

Garlenick Wind Turbines Community Advisory Panel

Meeting Friday 10 January 2014

Minutes

In attendance: Bryan Coode, Bob Egerton, Peter Hardaker, Geoff Hodgson, Dean Jenkins, Roger Paynter, Jane Sloan.

Election of chairman of panel

It was proposed by Jane Sloan that Geoff Hodgson be appointed as chairman of the panel and agreed by a unanimous vote.

Election of administrator of panel

It was proposed by Bryan Coode that Bob Egerton be appointed as administrator of the panel to liaise with Grantscape, take minutes of meetings and to coordinate the paperwork and information associated with the operation of the panel. This was agreed unanimously.

Terms of reference of the panel

The draft terms of reference prepared by Grantscape were considered by the panel. Bob explained that the legal position is that Grantscape is the accountable body for dealing with the money paid by Airvolution and for ensuring proper records are kept of the grants distributed.

Parish council representative. Dean pointed out that, although the terms of reference referred to the chairman of the parish council being a member of the panel, the parish council had wished for the position to be a person appointed by the parish council so that, in future, it could be that a parish councillor other than the chairman of the PC might be appointed. Bob said that this had been discussed with Grantscape who were happy with this and we would remind them to change the terms accordingly.

Vacancies arising on the panel and procedure at the end of 3 years. It was agreed by consensus that, if a vacancy occurred during the first 3 years, the panel would seek to co-opt a replacement but would consult with interested parties such as the parish council before making a co-option. It was felt that, at the end of 3 years, we would wish to have full elections again as happened at the start of the process.

Minutes of meetings. It was agreed that minutes of meetings held by the panel should be published into the public domain via notice boards, links on websites etc.

Confidentiality. It was agreed that, as a general principle, all applications should be open and available to be viewed by the public. However, it was also pointed out that, on occasions, there might be some personal details within certain applications that may need to be kept confidential. It was agreed that the panel would consider these on a case-by-case basis as they arose. It was also agreed that Bob should discuss with Grantscape whether or not they felt that all panel meetings should be open to any member of the public and whether experience elsewhere of public vs. private meetings should be taken into account, before making a final decision on this matter.

Frequency of meetings. It was agreed that the panel should meet 3-4 times each year between funding rounds in order to have informal discussions about potential projects for the next funding round, to monitor progress of projects etc.

Criteria for the annual fund

Minimum and maximum grants. It was agreed that the range of £250 to £7,500 was reasonable and this should be the criterion published. It is possible that there could be occasions in some years that the total of applications did not reach £15,000 but one project might be seeking more than £7,500. It was agreed that this would be considered on a case-by-case basis as and when the situation arose.

Projects for "school age children or older people". It was agreed that this was slightly ambiguous. However, it was also agreed that the fourth criterion of "any other community projects for the benefit of residents of the local area" was sufficiently broad that the age related criterion did not restrict the panel's freedom to recommend suitable projects.

Facilitating organisations. The criteria stated, "applicants need to have a written constitution ... and a bank or building society account". It was agreed that for those organisations that did not meet this criterion, it would be permissible for another organisation such as the parish council to act as the sponsor of the project. Furthermore, in acting as a sponsoring organisation, the parish council could apply for more than one grant in any one year.

Criteria for the one-off fund of £50,000

Deadline for distributing this fund. Bob said that he thought that the fund had to be spent by late 2014. He would check with Grantscape to obtain confirmation of the cut-off date.

Applicants. One of the criteria stated that "organisations operating for the purpose of making and distributing profits" were ineligible to apply. It was agreed that because the proposed community shop was an industrial and provident society and that it did not intend to distribute profits, it would be eligible to apply for funding.

Private or public money? Peter asked whether the monies from the fund counted as private monies or public monies. This could affect the ability of organisations to bid for some other sources of money such as EU funds and might be advantageous or not in relation to match funding criteria. Bob undertook to check with Grantscape on the proper interpretation of this issue.

Name of fund

The proposed name of Garlenick Community Benefit Fund was discussed. It was felt that the word Benefit should be excluded and that Garlenick Community Fund was sufficient. However, later, when the possibility of another turbine being erected in the vicinity was discussed, and perhaps any community fund derived from that project could be incorporated into the same fund, it was proposed that the more generic name of Grampound Community Fund should be used. Bob undertook to put this to Grantscape and, hopefully, to secure their agreement.

Declarations of interest

It was agreed that panel members should be able to speak on behalf of applications for organisations in which they were involved. Where their interest was significant, e.g. chairman of an organisation, it would be expected that they would not vote on the application.

It was also agreed that each member of the panel would prepare a "register of interests" which would be lodged with the panel and would be available for public viewing. The register would only include those interests that the person had in organisations within the parish, i.e. those organisations that might be potential applicants for grants.

Procedures for dealing with applications where the total of applications exceeds the monies available

It was agreed that the closing dates for applications would, once published, be final. If the total of the applications was less than the monies available, the panel would not seek to "hold back" any monies for potential new bids. Where the total of applications exceeded the monies available, the panel may consider holding an informal meeting prior to the decision-making meeting. The purpose of the informal meeting would be to investigate whether or not it was possible to negotiate with applicant organisations such that certain bids were scaled back so that as many as possible of the bids would have an opportunity to receive monies. However, there would be no obligation on the panel to enter into those negotiations if they did not feel that it would be appropriate.

Launch of the fund and timescales

Bob explained that Grantscape and Airvolution were happy for us to publicise the launch of the fund and to provide applicant organisations with as much information as they need in order to put together bids. However, the website portal through which organisations can bid for money will not go live until construction starts on site. It was anticipated that this would be in March, but we will have to wait for confirmation from Airvolution. It was agreed that, this timescale would enable organisations to assemble the information that they need to bid over the next several weeks. Then when the website goes live, they can submit their applications online.

It was agreed that the priority fund to be allocated is the one-off £50,000 fund. It was agreed that the closing date for applications for that money should be earlier than the closing date for the annual fund. It was agreed that the target dates would be end April for the one-off fund and end June for the annual fund.

A draft flyer advertising the funds will be prepared by Bob and circulated to all panel members for their agreement before it is finalised. Bob will also check with Grantscape that they are happy with this. The flyer will invite potential applicants to contact members of the panel and to have meetings with panel members to discuss the application process.

It was agreed that all publicity material for the fund would be branded separately from any other material associated with the parish council, Cornwall Council or the local Cornwall Councillor.

Cornwall Council potential project

Bob explained that Cornwall Council Property Services have identified potential sites on County Farms where turbines could be installed. One of the potential sites is between the Garlenick turbines and the village of Grampound. If the project was progressed and secured planning permission, there would be a community fund contribution of the order of £10,000 p.a. The panel felt that, if this happened, it would be sensible to try to combine the monies from the Council project with the Garlenick project in terms of administration of the fund. A public meeting will be held on 29 January to advise local residents of this possible project.