**Minutes of the Wales Committee**

**21st June 2023 via Microsoft Teams**

**In Attendance:**

Simone Lowthe-Thomas Wales Committee Chair

Nicola Russell-Brooks Wales Committee Member

Trystan Pritchard Wales Committee Member

Kate Young Wales Committee Member

Fadhili Maghiya Wales Committee Member

**Officers**

John Rose The National Lottery Community Fund

Rob Roffe The National Lottery Community Fund

Elizabeth Watson The National Lottery Community Fund (Minutes)

Ruth Bates The National Lottery Community Fund

**Guests**

Jemma Nurse The National Lottery Community Fund

Lisa Tomos The National Lottery Community Fund

Flow Mascord The National Lottery Community Fund

Kate Beggs The National Lottery Community Fund

1. **Welcome and Apologies**
   1. Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed that apologies had been received from Gwenllian Lansdown-Davies, Thomas Morgan and Andrew Owen.
2. **Review of Minutes from the Wales Committee meeting held on 16th March 2023.**
   1. The Chair asked that a grammatical error on 10.4 be amended, JR noted and confirmed this would be actioned as requested.
3. **Matters arising from previous meeting**
   1. Committee noted that details of the Shared Prosperity Fund would be distributed once complete . **(ACTION:- Rob Roffe)**
   2. RB advised the meeting that the review of web-based guidance had been completed, translated into Welsh and would be uploaded onto the website by the end of July 2023.
4. **Agreements by written procedure**
   1. Committee noted receipt of the two papers:-
      1. WBM 23:08 Sustainable Steps Wales Egin Grants:- Committee Terms of Reference agreed by written procedure which were agreed.
      2. WBM 23:09 Strategy Day Follow Up :- comments returned to Rob Roffe
5. **Declarations of Interest**
   1. Committee noted DOI’s had been received from Simone Lowthe-Thomas and Kate Young in respect of The Supporting Great Ideas application. The meeting noted that they would both be stepping out of the meeting at which point Nicola Russell-Brooks would Chair the meeting.

1. **Wales Portfolio Update**
   1. An update on work over the last 3 months provided. Committee noted that the first two months of the year in terms of grant making had been relatively quiet compared to the final quarter, commended the positive results to the employee engagement survey in Wales, whilst noting plans to address improvement areas would be developed in forthcoming months.
2. **Supporting Great Ideas**

* 1. SLT & KY left the meeting and NRB took over the role of Chair.
  2. JR introduced the application from the Wales Council for Voluntary Action, for a project that will support voluntary sector across Wales with energy audits working with a range of organisations with knowledge and experience in the sector. Alongside this, training will be delivered on reducing energy bills and running green sustainable buildings. In particular Committee noted that this project will enable 100 organisations to become more sustainable financially, reduce the carbon footprint and become more climate-friendly.
  3. JR highlighted to the Committee, that the application focused on organisations with energy bills over £10,000 and would complement the EGIN service delivered by DTA Wales.
  4. The Committee unanimously agreed to fund the full amount requested of £58,232.
  5. SLT and KY rejoined the meeting
  6. The Committeediscussed the unsuccessful application from Big Bocs Bwyd, noting some significant weaknesses for such a large application. The Committee agreed with the decision to reject this application noting that comprehensive feedback would be provided with the potential for a resubmission.

1. **Sustainable Steps Young People:-Programme Proposals.**
   1. Jemma Nurse and Lisa Tomos were invited to the meeting to discuss the paper on Sustainable Steps, noting that the aim of the Sustainable Steps Wales programme is “to support communities and young people to contribute to a prosperous, lowcarbon future for Wales”.
   2. The Committee noted that learning had been considered from a variety of programmes developed elsewhere in the UK, and the overriding message about the need for intensive person centred support.
   3. The Committee noted the importance of potential partners having complementary skillsets and the need to ensure these engaged user led groups, highlighting the potential role for the Fund in bringing potential partners together.
   4. In summary The Committee:
      1. Discussed and agreed the aims, outcomes and other parameters of the Sustainable Steps Wales – Round 2 programme and to agree the proposed approach to delivery of the second round of Sustainable Steps Wales to allow for further development, and enable a launch in January 2024.
      2. Agreed in principle that the Fund’s strategic two stage delivery mechanism is used to distribute the funding
      3. Agree decision making proposals on awards subject to the development of formal terms of reference
      4. Noted and agree the estimated administration costs for this programme.
      5. Considered matched funding with unallocated National Lottery Funding but agreed not to allocate any National Lottery Funding at this stage, but to allocate further funds made available under the current dormant accounts scheme should they become available.
2. **Prevention and Early Action**
   1. Rob Roffe and Lisa Tomos were thanked for preparing the paper which seeks to define the concepts of early action and prevention and posed a number of questions. Committee noted that the paper offered an overview of the policy context in Wales, and considered the benefits and challenges of taking an early action approach and reflects on the potential for the Fund to adopt its own early action approach.
   2. The Committee expressed support for taking a preventative approach particularly in relation to the 4 missions in the Funds new strategy, moving away from more recent crisis approaches necessitated by the Covid 19 pandemic and more recently cost of living crisis. They noted the challenges of producing evidence and being able to attribute change to the Funds interventions where multiple factors can affect outcomes.
3. **Analysis of Funding Spread (Wales)**
   1. JR introduced a short presentation providing details of geographic and hematic spread of funding for the period 2018-23. He highlighted a number of caveats to the data, indicating that data on the distribution of small grant was perhaps the best illustration of geographic spread owing to the local nature of many grant recipients. RB highlighted that data was sense checked and complemented by our regional teams local knowledge, allowing us to focus where needed.
   2. JR highlighted that as we develop our next portfolio further consideration will need to be given to ensuring we are reaching communities in greater need.
   3. The Committee reflected that the data while having limitations gave a useful overview of spread. They reflected that in general coverage was good with National Lottery Funding reaching the majority of lower super output areas (LSOAs). Looking forward the team would also need to consider other indices that could help identify different types of need and enable us to work in a manner consistent with the Funds new strategy.
4. **Safeguarding**
   1. KB was welcomed to the meeting and talked them through the presentation. She reflected on improvements made to the Funds approach to safeguarding both internally and with grant holders, highlighting a network of designated safeguarding officers, a designated safeguarding lead supported by a Senior Management Team and Board sponsor. She explained that the Funds role was primarily to ensure our grant holders have safeguarding measures in place reflecting that the responsibility for keeping project participants safe lies with our grant holders.
   2. The Committee noted the content and thanked KB for the presentation, noting it had given them a better understanding of Safeguarding.
5. **Welsh Language and Communities**
   1. Flow Mascord was welcomed to the meeting to discuss the paper she had prepared regarding the Welsh Language and Communities. FM explained that This paper provides a snapshot of the Welsh language in Wales. It offers a brief review of the 2021 census, outlines the decline in Welsh language speakers over time, and considers factors that implicate this decline, especially within Welsh language heartlands.
   2. RB highlighted the significant work the Fund undertakes to ensure that the Welsh Language is treated no less favourably than English, highlighting the recent development of materials to support non Welsh language projects support Welsh speakers.
   3. Committee highlighted the need to understand how support for the Welsh Language was supported through other sources (eg Menter Iaith), reflecting that the Fund was perhaps best placed to ensure that our grant holders are equipped and committed to enabling the Welsh Language to flourish in communities. The Committee agreed that further consideration should be given to support for the Welsh language as we develop our next portfolio.
6. **The Funds Approach to Risk**
   1. JR provided an overview of the Funds approach to managing Risk. He highlighted the use of the three lines of defence approach, and how risks are identified, quantified and mitigated at a strategic UK wide level, country level, programme and project level. He explained how applications were assessed and illustrated a number of controls that are implemented during the assessment and grant management of projects, highlighting that the level of monitoring is proportionate to the level of risk.

* 1. Committee noted that that the presentation provided them with significant reassurance relating to how risk was managed at the Fund and suggested that this be included in future inductions for members of the Wales and grant making sub committees.

**ACTION:- JR to offer Risk Session to programme sub committees.**

1. **Forward Workplan**
   1. The Committee noted the main point of the forward plan is setting out forthcoming proposals, in particular over the next six months including:-
      1. the upcoming visit to Wales of the Board and the project visits that have been organised.
      2. A number of Knowledge & Learning thematic papers to be considered by correspondence or in person.
      3. The Wales Committee meeting planned for September, which the UK Chair will attend and a Strategy Day for November at which we will be considering future funding priorities.
   2. The Committee were asked to indicate any preferences for discussions to be held face to face. Suggestions included; Discussions about place based approaches, and broader issues to he held face to face with more specific papers to be shared by correspondence. The Committee also suggested supplementing these with presentations from external speakers where possible.
2. **Feedback from Corporate Meetings**
   1. The Chair fed back about the recent events, including the successful day in Birmingham where all staff came together for the Strategy Launch.

**UK Board**

* 1. The Committee noted that Board were now receiving copies of all Committee minutes which they find helpful, allowing them to ask questions as and when necessary.

**UK Funding Committee**

* 1. Committee noted there is a review taking place of the Funding committee and taking this forwards.
  2. Further discussion had taken place around how the Climate Action Fund is already supporting work around the environmental stream and putting some more funding into support that as well as looking at where this is going in the future.

1. **Any Other Business**
   1. Committee were given an overview of the arrangements for the Board meeting due to take place on 28th and 29th June.
2. **Close** With no further business to discuss, the meeting closed at 2.30pm.