on the funds that are available at the time of the application and this can also affect the outcome. The Panel can tighten the rules if they wish but as it stands there is no reason to not encourage repeat applications from all groups.

**Recommendation**

The Panel are happy to approve the funding request for £500.

**52. GWF 45-20 Gargunnock Girlguiding Covid Relief (£1698.50) – Jackie Campbell**

Application on behalf of Gargunnock Brownies and Gargunnock Guides.

Girlguiding UK invoice annually in January with payment required by the end of February.

Both groups paid at the end of February 2020 and then were not able to run the groups from March due to Covid and therefore did not charge the parents resulting in no income coming in. Due to Covid they do not foresee being able to start the groups again until 2021. Girlguiding UK have notified them that they will still be charged at in January 2021 with both groups having to pay the annual fee for each child which is £39.50 each. This is calculated by the number of girls and volunteers that are registered on the Girlguiding database for each unit, even if the Unit is not active. Both groups foresee that they will not be able to run until the start of 2021 at the earliest due to the nature of the activities that they run. There are no Girlguiding units up and running currently in Forth Valley.

As it stands Girlguiding UK are not foregoing the annual fee as they have their own overheads to pay for.

Other sources of funding have been investigated but none are viable and balances on account show that both groups do not have enough funds to pay the fees at the end of January 2021.

Girlguiding UK will be asking for £790 from Brownies and £908.50 from Guides based on the forecast taken from the number of girls on the database.

The girls moving on and the waiting list has been factored in the calculations, only paying the fees for the leaders would not be feasible.

If they can’t pay for the invoice, then the future of both groups is uncertain.

Jackie Campbell, having declared an interest as the applicant, left the meeting for the consideration of this item.

It was clarified that the request is for the fund to be given to them in January 2021.

It was recognised that not all families are in the position to have the disposable income to be able to pay for their child’s membership (when no service is currently viable) and this would be amplified with families of multiple children.

It was also discussed that Girlguiding’s response is quite poor and unsupportive of their units and does not fit in with the overriding ethos of the organisation. Also, they are a national organisation who are having to adjust like every other large organisation in the country and should not be asking the ‘foot soldiers’ to bear the cost when there are other business decision avenues open to a large organisation. Should the Gargunnock community’s money go towards supporting a national organisation.

Locally other groups/clubs have not charged their members fees for services not available.

**Recommendation**

The Panel understand how frustrating it must be that Girlguiding UK are not assisting the individual groups financially when they are unable to provide the service. Equally the Panel do not wish to see the village’s 2 Girlguiding groups close because of this.

Panel are happy to recommend approval of 50% of the requested funds - £849.50 with a request that:

1/ they go back and make representation to Girlguiding UK to reduce the level of the fees

2/ they go to the parents with a survey to establish if there is an appetite for parents to contribute to partial payment.

3/ welcome to come back to January with a further request for help once the results of points 1 and 2 are known.

The funds should be drawn from the remaining balance of Covid Relief Funds with the balance being met from the Windfarm fund.

* **53. GWF 46-20 GC Trust CC Covid Relief (£1204.78) – Douglas Johnston**

Having declared an interest as a Gargunnock Communty Trust Board Member Jill Patrick took no part in the discussion of this application.

The Trust were applying for funds from the Covid Relief funds towards the costs in readying the community centre for reopening. Acknowledging the concern regarding the retrospective part of the request, Douglas noted these costs are likely to be ongoing. Objective is to ensure that the community can use the CC in a safe and meaningful way.

Risk assessment and guidance has been completed for the users to ensure it is safe and additional material costs are likely to be required on an ongoing basis for at least the next 6 months and beyond.

What is required is hand sanitisers plus additional Covid cleaning requirements. Stirling Council prefer to give grants instead of access to equipment etc and that they are not as far forward in organising their own properties.

It was confirmed that the amount already paid is £608 which leaves £596 as part of the application for future spend eligible for Covid relief. This money would go towards paying for cleaning materials and hand sanitisers over the next 3 months, and not the additional cleaning costs. A grant, if available, to assist with Covid costs for the next 6 months would be welcomed.

With reference to the 3 quotes, these require to be provided. The cheapest place has been Bookers, and this should be evidenced. The additional cleaning forms another quote and buying chemicals. There is a projection detailed in the application, but it only covers the cleaning materials and not the cleaner.

The rules surrounding retrospective funding are very strict in that it is not permissible. There have been occasions with Covid Funds and other panels where exceptional grants have been awarded to meet anticipated, but as of yet unspecified, burden of Covid related costs, and in this case evidence would be required in due course as to what is was spent on.

Regarding the provision of 3 quotes the Panel have been made aware that online research was carried out for cost comparison purposes and that Booker has been selected as the most suitable supplier. The Panel are comfortable with this outcome.

**Interim Recommendation**

The Panel noted they could not make a retrospective award for monies already spent but were understanding of the additional cost pressure Covid had had on the running costs for the Community Centre.

They agreed to make an award of £596 towards the future expenditure detailed in the application on the basis that further information was provided on quotes and costs.

In the extenuating circumstances it was also agreed that the applicant be invited to rework the application to detail the additional anticipated costs discussed so that an additional award of £608.78 could be legitimately made. The Panel agreed they would be happy for this revised application to be circulated to members for approval via email. A total award of £1204.78 could then be made from the Covid Relief fund.

**Final recommendation**

The reworked application was considered by the adjourned meeting on the 19th October and listed expenditure items to ensure the hall was safe to reopen. David

 King was also in attendance for the adjourned meeting on the 19th October and subsequently

 both he and Jill Patrick had a conflict of interest as Directors of the Trust and left the meeting.

**Panel agreed the following recommendation:**

The Panel are happy to approve the funding request from the Covid Relief Fund for £1204.78 for additional expenditure relating to the reopening of the Community Centre in a safe manner. The Panel were satisfied that the smaller cleaning items had been price checked and that Booker offered value for money for these purchases, so 3 quotes were not needed to be submitted. The 3 quotes for the hand sanitisers however did need to be provided for files before the monies were released, and the panel were happy to approve funding for the preferred sanitiser, having been assessed by the Trust as better quality than the cheaper quote.

* **54. GWF 47-20 GC Trust CC Sinking Fund (£25,000) – Douglas Johnston**

Having declared an interest as a Gargunnock Communty Trust Board Member Jill Patrick took no part in the discussion of this application.

Douglas prepared a presentation for the Panel.

Reason for the application, looking at the Community Centre financial asset plan 2020-25, consists of 2 elements - the CC condition survey and the CC financial model to take account of all current information including expenditure. This is to maintain the asset over the next 30 years including

* the planned maintenance cycle over the next 30 years,
* major component replacements that will be required,
* preventative action to stop the property going into disrepair,
* deal with back log repairs that have been identified and
* equipment replacement.

Over the next 5 years the survey has identified that £12600 is needed for cyclical repairs, £24000 is needed for component replacement, preventative action £8850 and backlog repairs £23950, total of £69400. The projection over 30 years is £380000.

Vast majority of works is for the roof which were not carried out in original refurbishment and this will be required over the next 5 years.

The strategy is to prioritise backlog repairs, carry out planned cyclical maintenance, include all equipment replacement and build the sinking fund. Also, to seek other grant assistance where that is possible, some of which has already been achieved.

Income expected £18700/year

Expenditure (excluding major investment) £15800/year

Projected 30-year deficit £8193k per year forecast at current income levels.

If they increase their charges, then the deficit will decrease by 20% to £7487/year which is still significant.

£19k required over next 5 years for backlog plus major roof works required at a cost of £24000.

Without the major cost of a capital works there was a consistent surplus however due to the impact of Covid there are 2 other scenarios. The 2020-21 assumption is that the planned income will be down by 60% and in 2021-22 it will be down by 40%. The anticipated result is that it will take 2 years to get out of a deficit situation.

Deficit in real terms is £8000 in year 1 and just over £5000 in year 2, whereas before they were breaking even. It Costs around £1k a month to run the CC if you consider all the fixed and variable costs.

Have had a business interruption grant from the Government of £25k which has allowed them to do the backlog of the fire safety work as a priority and redecorating which was 2 years after the initial work plans.

 The £25000 is also to leverage the operating deficit but it is not enough to cover the scale of

 business interruption which the CC is suffering.

The sinking fund of £5,000 a year amounting to £25000 however the overall 5-year projection is that £70,000 is required. The difference is made up of £8000 that has already been spent on the decoration and fire risk assessment works (Not including the fire doors at the garden room and the main hall). The balance of the business interruption scheme is earmarked for covering the deficit in hall fees over the next 2 years, but it is also earmarked to cover heating costs.

In addition it is forecast that they will be able to achieve the works for 10-15% less when they go to market through careful tendering and contact managing plus they have the residual of the money from the business interruption scheme and also the £9000 from previous sinking fund allocations which they still have. So through careful management it will be balanced.

It would be phased in a way to minimise the set-up costs of each stage. Also rolled out as one major contract there is less competition and therefore costs are heightened as opposed to several smaller projects where there is higher competition. One option is looking to build a relationship with a smaller contractor who can do the work over the years and to see if that is more cost effective.

Regarding doing all the works in one go to save on set up costs was deemed as not cost saving in reality. It would be phased in a way to maximise the savings.

It is preferential to allow multiple smaller suppliers to tender to encourage competition as opposed to a few larger suppliers which would potentially drive the cost up. The surveyor has recommended 2 courses of action.

1. Spread the work over a period to save costs
2. Develop a long-term relationship with a local contractor who would develop with the project.

As the surveyor is published book price, hoping to save 10-15% on this.

Another £20k not included in the forecasting from the lost income from the CC. Increased cleaning costs will need to be factored in. The Trust are confident that they can manage the anomalies in the figures through careful management but if the Panel were to approve £6k or £7k a year for the sinking fund then that would be very welcome.

Regarding whether there is a viable business plan that sits behind the CC so that money isn’t going into something that is always going to fall short, the forecast was that it was always going to fall short. The CC cost £880k to refurbish after 20 years of neglect when owned by the Council. It was always the intention to seek a sinking fund to assist with the fundamental maintenance requirements long term. The number one priority is to look after the key asset which is there. The level of investment to maintain the property at its current standard will cost £320k over the next 30 years so that costs are not increased further down the line due to poor ongoing maintenance.

The backlog repairs were not specifically itemised but include soffits, dormer windows, plus a whole range of these types of items. Risk assessment highlighted requirements for fire doors for the garden room and main hall. The Panel noted that clarity over what the sinking fund will pay for would be welcome so that further applications can be assessed on whether the applications should be covered by the sinking fund. However, a sinking fund by its nature is flexible in terms of what it will be needed for. For example, they have managed to save £9k of the previous 3 years sinking funds by careful cost management.

The question was asked around match funding however routine refurbishment does not fall into most criteria and there are limited funding sources for this, however they are continually looking into this.

To sum up the request, the Trust are looking for £10k imminently and a further £5k drawn down in subsequent years which is the total of £25k over a 5 year period.

It was noted that the original application for sinking funds was curtailed to 3 years so that new Panel members did not inherit a prior agreed funding grant in their fund year. As Panel members are more rolling now this may not be such an issue.

The panel broadly noted the merit in maintaining the asset now so that it does not cost more in the future. Although the long-term business plan is not able to cover all costs, the Community Centre is an important resource for the Community and with Covid being around for the short to medium future, there is merit in assisting this. However, there is some ambiguity around what the sinking fund will cover compared to what any future ad hoc applications from the Trust may look for further funds towards. It has also been noted that a lot of assumptions have had to be made to arrive at the final figures. Would prefer greater transparency and clarity around the figures. It’s is unfortunate that the business plan is projecting a £320k loss by the end of the 30 years. Questions raised as to whether that is a legacy that should be left to the village when there may be alternative sustainable business models that could reduce overall external funding requirements. The Trust are projecting a 25% requirement of the total annual wind farm fund as part of their business plan with additional scope for ad hoc applications which means there is a question surrounding its sustainability. If it is only sustainable on that basis then the Trust should be up front, and the community should be made aware of this so that annual fundraising can be planned around this. It is likely that most of the village thinks that the CC is financially stable.

Noted also that the Trust are volunteers and are looking to find the best solution and have a list of what are the critical repairs required.

Would it be better to look at the requirements of the CC holistically rather than approving a sinking fund and then ad hoc applications in addition to the sinking fund for items which are foreseeable? Rather that salami slicing it may be more accountable to look at what the overall commitment will be to sustain the CC over its lifespan. However, the sinking fund will give them leverage to apply for funds elsewhere. If there is a major repair project ie. the boiler breaks down, then this is always the problem with capital maintenance of buildings. It is noted that there is a difference between a force majeure incident compared with equipment that is at the end of its operational life and back log maintenance projects. Previously applications coming from the Trust have been for foreseeable items and this is after the original sinking fund was agreed.

**Recommendation**

Will recommend the payment of £10k now.

Before a further grant is agreed to be awarded the Panel request that the Trust provide a list of items that they foresee as being included within the sinking fund and profiled over the 5-year period plus projections of other anticipated costs that could fall within this. The Panel would like to see a holistic application rather than agreeing to a sinking fund amount and then additional applications for foreseeable items coming in each meeting.

1. **Monitoring / feedback**
* GWF 26-19 Stirling County U15’s Tour to France – kit

Panel agree that the money has been spent in accordance with the original award.

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 **Adjournment Meeting 19th October, at 7.45pm via Zoom**

1. **Review of official docs: MOU / Terms of Ref / Fund guidelines (emailed 28 Sept 2020)**

Due to the late time it was agreed to conclude item 9, Monitoring and Feedback and then adjourn the meeting to Monday 19th October to allow Item 8, Review of Official Documents to be discussed in full.

This item considered the official documentation for the Panel in terms of how it operates. The MOU is the overarching document between Foundation Scotland (acting for the funders )and the Gargunnock Community Trust who are acting as the official administrator of the funds and supporting the Panel. The structure is quite unusual, so it has been a worthy journey to establish how the various stakeholders work together and their responsibilities. This process will occur every 3 years.

The review of the documents began at the start of the year bringing together the views and requirements of the Panel and the Trust.

There was a 3-way meeting with the Trust and Foundations Scotland and Panel Chair to finalise the changes. All the Panel’s views were represented taken on board and Foundation Scotland are happy with the results.

MOU

Amendments made to document for 3.2 and 5.5 removing surplus terminology

Document approved by Panel.

Terms of Reference

Amendment made to 5.3 including notification to the administrator placed in the wording

6.2 – Foundation Scotland recommended it be changed to aged 16 and over due to issues regarding vulnerable groups if aged 15.

Further suggestion from Foundation Scotland is to put in the option for decisions being able to be made via able where there were difficulties making the quorum.

It was noted that the earlier prepared flowchart was missing from the document and asked that it be reinstated for final version.

Document approved by Panel.

Guidelines

Alison confirmed that the responsibility sat with the Panel for fund strategy i.e. the guidelines and mechanisms for distribution of the funds. This meant that the Panel could adjust guidelines and structures in the future i.e. if they want to limit repeat applications, or dedicate strategic funds to a significant community project. Ultimately the funds should be focused on helping the community meet local priorities, for example if there was a community action plan or strategy that had been robustly produced and widely consulted on then the Panel should want to make sure the fund strategy was able to act as an enabler for these priorities. Consultation with the Trust around any changes was important to ensure both were working in a collaborative manner.

3.2 – it was minuted on the 22nd June that all applications (small, large and major) will require 3 quotes for work to be obtained so this is now amended to reflect this.

3.4 – addition of 28-day process

Document approved by Panel.

1. **AOB**

Arising from the discussion about repeat applications it was noted that it should be made clear to all applicants during their Panel attendance that the decision making process takes place once the applicant has left the Panel meeting and that the Panel would subsequently have to take account of both eligibility and funds available when making their recommendations. Minutes of these recommendations needed to be clear and communicated formally to applicants.

A record of the awards made is in the Annual Report along with the Grant Tracker which are all in the Dropbox. It was agreed it would be useful to programme in an annual review at the first meeting of each calendar year of where overall funds have been allocated to help inform fund strategy.

Administrator

It was noted that as Carol was standing down as Panel Administrator at the end of the year that this would be her last meeting. Alison thanked Carol on behalf of the Panel for all her hard work, diligence and efforts– helping to guide the Panel through its first few years and in particular for the all the extra unpaid work this year to conclude the review of documentation and the Dropbox files. The Trust were in the process of recruiting for a replacement and Carol’s offer to assist as much as she could with the transition was much appreciated. The Panel wished her the best of luck for the future.

GASC

It was brought to the Panel’s attention that GASC is ceasing to operate and are hoping to be placed in dormancy until such times as the demand increases again. It was put forward that the Panel would write to GASC to acknowledge the amount of effort that goes into sustaining the service and to thank them for all their efforts and hope that the Panel would be able to work with them again in the future. This was supported by the Panel.

1. **Date of next meeting**

Date TBA for January/February once the Trust meeting has agreed the 2021 dates