# SCBF Directors Meeting

# 14th September 2022 at 1800

# Market House Conference Room

**Present**

Chris Bunyan, Aileen Brown, Colin Clark, Jamie Macbeath, Alistair Laurenson, John Parry, David Cooper, John Dally, Jim Milne and Neville Martin (joined 1810).

**In Attendance**

Lindsay Dougan, SSE Renewables, Community Investment Manager

Eleanor Gear, Administration Officer

CB opened the meeting by welcoming and introducing Lindsay Dougan from SSE Renewables, who looks after the Viking Community Fund amongst others throughout the UK and Ireland.

**1. Apologies**

Robin Black, Kenny Pottinger, Jim Anderson and Karen Hannay

**2. New declarations of interests**

None.

**3. New Directors/Observers**

None.

**4. Minutes of 10th August 2022**

Proposed by John Parry, seconded by Aileen Brown. Agreed.

**Matters Arising and not covered by the agenda**

None

**5. Audit and Governance group**

Aileen Brown advised that she has been sent an early draft of a financial controls policy from Eleanor and the group will review the document.

During Eleanor’s annual appraisal (as per contract) which was carried out by the SCBF officers, it was suggested that the Audit and Governance group begin carrying out regular internal audits of the AGS and SCBF finances. This would involve checking applications and other financial information. It should be noted that this was a suggestion from Eleanor and not related to any concerns from SCBF.

**6. Administration**

The officers carried out an appraisal of Eleanor’s work on Friday 9th September and were more than satisfied with the standard of work provided.

**7. Financial Report**

**(a)** Report on 2022-23 income and expenditure - circulated

Colin Clark raised a concern that the level of expenditure was quite low when compared to the funds available. CB advised that committed funding had now passed £500,000 and a press release would be issued soon. He apologised for the delay in issuing a recent press release, which SCBF tries to do regularly, but this was due to varying factors and clashes with other things. Lindsay Dougan added that the AGS has awarded a lot of funds in the early stages which has been a surprise especially considering it launched during a pandemic. LD manages funds throughout the UK and Ireland and confirmed that the AGS is performing well.

Finance report noted.

**8. Legal and Accountancy Advice**

CB has drafted letters for sending to local firms and will do so soon.

**9. Viking Energy**

Nothing to report.

**10. Business Plan Sub-Group**

CB provided a verbal update and advised that the consultation is currently running one month to 6 weeks behind schedule due to a number of factors. The launch of ‘Shetland Today’ is now scheduled to take place on Monday 26th September. This will consist of a press release, media interviews, launch of the consultation page on IBP’s website and the distribution of ‘Shetland Today’ to the mailing list of contacts built up by IBP during phase 1. Focus groups and a Shetland wide postal survey will follow in phase 2.

**11. AGS**

**(a)** Application Summary Report – circulated

David Cooper raised that there is frustration locally from groups that they will always be chasing funding to be ‘sustainable’. CB explained that ensuring sustainability of project was important, especially for larger projects. He outlined ways that groups could apply for specific, one-off projects, that might be part of longer-term aims for an organisation. He advised David to ask any concerned groups to speak to the administration officer who would always try and be positive. Lindsay Dougan added that the early stages of a fund tend to develop and enhance what is already available and the consultation will highlight the gaps in what people feel is missing. Reviewing the consultation in 5-10 years will ensure the needs of the community is still being met.

Report noted.

**12. Shetland Aerogenerators Community Benefit Fund**

CB has emailed the Chair of Bells Brae Parent Council to chase up the SACBF evaluation, this has been noted by them.

**13**. **Other commercial renewable energy scheme**

CB had an informal meeting with NOVA (Yell sound tidal scheme) which was very positive. Once the project moves forward, it is hoped that community benefit will be discussed with SCBF.

Colin Clark updated that PEEL is ready to go ahead but are waiting on planning consent. Statkraft are at the procurement stage and will be in Shetland before Christmas. CB added that he hopes a meeting could be arranged when they are here.

CB also updated that the sub-group were continuing discussions with the SIC and ORION group on offshore developments and community benefits.

**14. Any other business**

An email from Maggie Sandison, Chief Executive, SIC was circulated prior to the meeting. This requested a donation from SCBF to the local authority’s Early Action (Anchor) Project. A similar request has been made to the Charitable Trust.

This opened a lengthy discussion on whether SCBF should directly finance a local authority project, how any such donation might be financed, and the general issue of tackling poverty in the islands. Directors unanimously agreed that SCBF should not directly fund a local authority department, or project. SCBF had already made one major donation (of £200,000 to the MRI Scanner Appeal) by drawing-down future funding and had previously agreed this should be a one-off decision and not repeated as it reduced SCBF’s ability to fund projects in the future. Directors were also concerned that if they agreed to use future funds for this SIC request, this might result in a number of other similar requests from statutory or on-statutory bodies.

Directors agreed to put the issue of poverty on the agenda for the next meeting and the chair invited any directors who wished to present a paper on what actions SCBF might consider.

*David Cooper left the meeting at 1935*

Following this discussion, a proposal was made by CB to allow a second application from applicants within 12 months from their last grant award where this would meet the criteria of improving poverty or welfare. Proposed by John Parry, Seconded by Colin Clark. No dissent.

**15. Lindsay Dougan – SSE Renewables**

Lindsay Dougan thanked everybody for all their hard work and said it was very impressive how SCBF had developed and launched the Viking Community Fund AGS during a pandemic. It was commendable to volunteers and staff and other communities could learn from SCBF.

There are hard points coming up, such as the consultation, but having witnessed the discussions and communication this evening she is assured there is a strong foundation in place to deal with this. Lindsay is happy to share learning from other communities and reminded everyone that SSE are here to be flexible and to make the fund work.

CB expressed his thanks to Lindsay and noted how enormously helpful she is.

Date of next meeting – 12th October 2022 at 1800

**Meeting closed at 1955 with nothing further to discuss.**