

# Ray Windfarm Fund CIC Meeting

Date 26<sup>th</sup> November 2025  
Elsdon Village Hall  
Time 7.00pm

## 1. In attendance

**Action**

Sarah Crone (SC) Chair; Shirley Stuchfield (SS); Martin Dickson-Green (MDG); Louise Crennell (LC); Paul Andrew (PA); David Burn (DB); Sarah Lunn (SL); Alison Thomson (AT); Katie Wood (KW); Martin Chilvers (MC); Phil Lawless (PL); Joanne Willis (JW) CDO (Minutes)

**Apologies** Deb Walton (DW); Peter Ramsden (PR); Chris Robson (CR)

LC and PA were welcomed as new Directors and Directors introduced themselves and the parishes they represented.

## 2. Declarations of interest

No changes. KW declared a conflict of interest with application 406 from PCC Kirkwhelpington, Kirkharle and Kirkheaton.

## 3. Minutes of the last meeting 25<sup>th</sup> September 2025 and matters arising

Accepted as a true record.

## 4. Minutes of F & GP 11<sup>th</sup> November 2025

Accepted as a true record.

## 5. Notes of ARC 20<sup>th</sup> October and 16<sup>th</sup> November 2025

Accepted as a true record.

## 6. Grant Analysis for 2025-2026

JW gave an account of the grant analysis. The money remaining within the fund is £216,000 which includes the allocations for schools, community transport, village shows, EAT Bursary and Small Donations Fund, which are fluid. £85,000 remains within the Community Benefit Fund which for grants to applicants from businesses and community organisations.

## 7. Applications

- **406 PCC of Kirkwhelpington Kirkharle and Kirkheaton £10,000**

Request for funding towards the relaying of the stone chancel floor, the repair and relocation of the organ to ensure the health and safety of all visitors to St Bartholomew's Church, Kirkwhelpington. The flooring in the chancel is currently a trip hazard. Match funding has been secured and further decisions are required on several other grant applications. The work will enable the church to be used more widely by the community for events and concerts etc.

**Scoring - Impact 36 Organisation 18 Engagement & Inclusion 18 Planning & Delivery 18 Total=90**

**Unanimous decision to award full grant amount subject to confirmation of other match funding.**

- **516 Soul Print £2,248**

Request for funding towards the cost of a Direct to Film printer and laser engraver to allow the newly established business to grow. While the business is based in the area of benefit there are many businesses offering printing on clothing and keepsakes nationwide. Directors

felt the community benefit was not sufficient to award a grant.

**Unanimous decision to decline the application.**

- **518 Northumberland YFC £2,100**

Request for funding towards core costs of a storage unit to hold all the county held equipment and club archive documents, they have been given notice to vacate their current storage facilities. The unit will be located on a farm outside of the area of benefit but will be used by the county federation and all county clubs of which Cambo and Bellingham are in our area of benefit. This is a one-off cost with the federation providing match funding and ensures that county funding which has been cut nationally can be prioritised for club events.

**Scoring - Impact 35 Organisation 18 Engagement & Inclusion 18 Planning & Delivery 18 Total=89**

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

- **525 DC Custom Build Ltd £10,000**

Request for a grant towards the cost of a cherry picker for the newly established business. The addition of the machine will allow the applicant to undertake larger jobs in the area of benefit ensuring health and safety guidelines are followed. Despite only trading for several months the applicant has undertaken jobs on heritage buildings in the area of benefit, they will also contribute 50% of the machinery cost. Directors are aware, the bottleneck for many trades can be hiring specialist machinery, which then also increases the cost for customers. This will allow customers to save money on project costs and ensure that waiting times are minimised as the applicant will have the specialised equipment.

**Scoring - Impact 28 Organisation 15 Engagement & Inclusion 15 Planning & Delivery 15 Total=73**

**Majority decision to award full grant amount. The grant will be transferred on receipt of the invoice. Advise the applicant that within the monitoring form they must provide evidence customers have benefitted through reduced costs and community projects have been undertaken such as installation of Christmas lights on community Christmas trees or community buildings for example.**

## **8. Policy Reviews**

- Disclosure “whistle blowing”
- Recruitment
- Redundancy
- Sickness & Planned Absence
- Support & Supervision
- Visitor’s Expenses

**All accepted and agreed.**

## **9. Draft Accounts 24/25**

**JW**

Accounts agreed, JW to advise Armstrong Watson and return a CIC 34 and cheque for £15 to Companies House for accountants to submit to Companies House with the accounts.

## **10. Annual Report**

**JW**

The final draft was agreed by Directors. JW to send to PCs as a link and put on the RWF website.

## **11. Schools Update**

Three visits have been conducted to date, Chollerton First School, Belsay Primary School and Belsay Daycare. A further visit is scheduled to Cambo First School and Cambo Wraparound this week. The schools have been very enthusiastic and accommodating and it has been a worthwhile exercise to understand their financial pressures and how hard they are working to ensure they are meeting the standards required. A meeting of all Head teachers is scheduled for the New Year.

## **12. Transport Update**

**JW**

SC and JW met with Christine Talbot-Brown, Bus Engagement Officer from NCC and Caroline Clarke, Church and Community Partnership on 6<sup>th</sup> October to discuss the transport needs of our area and the potential to undertake a transport audit. No information has been forthcoming to date. MC reported the route to Hexham from West Woodburn has now been extended to commence at Otterburn, which gives more people access to transport to Hexham.

## **13. Promotional work/ Social Media/ Website**

**JW**

SC and JW visited Charlotte Straker House this week, they will put out a press release informing people of the £5,000 grant. The visit was very informative, with the inability to access transport one of the issues discussed. JW has been sharing the case study videos produced by Twentyseven Design, could all Directors who use social media please like and share the posts to increase their reach? JW will ensure the amendments to the online application forms are made to mirror the pdf forms and any other outstanding changes will be raised with Light Bulb Web Design.

## **14. Membership of ARC and F & GP**

For the benefit of the new Directors, SC explained the purpose of the sub-committees, the Application Review Committee (ARC) and Finance & General Purposes (F & GP), if Directors had skills that could benefit the committees or an interest they could join either. LC expressed an interest in joining the F & GP.

## **15. Director second three-year term**

**JW**

MDG, SL and DW have reached the end of their first three-year term in December 2025. SC asked whether they wished to continue for a further three years, SL and MDG agreed and Directors in attendance supported this. JW to contact DW to confirm her agreement.

## **16. Potential New Director**

**JW**

JW received an email from a local who wished to apply for the post of Director when it was open in the autumn, but circumstances did not allow their application. Due to a change in circumstances they were now able to apply, would Directors be agreeable to interviewing outside the application window? All agreed this was a good idea. The interview panel will have to change as SL knows the candidate, proposed interview panel SC, MDG and KW. JW to arrange a date for either December or the New Year.

## **17. B4RN Update**

Scots Gap is now live with ten properties connected to date; these include Robson & Cowan and Scots Gap Chapel, which has been connected for free as a community asset. The community assets connected within the past few weeks now total three including St Wilfrid's at Kirkharle and Holy Trinity Church at Cambo, there will be no ongoing cost to these facilities which will offer significant cost savings. JW to share B4RN social media

posts to help to increase engagement.

## 18. AOB

- RTC at Otterburn have asked if the maximum £10,000 grant limit could be exceeded for a future project to replace the roof on the centre. They have submitted a business plan, though some key information is missing. Directors would like to see quotes, as the current minimum and maximum project costs referenced are vastly different. JW to advise the maximum could be raised for this project but further information would be required to decide the limit including information on match funders. **JW**
- JW circulated a Small Donations Fund request from North Tyne Youth for £282 for costs to set up a Warhammer and D&D group within the NTY groups in our area. Directors approved the grant.
- Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> November will be the first Parkrun at Kirkharle, this is not widely publicised as the organisers are concerned with numbers exceeding potential car parking spaces. JW and KW will be in attendance and have organised a photographer to take shots for publicity purposes.
- Directors who will be signatories would appreciate reassurance about the information required from Cascade. JW to ask what they will do with the data requested, who will be given it, will it be solely the banks we open secondary accounts with, will it be visible on credit checks? Directors will be advised of the responses. If there are still reservations, then another savings account will be researched. The upper limit now has been raised from £85,000 to £120,000 currently at this point in the grant year, the RWF would need one other account to manage any potential risk. **JW**

**Closed 9.00pm**