

**Infinis A’Cruach Community Fund
Panel Induction Meeting**

Wednesday 22 June 7.00pm

Red Cross Hall, Lochgilphead

Panel Members Present:

Lochgilphead: David Renwick (DR), Elizabeth (Betty) Rhodick (ER), Elizabeth McLean (EM)

Dunadd: Paul Holness (PH), Dianne Roberts (DR), W), Barbara Halliday (BH)

West Loch Fyne: Fred Bruce (FB), Jan Williams (JW), Sarah Calderwood (SC)

Attending

James Hilder (JH); Rachel Searle-Mbullu (RSM); Jacqui Morris (JM); Jim Malcolm (JMa)

1 Welcome, Introduction, Apologies

JH welcomed everyone to the meeting. Panel members introduced themselves: it was clear that there was a lot of skills and experience amongst the Panel in terms of working on other Panels distributing funds, organising and running events, project managing community projects, financial management and budgeting, running community organisations and being a Trustee/Company Director and applying for funding.

RSM outlined Foundation Scotland’s track record in delivering community benefit funds. She emphasised that all the Panel related material being shared this evening is built on work with communities in receipt of community benefit funds in other parts of Scotland that FS is supporting. So it is changing all the time and always being adapted to suit particular circumstances and communities. The grant-making material draws on FS’ expertise as a grant-maker and work it has been doing to distribute funding in Scotland for 20+ years. A key part of FS’ approach is to provide flexible approaches that enable all different types of groups to access funding, especially those that aren’t used to applying for funds and/or have very limited capacity.

ACTION:

FS to send all BH copy of Firm Foundation – CB Charter

2 The Story So Far

The panel confirmed receipt of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and the Panel Terms of Reference (TOR).

RSM explained both documents are the foundations of the fund and all decisions around the fund will be based on the principles outlined in the two documents.

3 Panel Business

The panel were presented with a number of papers including a Panel meeting sample agenda, Code of Conduct, Declaration of Interest, Conflict of interest and expenses policy.

It was noted that a Register of Interest will be created and which will be reviewed annually.

Panel members were invited to review the following policies and propose amendments or additions for discussion and adoption at the next Panel meeting:

- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Expenses Policy, noting cap of 2.5% of fund value on administrative costs.

4 Grant-making

RSM explained FS' grant making process from application through to award. She indicated there were quite a number of different steps to ensure requisite due diligence and accountability measures were in place.

DR asked if an appeals process existed. RSM explained that experience had demonstrated that generally FS discouraged community benefit funds from running appeals processes. Quite simply – it can be complicated to manage given the dispersed nature of the Panel. It can also serve to undermine the work of the Panel locally. However groups that don't receive awards are given clear feedback and generally signposted to more specific sources of support to ensure their projects are well planned etc

Further notes on this:

Applicants will sign a declaration at the end of the application form which says:

"I certify that the information contained in this application is correct, and that I am authorised to make the application on behalf of the above organisation. I understand that decisions made by the Panel are final."

Another Panel has also incorporated the following statement into its grant-making materials.

"Decisions of the Panel are final and there is no right to appeal. Projects that are not awarded a grant cannot be re-considered for the same project for at least one year. Applicants should therefore ensure that all information relevant to their application is provided with their application, as new information cannot be considered after a decision has been made."

5 Fund Framework

JH explained that the Fund Framework has been drafted from analysing the outputs of the Community Planning Process. The Fund Framework will help direct the grant-making process and the future direction of the Fund.

JH recommended that the Fund Framework be reviewed after three years. The panel agreed with this recommendation.

The Panel also agreed with the proposed Fund Purpose and Priorities and felt they were fit for purpose for the initial period of the Fund, certainly the first three years.

However there were some concerns amongst Panel members that they were not all sufficiently familiar with the Research Reports and Action Plans of the other two areas.

The Panel agreed with the proposal to set some funds aside to support capital projects and agreed that this amount should be raised from £20,000 to £25,000 to fit with the upper Main Grant level.

The Panel agreed that at the three year review of the Fund, consideration be given to setting aside an amount each year to establish an endowment fund that could provide some grants when the windfarm is decommissioned.

Grant-making levels:

Micro-grants: The upper limit will remain £250 and up to £2483 will be available to each CC to distribute as micro-grants. However it was agreed not to start these until after the first grant making round to avoid confusion. [micro-grant is configured at 5% of the Fund value = 5% of £149,000/3]

Small grants: Will start at a lower level of £500

Standard and Large grants to remain as outlined

Frequency:

The Fund will operate two rounds per year, however, this will be reviewed after the first round, when a clear picture of demand can be made.

Eligibility:

If the fund is to support enterprise then consideration should be given to allow businesses to apply to the fund. Panel agreed to review at a later date,

It was also agreed to consider applications for bursaries if there is sufficient demand from the communities.

ACTION:

JH to correct some typographical errors in the Fund Framework & update with other decisions.

JH to send all Panel Members the Community Action Plan for each area to enable them to understand community priorities

6 Next Steps

It was agreed that that the fund will open in early July with a closing date of **9 September** with decisions due at the end of October.

There will be another meeting of the panel on **15th September** in advance of the decision making panel on **27th October**.

The Panel was informed that work is underway to engage with children and young people. FS has approached Lochgilphead High School to design a fund logo and the local primary schools to name the turbines and create a story about each turbine.

Panel members confirmed they were comfortable for all their email details to be shared and to receive emails collectively. However all Panel papers would also always be printed and posted from FS.

7 AOCB & DONM

Some of the Panel have received information from E.ON regarding another windfarm in the area called Chruach. There is concern this could lead to confusion between the two wind farms and funds.

The next meeting will be held on the 15th September at 7.00pm in Lochgilphead.

ACTION:

RSM agreed to speak to E.ON about this concern.

ER to book Red Cross Hall again.

Post Panel notes from FS:

1) Fund Launch

Infinis has since confirmed that it would be better to organise to visit the wind farm in the Spring to celebrate the first year of the fund and hopefully the second round of grant-making around April 2017. An event could still be organised at a community venue in early November to celebrate first awards, new logo (from the High School) and results of work done by the primary schools. Young people from the High School and primaries would then get to visit the wind farm in the Spring.

2) Commercial Operation Date (COD)

COD was 27 May 2016. Hence the second 6 month payment for Year 1 will only likely arrive in June. Hence pushed 2nd round back to early March.