**Minutes of the Wales Committee**

**14th September 2023**

**Llety Arall, Caernarfon**

**In Attendance:**

Simone Lowthe-Thomas Wales Committee Chair

Nicola Russell-Brooks Wales Committee Member

Trystan Pritchard Wales Committee Member

Kate Young Wales Committee Member

Gwenllian Lansdown Davies Wales Committee Member

**Officers**

John Rose The National Lottery Community Fund

Rob Roffe The National Lottery Community Fund

Andrew Owen The National Lottery Community Fund

Ruth Bates The National Lottery Community Fund

1. **Welcome and Apologies**
   1. Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed that apologies had been received from Fadhili Maghiya and Thomas Morgan.
2. **Review of Minutes from the Wales Committee meeting held on 21st June 2023.**
   1. The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of proceedings.
3. **Matters arising from previous meeting**
   1. A session on Risk was scheduled for the People and Places Committee in November 2023.
   2. Analysis of the opportunities available from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund were available for the geographies covered by the 3 regional teams upon request, however data was limited owing to an inconsistency in available data across the 22 Welsh local authorities.
4. **Agreements by written procedure**
   1. Committee noted receipt of the paper:-
      1. WBM 23:18 The challenges facing people who are disabled and the organisations that support them.
5. **Declarations of Interest**

There were none received.

1. **Wales Portfolio Update**
   1. The report provided an update on work over the last 3 months ending 31st August 2023.Demand for funding had been higher than usual, with no dip during the summer months. The Committee questioned the impact of recent announcements regarding wider public spending challenges, noting the importance of adhering to our own requirements such as additionality and asked the team to monitor the extent of impacts on funded organisations. High levels of customer satisfaction were noted as were a busy schedule of political liaison, positive press coverage stakeholder engagement including strategy launch and attendance at National Eistedfodd. The Chair highlighted to successful visit of the UK Board and record thanks to team for organising excellent visit.
2. **Place Based Approaches (WBM 23.22)**
   1. The Committee reflected on the positive project visit to the Maesgeirchen estate the previous day, where they had met local community activists and organisations. Given many of the positive attributes of place based funding they reflected on how we engage others in taking more interest in place based approaches. They also acknowledged some of the challenges including delays to community projects where multiple stakeholders are involved, and questioned how we (or others) might help address/ reduce these. They suggested identifying examples and using our communications channels to talk openly about the benefits and challenges of place based funding, and how we can balance strong community driven work to inform place based plans with support from external agencies and partners.
3. **Consideration of our future approach to our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion commitments (WBM 23.23)**
   1. The Committee reflected on the concept and challenges of communities being truly inclusive. They encouraged the team to think carefully about language and the need to support communities and applicants to understand what makes communities inclusive and our expectations as a funder. They discussed the need to consider the challenges faced by people facing disadvantage and discrimination from their perspectives whilst also illustrating how a community can respond to meet their needs.
4. **Initial consideration of potential Wales Portfolio funding priorities (WBM 23.24)** 
   1. The Committee reflected on the need to ensure that the future portfolio aligns with our new strategy, balancing elements of responsive funding with a more focused approach on one or more of the themes, whilst ensuring this is relevant to the Welsh social context and complements approaches emerging from the UK Portfolio. They were reluctant to identify specific themes at this point and asked the executive to undertake further work to assist in reducing the options available giving a clearer steer/ recommendation. Consideration should also be given to how we can support not only “ready to go” projects but also support communities to develop their ideas.
5. **Wales Portfolio Report to UK Board (WBM 23.25)** 
   1. The paper noted the report to the UK Board highlighting key achievements between September 2023 and august 2023.
6. **Forward Work Plan (WBM 23.26)**
   1. Wales Committee is invited to *noted and the forward work plan; •*
7. **Feedback from Board and UK FC**
   1. The Chair provided feedback on the June Board meeting and UK Funding Committee, highlighting the appointment of the interim UK Chair, and key feedback from the recent governance review.