

Minutes of the Meeting of the Community Benefit Fund Committee

A committee which reports to, and is overseen by,
Bradford & Cookbury Parish Council (BCPC).

Date of meeting: Tuesday 23rd April, 2019 at 5.00 pm
in Bradford & Cookbury Village Hall Committee Room.

Present: Parish Councillors - Nigel Manners (Chair), Bill Pennington, Kate Rowlands.
Parishioners - Paul Clarke (Secretary), Geoff Pitt, Catherine Smale, Andy Smith.

1. Apologies: Parish Councillor - Mike Welch. Parishioners - Phil Drummond, Chris Reed.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 26th February, 2019.

The Minutes were approved with two amendments. Catherine Smale was added to the list of attendees and the phrase in item 4, '*This is the same rate of inflation as is applied to the subsidies...*' was replaced with '*This is the same index of inflation as is used for the subsidies...*'.

3. Confirmation of 2019 funding received from TREF No.1 Ltd.

The Parish Clerk has confirmed that £12,300 has been received from TREF No.1 Ltd. for this year's community benefit funding.

4. Update from Parish Council regarding Vaglefield income contributions.

The Chair advised the committee that a proportion of the cumulative amount so far received from the operators of the Vaglefield Farm wind turbine, which has built up from annual contributions shared equally with Thornbury Parish Council, is to be held as a contingency for the funding of unexpected or critical projects at short notice. The Bradford & Cookbury PC contingency will be set at £5,000. Any money exceeding that amount will be available for immediate funding of projects which may include recommendations from this Community Benefit Fund committee. At the present time approximately £5,050 is in this fund, meaning £50 is currently available for projects and worthwhile causes.

5. Further discussion of Friends of Bradford School (FOBS) 2019 funding application.

Since the last meeting on 26th February FOBS had supplied additional material to support its bid. This material allowed the bid to be validated so that it could be considered for a funding award. The material also included answers to questions which informed the discussion which took place without any FOBS personnel being present.

The wide-ranging discussion, which lasted more than one hour, covered all aspects relevant to this bid, including ownership of the play equipment, the degree to which the local community would benefit given the lack of access out of school hours, the availability of other sources of funding and the risk element and accountability regarding any money awarded by the committee in the eyes of its funding source, TREF No.1 Ltd.

The majority of the committee members present made it clear that they wished to support FOBS and its fundraising efforts on behalf of the school but the committee as a whole was also firm in its desire to balance the competing forces pulling this bid in different directions.

A show of hands was finally taken to establish the level of award deemed most appropriate in the light of all of these considerations (see item 7 below).

6. Validation of any new applications for the 2019 funding round received after the agenda for this meeting was issued.

None had been received at the time of this meeting but the Chair advised that he knew of one new application which was imminent.

*This bid subsequently arrived two days later and was immediately forwarded to all committee members by email. The bid was from the Bradford Belles Netball Team which was seeking £250 to put towards the £456 cost of replacing kit.

**Committee members were asked to indicate whether or not they wished to support this application. Eight of the ten committee members replied within one day, all saying that they did support the bid. The remaining two replied with messages of support in the next two days. However, one member was concerned that this application needed more formal, Minuted consideration rather than consent-by-email and this was agreed by the Chair, so a new meeting will be arranged at which the Bradford Belles Netball Team application can be properly considered.

7. Awarding of funds to successful bids.

The Village Hall Snooker Club bid for £195 was recommended for full funding. This bid represents 50% of the £390 cost of the project.

The Bradford with Cookbury Parochial Church Council bid for £2,190 was recommended for full funding. This bid represents just over 26% of the £8,386.80 cost of this project.

The Friends of Bradford School (FOBS) bid was recommended for an award of £2,500 against the £12,000 being sought. The total cost of the FOBS project is £18,394.

*The Bradford Belles Netball team bid for £250 was recommended (by members' email replies - see item 6 above) for full funding. This bid represents just under 55% of the £456 cost of this project.

**To be reviewed at the next meeting as noted in item 6.

These recommendations will be forwarded to the full Parish Council for approval at its meeting on Wednesday 15th May, 2019.

If these awards are approved then it means that £7,165 of this year's allocation of £12,300 remains unallocated, so the 'Window of Opportunity' for new bids will remain open beyond 30th April, 2019. It will remain open until such time as all the money remaining has been allocated or earmarked for larger projects coming down the line next year.

8. Suggestions from committee members for community benefit projects worthy of support with a view to inviting project groups/individuals to apply for funding.

Two suggestions were made where extra funding could bring forward projects/work which would benefit the local community substantially.

The first is the provision of toilets at both Bradford and Cookbury churches. At present there is no toilet provision at all and this can affect attendance at both churches for the numerous services, Christenings, weddings, funerals and bell-ringing practices which take place. Ideas have been mooted for composting toilets to be installed at these rural sites but these discussions are still only in their earliest stages.

The second acknowledges that the village hall is probably the most important community facility of all and, as such, should have the finest, modern facilities. There are numerous ways of improving the hall - rebuild the floor, improve the staging and sound system, install superfast broadband to name but a few - but the hall committee simply cannot afford all of this. It was acknowledged that a superior village hall is a win-win situation all round, because greater use of the hall results in more revenue to further improve the facilities.

9. Rewording of Grant Application Form, Guidance Notes and Qualifying Criteria - suggestions for amendments for 2020 applicants.

It was agreed that the three paragraphs in the 'General' section of the Guidance Notes should be re-written as shown below to make future bidders aware of the 'Window of Opportunity' system designed to encourage applications to be submitted as soon as possible after the new TREF No.1 Ltd. funding contribution for each year arrives.

Existing wording:

Applicants for funding are expected to have a constitution (a governing document or set of rules) and a bank account in the name of the organisation. The only exception to this will be for very small grants given to help new groups and projects get started.

Grants should generally be regarded as one-off payments and there should be no expectation of repeat funding. As soon as the £12,000 is fully allocated, all remaining applicants will be notified that funding for that year has been terminated and that fresh applications will be required for the following year's allocation.

Only rarely will 100% of any project's costs be offered. It will depend on the level of funding requested. It is expected that applicants will also make a contribution to the costs of the project, either from their own reserves, by fundraising or by using other grants from other sources. Match-funding and staged payments might be required for larger, more expensive projects.

To be replaced by:

Applicants for funding are expected to have a constitution (a governing document or set of rules) and a bank account in the name of the organisation. The only exception to this will be for very small grants given to help new groups and projects get started.

Applications should be submitted when the annual 'Window of Opportunity' is open. This runs from 1st February until 30th April each year. If the fund remains under-subscribed after 30th April it will remain open for new bids until it is fully allocated. Whenever that happens, all remaining applicants will be notified that funding for that

year has been terminated and that fresh applications or re-submissions will be required to bid for the following year's allocation.

Rarely will 100% of any project's costs be awarded. It is expected that applicants will make a contribution to the costs of the project, either from their own reserves, by fundraising or by using other grants from other sources. Match-funding and staged payments might be required for larger, more expensive projects.

10. Open Platform.

No new items were raised.

11. Items for next agenda.

None tabled.

12. Date of Next Meeting:

Provision had been made to extend today's meeting into a second session on Tuesday 30th April at 5pm if the FOBS discussion (item 5) took up all of the time. This did not happen **so the provisional meeting for 30th April, 2019 is now cancelled.**

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 14th May at 5pm, one day before the full Parish Council meeting on 15th May, 2019.