



Glenkens & District Trust (SC042489)

Report from meeting – March 2024

Annual General Meeting.

Our Trustee meeting was preceded by our Annual General Meeting. This was well attended by both Members and Associate Members. Fiona Smith, Chair, and Suzy Mercer from Foundation Scotland talked about what had been achieved over the year and the current challenges. The pooled fund arrangements and the ability to do longer term awards was welcomed but this was tempered by the recognition that the fund will not grow significantly for some time and is likely, in real terms, to reduce. This requires the Trustees to consider carefully how it can maximise the funds in the longer term and ensure that it utilises the available monies to create the greatest impact. There followed a positive and constructive discussion with a clear recognition that by working effectively across the wider community and supporting each other we could maximise the benefits for us all. The Chair thanked the Community Council Members for their continued support and trust in GDT.

Trustee Meeting

There was a short Trustee meeting which covered the following topics.

Funding Round and Budget

The closing date for applications for the next funding round is 18 March. As highlighted in our last meeting report, Foundation Scotland have slots available for potential applicants to discuss their applications and get guidance. Please look at our Facebook page for information.

The budget and cash flow were reviewed and there is currently c £90 k available for this round. This is less than has historically been available. The next annual payments are due from Blackcraig and Windy Rig in June/July,

Awards

We decided to make a small proactive award of £500 to each of the nursery settings in the area of benefit for non-statutory activities and items. These are Crossmichael and Parton Playgroup, Moniaive Playgroup, Springholm Playgroup, Dunscore Pre-school Centre and Dalry ELC.

The rationale for this is that the Community Action Plans identify childcare as a priority area and the childcare feasibility study commissioned by GDT in 2021 noted that quality ELC provision in fragile rural communities is seen as essential. Consequently, it was felt that this modest award is an efficient, equitable and effective contribution to supporting the important work undertaken by these centres.

Education

We are acutely aware of the importance of education provision to the sustainability of the area and the current issues and concerns relating to the potential mothballing of a local secondary school. We are also aware that this is an issue that is impacting various other rural areas across Scotland and that there are several different groups in similar areas and nationally looking at how education provision can be delivered effectively in rural communities.

GDT's role is to resource and enable community development locally. We discussed the scope of our role in relation to this issue and concluded that GDT should commission a piece of work to enable a better understanding of how other communities affected by this issue in Scotland are approaching it in order to share that learning and experience. We are doing this with a view to providing information and tools to community advocates that will support them in their goal to find a locally specific way forward that meets the needs and aspirations of local families and young people.

We are establishing a sub-group to develop a scope of works. We will work with contacts across the area to develop this and agree next steps.

Areas of focus over the next quarter

We will continue our work to ensure we evolve as an organisation to meet the challenges we face and to engage with other groups and regional and national bodies as appropriate.

We will negotiate the Agreement with Red Rock Power Ltd regarding Benbrack.

We will continue to liaise with developers.

Foundation Scotland will carry out the assessments of the applications received in the next funding round to enable the Trustees to make decisions in mid May.