

Gargunnock Community Trust
Gargunnock Windfarm Fund Panel Meeting

To be held on 22nd June 2020, at 7.30pm via Zoom

MINUTES

- 1) Apologies: Chloe Bruce, Charlie Fitches
- 2) Attending: Alison Younger, Geoff Peart, Mark Evans, Julie Cole, Jackie Campbell, Jill Patrick, Ian Young, Fiona McCartney, Carol MacGregor-Administrator
- 3) Minutes from last meeting
Approved. It was noted that the Trust were to review their own Code of Conduct and would review the Conflict of Interest Policy within this exercise before bringing any recommendations for alterations back to the Panel.
- 4) Declarations of interest
Geoff Peart and Jill Patrick are members of the Curling Club, but they are not committee members. It was agreed that they could participate in the decision making for this item.
Mark Evans – declared interest with Curling Club as his wife is on the committee and it was agreed he could take part in the discussion but would not vote.

Alison Younger is Secretary of the Parent Council and had been involved in the preparation of the application. It was agreed she would take no part on discussion or decision making and Fiona will step in as Chair for this section.
- 5) Covid-19 Monies – amount / eligibility / distribution guidelines
£3300 Covid-19 Relief Funding had now been received from KWEL for supporting individuals or organisations requiring financial assistance to respond to, or recover from, the Covid-19 pandemic. They could also be used to celebrate and support key workers in the community. This fund has been provided in addition to the normal funds and must be spent by January 2021. Applications would be made to the Windfarm Panel in the normal way. ME made the point that Panel members should have been made aware of the additional funds directly rather than hearing of the information by chance after it was posted on the Village Facebook page. We need to be able to respond to other Village residents in a knowledgeable way to present a professional image of the Panel.
- 6) Applications:
GWF 33-20 Gargunnock Curling Club - Sliders, Coaching, Fees £814.92 + Garments £825 + vat/£1185+vat (Gavin Fleming)
3 quotes were received from Gavin regarding the sliders, coaching and fees, this has now been approved.
Garments – The Club had approached 3 other suppliers for quotes and the Panel noted they had received 1 other quote for a cheaper polyester garment, at a lower quality of material and logo placement. Concerns were raised about the principle of providing uniforms for clubs however it was noted that funding has been awarded in the past to applications which were asking for assistance with uniforms and kit.

It was confirmed that the club would remain owners of the shirts and if club members leave, then the shirts would be given to another club member. They would like to buy 30 shirts to hand out to the 30 members. 30 was the minimum order for the more expensive shirts. There was no minimum order for the cheaper shirts. The high individual cost of the more quality shirt comes from them being a bespoke design for the club with the G for Gargunnoch as part of the branding. Quality is like a Scotland rugby shirt. Higher quote is ideal for club competition and is embroidered. The lower quote is screen printed and this would therefore require an outer garment for warmth. The question was asked, if successful, whether the Trust would be able to purchase the items to reclaim the VAT. This question will be put to the Trust.

Recommendation

Sliders, Coaching, Fees £814.92 - 3 quotes were received from Gavin regarding the sliders, coaching and fees, so the panel are happy to approve this part of the application.

Garments £1185 + vat – Panel have approved this on the basis of quotes sought and secured as the heavier weight shirts are more fit for purpose, have a longer life and will represent the community well when worn in competitions. It was also seen as important to the recommendation that this was a relatively new club which was still actively ‘setting up’ and it was felt the club shirts would support this part of the club’s development.

Action - Are the Trust willing to purchase the items to reclaim the VAT?

GWF 41-20 GASC Fundraising Support £2400 (Paul Smith)

The applicant outlined the annual fundraising undertaken through a variety of social fundraisers normally raised £2400 per annum towards running costs. The same fundraisers would be difficult to organise in current lockdown and social distancing conditions. The applicant was asked if GASC is looking at virtual fundraising as an alternative. GASC committee were not comfortable with asking for service users for additional fundraising when budgets may be under pressure already and there could be the wind farm option. The GASC fundraising year ends in June and most of fundraising is normally carried out March/April/May, so this window has now been missed. Question asked if the fundraising events be moved to next year. In principle yes but this would mean that they would be operating without knowing if they had the funds secured. Also, after the September AGM the next committee coming in could result in a change of office bearers, the new ones being without the security of funds.

There was discussion about how the operation of GASC may have to alter due to Covid-19. The applicant confirmed that GASC cannot operate under current guidelines. GASC was hoping this will change come August in line with schools. Weekly updates are coming from care inspectorate. Whilst they would expect some demand is there, their overheads would be at least as much as before. They are also at the mercy of the schools if blended learning is rolled out and kids are not back full time so hard to gauge the demand and need - the intention would be to survey the parents once there was more certainty surrounding the guidelines.

Regarding the furlough scheme, no one knows what will happen beyond October and this is another issue and challenge that they will have to deal with. From August onwards where staff can return part time this would be built into operation. It was confirmed that Community Centre hall fees have not been incurred during lock-down but they still need to pay insurance etc. Would need to get proper projection from treasurer as to future costs once service design was known post August.

The Panel had wide discussion on the application for the £2400 towards annual fundraising. It seems that GASC do not need the funds right now and whilst The panel agreed that they wish to support the continued viability of GASC however it was felt there was not enough information available at the moment to understand how the service would operate come August and the impact on budget and fundraising needs. It was also felt that some level of fundraising could be undertaken.

There was discussion around the earlier application from GASC that had been received at the March Panel meeting for immediate financial support for staffing through the lockdown period. The Panel had invited GASC to come to the next meeting, and offered to schedule an ad hoc meeting if necessary, to consider the Application once furlough details were known. It was noted that GASC staff had been eligible for the 80% furlough scheme and that Windfarm monies had since the last meeting been awarded without the knowledge of the Panel to cover the cost of the 20% top up element of this scheme. There was an acknowledgement that the nature of the award was not incompatible with the intent of the Panel, but it was at odds with the minutes and hence there was confusion around the process applied here and how the decision had been reached to finalise the award made. *(Please see update note from the Chair attached)*

Recommendation

The panel are not going to recommend this application for approval at this stage but were supportive in principle to provide additional funds to offset fundraising 'losses' in due course once the future operational basis and revised budget projections were known. Once more detail was known a further application should be made with budgetary detail. The panel also noted that the GASC committee should give thought to what alternative fundraisers they could hold to go some way towards fundraising for the service and how much a fundraising target via alternative means might realistically be.

The Panel recommended that the funds awarded following GASC's previous application for immediate support with staff costs through the lockdown period be drawn from the Covid-19 relief fund.

GWF 42-20 Gargunnoch PS Parent Council - OLZ pathway £1461.06 (Nathan Anderton)

The applicant reported that the Outdoor Learning Zone is growing in use and the community is also using the facility. The path was part of the long-term plan and would allow the OLZ to be used in all weather and all seasons. This would be even more important given the schools response to Covid-19 social distancing guidelines when schools re open in August. Question raised about the robustness of the mat and it was explained that the quote is for matting which would provide a defined route which was advised so that people would stick to this. Also, mowers would be able to go over this matting without any issues. The structure in the matting would be filled with gravel rather than grass. Future projects were enquired about – the applicant advised that nothing further was planned yet though ideas had been floated about a basketball hoop and locks/ rubber bungs for storage seats. Two thirds of the cost towards the path have already been raised by the Parent Council.

Recommendation

The panel are happy to approve the application in full as they feel it will benefit the children and the school and will enhance the use of the area. There is the potential that the Covid-19 funds could be used to pay for this to assist with the schools' recovery plan.

7) Review of official docs: MOU / Terms of Ref / Fund Guidelines

Following the amendments agreed by the Panel at the last meeting Fiona, Mark and Alison have worked on the three documents to ensure they are compatible with each other. Alison has made recommendations within each for consideration tonight, and she had also received some useful comments and suggestions from Foundation Scotland. The Conflict of Interest Policy will not come to the Panel to approve until it has been reviewed by the Trust as part of its own review into the Trust Code of Conduct. There had also been discussion with the Trust about the Investment Strategy which they have produced following community consultation and which they were keen at some point to bring to the Panel with a view to it informing fund strategy. It was felt that this

would be most appropriate once the review of the MOU, Terms of Reference and Fund Guidelines had been completed so that both Trust and Panel could be satisfied it was compatible with these overarching documents. Ian Young had to leave the meeting.

MOU –agreement between the Funders and the Trust acting on behalf of the community

The Panel agreed the revisions proposed. It was also agreed to review the terminology in 2.6 to make sure these tied into the names of the funds and grants as we use elsewhere. It was noted that the text in 2.2 re the value of funds coming from KWEL was incorrect and Foundation Scotland would provide the correct wording for this.

Terms of Reference – Governs how the Panel operates

The revisions were agreed. It was also agreed to make a provision for virtual meetings within 8.6. It was noted that these documents will guide new panel members and all panel members should receive a pack including the terms of reference and Conflict of Interest Policy . A standard letter to cover these should be drafted.

Action - Cover letter to be drafted up by Alison and Carol to issue welcome packs.

Fund Guidelines – for the applicant

There was discussion on whether this document needed the list of permitted purposes as these were more specific than those listed in the MOU.

It was agreed that these were examples of permitted purposes to help applicants understand the types of projects that the fund could be used for and the working should reflect this and that this is not exhaustive.

Applicants could also be signposted to the website to view examples of successful applications.

It was also agreed that 1.1 should be amended to reflect the purpose of the document more clearly.

Amendment required under Fund Administrator, second bullet point, to say that all grant applications should have 3 quotes where appropriate or to have a robust explanation where this is not possible.

The other revisions were agreed.

It was agreed that Carol update the documents to reflect changes agreed and Alison would review before submitting to the Trust along with the Foundation Scotland comments.

Action – send above documents with comments attached to the Trust – send via Alison first.

8) Monitoring / feedback

Monitoring forms are up to date and available in the Drop Box. It was suggested that the Drop Box in general requires reorganising and this has been given as an **action** point for Alison and Carol

9) AOB

Talked about ongoing promotion of the panel to get younger, more diverse members and applicants. Also, idea of a short video would be good to promote the good news stories. Perhaps fund a workshop for young people in the village and use this video to promote. Mark reinforced the need to ensure that KWEL funds were promoted by successful projects. Jackie queried whether applicants still required Trust approval to publicise their awards and this would be double checked.

Panel to provide content for the Bugle including a list of funding awards, Alison agreed to action, ensuring a reference to KWEL

10) Next meeting - 5th Oct (Trust 22nd Oct)

UPDATE POST MEETING on GASC Application GWF 40-20 by Alison Younger, Chair, Wind Farm Panel

GASC had applied (GWF 40-20) at the March panel meeting for funds to help meet immediate staff costs as we entered lockdown - it was not clear at that stage that staff would be eligible for the government's furlough scheme. The Panel Recommendation was, " Having spoken to GASC the panel understand that the playleader could be furloughed however if this is not the case or if the furlough support is short of what is required then they are welcome to come back and request assistance. Should GASC wish to proceed with application for windfarm fund support, the panel would request that a copy of the care commission report is also submitted. The panel agreed in principle that they could provide financial assistance if the furlough option is not viable for staff. An interim Panel meeting could be arranged prior to June if this is required to be actioned ".

The Panel minute was submitted after the meeting to the Trust but an error in their paperwork meant the minute was not part of the 23rd April meeting agenda. I was asked if this required an extraordinary meeting of the Trust out with their normal cycles to rectify, so as not to cause delay for any application, and agreed their May meeting would be ok. The Trust then circulated the minute on the 5th May and agreed the panel recommendation on the 6th (to be formally homologated at the May 21st meeting), who then informed the Panel Administrator, who then informed the applicant. The Trust then considered the minute of the March Panel meeting at its meeting on 21st May, at which point the confirmation of approval of Panel recommendations as minuted was sent back to the Panel Administrator with no changes.

GASC subsequently advised the Panel administrator on the 18th May that they had managed to secure the 80% furlough for staff but had an immediate need to find the 20% top up required to enable them to retain their staff at full pay through this period. A request was made for the provision of this 20% from the WindfarmFund It was suggested that this could be drawn down retrospectively month by month as required and adjusted if required as the furlough scheme eased. Approximate monthly costs on full time furlough are £217.21. The Panel Administrator contacted the Trust treasurer to check this process for drawdown would be viable and he confirmed it would.

On May 25th the Panel Administrator issued to GASC the approval letter for the award of 20% top up for staff furlough schemes. It is now acknowledged that this award letter was issued in error and the detail of costs should have been brought back for the Panel to make a final decision as per minuted agreement. Another opportunity to identify the error was also missed by the Chair when reviewing the minutes and agenda for the Panels' June meeting hence the confusion on the night when it suddenly became apparent that GASC were already in receipt of funding support and the Panel were absolutely correct to query this.

Next steps

The process of issuing minutes and receiving approval from the Trust has been tightened with agreement about timescales for issue and receipt. We have also agreed that minutes will be submitted from the Administrator to the Trust Sect. so that they are not missed as part of the agenda timescales. The delay in receiving the approval back does not excuse the error then made but was a contributory factor in 'losing the thread' of the process flow. There will be further discussion with the Administrator to review the process for issuing Awards letters to ensure there is a trail of cross referencing against Panel and Trust minutes.

My view would be that whilst it is far from ideal the award made was not incompatible with the principle of the Panels' decision or the Trusts approval of that recommendation. The need for funds is immediate and ongoing and I do not think the impact of the error made is so great that we should seek to recover funds from the applicant who has acted in good

faith. I would propose that we report detail to the next Panel meeting on the value of the funds awarded to date and likely value of any remaining furlough claims for retrospective approval.