

Ray Windfarm Fund CIC Board Meeting

Date 23rd February 2023
Birtley Village Hall
Time 7.00pm

1. In attendance

Action

David Burn, (DB) Chair; Lesley Gosling (LG); Peter Ramsden (PR); Mark Neale (MN); Sarah Crone (SC); Paul Cowie (PC); Sarah Lunn (SL); Martin Dickson-Green (MDG); Joanne Willis, (JW) CDO (Minutes)

Apologies Chris Robson (CR); Katie Wood (KW); Martin Chilvers (MC); Deb Walton (DW)

2. Presentations from Caroline Clarke, Church and Community Partnership Tynedale and Angela Watt and Julie Leddy, Northumberland Communities Together

The Church and Community Partnership Tynedale work with many other organisations in the area such as NHS, Citizens Advice Bureau, Northumberland Community Voluntary Action, West Northumberland Foodbank, Tynedale Hospice at Home. Their priorities within our area are social inclusion and befriending. A particular focus currently is providing dementia training for as many people within our area, event being held at Hexham Abbey on 21st March. Another prominent issue is the suicide rate amongst farmers and the mental health issues that are found within rural areas, they have looked into Mental Health England First Aid courses for volunteers. Could act as a facilitator for grant applications, SL suggested that visionary funding from the RWF could help to make every community space within our area dementia friendly spaces with training included. Caroline is the sole employee.

Northumberland Communities Together was established by the County Council in 2020 as a response to Covid and leaders felt that communities were being lost, they have a team of over 40 staff. They pride themselves on listening to the needs of a community and responding accordingly. The common issues currently are the cost-of-living crisis, food prices and loneliness. They can provide £500 Micro Grants to set up for e.g., a warm hub, but can only do this once in a year and some of the hubs require further funding to continue. Many were only intended to run over winter to March 2023, but have been well received among communities, though funding is now required. PC suggested the RWF could match fund a £500 CC micro grant for projects within our area.

Discussions ensued regarding the way RWF could support any initiatives, enabling money is required. Ensure JW in not inundated with applications.

Caroline, Angela and Julie left the meeting at 8pm.

3. Minutes of the last CIC meetings 26th January 2023 and matters arising

Accepted as a true record.

4. Notes of Virtual ARC 16th February 2023

Accepted as a true record.

5. Declarations of interest

SL – application 258

6. Applications

258 £20,000

Scoring system discussed on the assessment sheet, to be finalised at next meeting. A lot of work has been completed externally on St Giles Church and funds raised by the PCC to undertake this. ARC requested a quote be provided by a local scaffolder, this has been requested but not yet undertaken. Potential for increased community and school use of the church once work completed.

Majority decision to award the full amount, though new quote to be taken into consideration.

263 £5,000

Directors discussed the awarding of grants to businesses, the desire for this has been highlighted in the community consultation work. Directors agreed £2,880 quote for the website work exhibited best value for money and therefore decided to grant a lower amount.

Unanimous decision to award £3,000.

8. Pre School and Bellingham Middle School funding

JW and KW contacted North Tynies at Bellingham, Chollerton Pre School and Bellingham Middle School (BMS) to gauge whether any supplementary financial support is required in the current cost of living crisis. BMS has requested help towards transport costs, must be established whether this is for transport to swimming or school trips rather than transport into school which should be statutory funding. North Tynies and Chollerton Pre School would appreciate any help that could be provided towards the cost of meals to bring the contribution from parents down. KW has proposed £750 for North Tynies, £450 for Chollerton Pre School and £1,750 for BMS. Directors support in principle though need to question BMS on which transport the request is for. KW to prepare a report for circulation.

KW

JW

9. B4RN Update

The government have approved the whole scheme under the new gigabit voucher scheme. B4RN should now receive a higher rate for households who have signed up. To recalculate their financial requirements and inform the CIC. It was proposed that B4NTR could commence talks with some of the other firms operational in the area that have already connected properties, Alncom and We Fibre.

10. AOB

None

Closed 8.50pm