

## Ray Windfarm Fund CIC Meeting

Date 31<sup>st</sup> July 2025  
Corsenside Parish Hall  
Time 7.00pm

### 1. In attendance

**Action**

Sarah Crone (SC) Chair; Martin Chilvers (MC); Chris Robson (CR); Peter Ramsden (PR); Shirley Stuchfield (SS); Martin Dickson-Green (MDG); Deb Walton (DW); David Burn (DB); Sarah Lunn (SL); Alison Thomson (AT); Joanne Willis (JW) CDO  
(Minutes)

**Apologies** Phil Lawless (PL)

**Non-attendance** Katie Wood (KW)

### 2. Conflicts of interest

DB – application 490 Birtley Village Hall Committee

### 3. Minutes of the last meeting 26<sup>th</sup> June 2025 and matters arising

Accepted as a true record.

### 4. Minutes of F & GP 10<sup>th</sup> July 2025

Accepted as a true record. DB gave an account on the response to government consultation document on behalf of RWF and JW on the virtual meeting she attended with Department of Net Zero officials and government Minister.

### 5. Notes of ARC 17<sup>th</sup> July 2025

Accepted as a true record, JW asked for confirmation on the defibrillator location map, while a good idea, charities may already hold this information and would be timely to look up in a case of emergency.

### 6. Grant Analysis for 2025-2026

Berry Jordan has notified RWF the Vattenfall donation will be £403,400, JW has submitted an invoice. JW prepared a provisional grant analysis for discussion. Directors agreed to maintain the allocations of SDF as £12,500 and EAT Bursary as £15,000 the same as the previous year. To increase the provisional allocation for transport to £25,000 and increase the school budget to £75,000. The Village shows will have an allocation of £10,000 to be discussed at a meeting of show committees in the new year. B4RN are due their second year tranche of £100,000 for the Kirkwhelpington project and North Tyne Youth the third and final installment of £25,000 for a multi-year project. This would leave approximately £100,000 for community grants and £30,000 for business grants in the year after the potential 10% administrative budget and reserve are subtracted. All the figures are fluid and can be adjusted throughout the year.

### 7. Applications

- **459 Three Kirks PCC £10,000**

Request for funding towards the creation of a new footpath with handrail to allow those with mobility issues to access St Wilfrid's, levelling the existing footpath to ensure safe access for visitors to the church with handrail and handrail into chancel of the church. A sound loop system will also be installed for those with hearing impairments. Awarding the grant ensures all visitors can access the heritage asset helping to preserve its legacy and maintain visitor numbers. Some match funding has been secured and others are in the application process. St Wilfrid's has been used to host a popular concert series for several years and this will allow everyone to attend.

**Scoring - Impact 39 Organisation 18 Engagement & Inclusion 18 Planning & Delivery  
18 Total=93**

**Unanimous decision to award full grant amount.**

- **490 Birtley Village Hall Committee £5,700**

Request for funding towards the replacement of the main access path to the village hall which currently poses a health and safety risk. The facility is used throughout the month by community groups and private hirers and is the only community facility in the village. A second quote for the work has been provided following the request at the ARC meeting.

**Scoring - Impact 35 Organisation 15 Engagement & Inclusion 15 Planning & Delivery  
18 Total=83**

**Unanimous decision to award full grant amount.**

- **495 Natural Northumberland £7,000**

Request for funding towards the expansion of the retail space into the vacated unit next door, development of a website to promote retail and trade products and the renovation of the manufacturing unit to produce products while creating employment. CR gave a financial analysis of the business accounts which were well presented with realistic forecasts and an applicant contribution from turnover. JW to request confirmation if the grant is required immediately or if it could be paid in tranches.

**Scoring - Impact 30 Organisation 18 Engagement & Inclusion 16 Planning & Delivery  
18 Total=82**

**Unanimous decision to award full grant amount, and base transfer on response to query.**

- **505 Individual Birtley 2<sup>nd</sup> yr EAT Bursary £1,000**

The applicant has returned monitoring for the previous year approved by Directors, the Bursary will allow them to receive funding for costs associated with their second and final year at Askham Bryan College, York.

**Unanimous decision to approve the grant.**

- **503 Individual Chollerton EAT Bursary £1,500**

The applicant would like to undertake an Advanced course in Agricultural Business Management with the Worshipful Company of Farmers. The course will be run online through workshops and one-to-one sessions and an intensive two week residential in the autumn. The applicant hopes to gain skills in leadership, management and marketing which will help the business to diversify. They hope to offer peer mentoring and knowledge sharing with the local farming community once qualified.

**Unanimous decision to approve the grant.**

## **8. B4RN Update**

Scots Gap has been signed off to build due to commence from 11<sup>th</sup> August with most of Cambo now connected. There have been some issues in Cambo due to listed building Consent. B4RN have been trialling alternative options for connection which would enable connections to occur without the requirement of listed building consent. The route past Scots Gap is served by BT and there has been minimal interest and no voucher available for connecting properties, therefore if people would like to receive B4RN connections they must raise funding themselves in their communities to enable this. MDG's role within B4RN has changed and he will now be connecting properties locally and be the main B4RN liaison within the area. The two remaining tranches of £100,000 per year will be calculated on a pro rata basis against routes to be connected to ensure it is fully utilised.

## **9. Grant monitoring**

- **426 Individual Birtley EAT Bursary £1,500**
- **452 Scots Gap Chapel £3,500**

**JW  
MDG  
DW  
PR**

Directors accepted the monitoring, the EAT applicant has applied for second year funding and the chapel continues its weekly Friday at the Gap sessions that welcome many locals for a meal and a chat along with other groups that meet and will benefit from the boiler replacement.

The non return of monitoring forms was discussed, with the view that JW cannot chase these but a strongly worded email will be sent when sending the form that states no additional grant funding would be considered without the return of the form.

Following on from the discussion at the last CIC regards upskilling the community in terms of the completion of application forms and assistance identifying match funders. A working group of MDG, DW, AT, PR and JW will work on the existing RWF application forms to ensure these are clear for applicants what information is required. JW to send a word document of all existing forms. The Northumberland County Council website is a good source of alternative funders which applicants can be directed to.

## **10. Succession Planning and Director Recruitment**

**JW**

JW has circulated an advert to circulate in local parish magazines and email newsletters. To ensure the parishes outside of the six main parishes are listed in case eligible candidates wish to apply. To share with The Chimes, The Broadsheet, Meeting of the Waters, Redesdale Village Notes, Parish Councils, Schools and social media. Also enquire if they can be placed on village notice boards. The interview panel will be SC, MDG and SL who will liaise about potential dates in October to conduct interviews. CR discussed the potential to approach potential candidates who may have accountancy experience, where a handover period could take place before he would be due to step down in 2027.

## **11. Twentyseven Design Progress**

**JW  
SC**

The four case studies produced to date were shown with Directors agreeing they were excellent. JW and SC have met with BJ to discuss a strategy for sharing these and a meeting will take place with Twentyseven Design in August regarding wording, targeting order of release etc. These will also be uploaded to the website.

Directors commented that the photographs of Directors that were held on the old website are no longer visible and agreed that these should be reinstated. JW to speak to Light Bulb Web Design.

## **12. AOB**

- **Next CIC meeting in September – Barrasford.**

**Closed 8.40pm**