



**South Kyle Community Investment Fund**  
**Working Group Meeting**  
**16<sup>th</sup> March 2022, 7.30pm**  
**Dalmellington Community Centre**  
**Draft Minutes**

**1. Welcome, intros & apologies**

Present	Sylvia Sinclair (CREFL), Liz Holmes (Carsphairn CC), Sheena Boyd (NCDT), Susan Kerr (NCDT) Davey McMillan (CCT), Rae Smith (Dalmellington CC), Michael Crosby (Patna CC), Sandra Laidlaw (Patna CC)
In attendance	Rachel Searle & Suzy Mercer, Foundation Scotland

**2. Minute of the August meeting and agreement of circulation**

The minutes of the August meeting were agreed as accurate and that they could now be posted on the Vattenfall South Kyle webpage. There were no matters arising not on the Agenda.

ACTION: Foundation Scotland to liaise with Vattenfall to upload minutes

**3. Developing young people's engagement**

Rachel provided an update on the work to involve children and young people in the fund development which had been badged as 'Young Deciders'.

Vattenfall had provide a donation to each of the communities, via schools and other settings as appropriate, so that children and young people could dip their toe in the water of decision making about funds. £500 had gone to all the primaries in the area of benefit and £1,000 had gone to the Doon Academy, The Zone, NCDT and to Carsphairn CT originally to run a process with young people, led and designed by each setting.

Four of the five primaries had run their process, sometimes involving just one class and sometimes doing something across the school. Much of the focus for the use of the money has been on play equipment for the outdoor space. A survey went out

alongside this work and the clear response from the 9-11 years olds has been that they want to be involved in the decision making processes relating to the fund.

So far there has been a much lower response rate from older children/young people so this is a less clear picture; but another push is being carried out just now to increase feedback.

Michael offered to liaise with Patna Primary on how they were getting on with their process as he has links to the school.

NCDT updated that in their setting, they were using a Dragon's Den type approach with a voting stage in the next week or two and that this had given them some ideas for how to use this approach for other initiatives as well as this particular focus on South Kyle.

**ACTION:** Michael Crosby to make contact with Patna Primary and link back with Rachel or Suzy.

#### **4. Community Updates**

Each of the community representatives gave an update on activity or issues arising in their communities where these might relate to South Kyle.

**Dalmellington** has started a 'refresh' for its Community Action Plan via a recent Big Breakfast. The town continues to be the focus for a lot of multi agency input including various walkabouts and the Doon Valley Masterplan, which is focusing on capitalising on natural assets such as Loch Doon. There was some discussion of the Doon Valley Masterplanning process, timing and sums of money available.

**New Cumnock** is engaging in lots of community led activity including the ReUse Hub – a long term social enterprise project focused on the circular economy; buying another asset, more news on which is currently embargoed; the Sports & Health Wellbeing hub is picking up momentum; work on youth provision for older children and young people; supporting the asset transfer of the football field; a partnership project called the N76 focused on a transport plan looking at sustainable and active travel; visitor accommodation; and food growing.

**Carsphairn** has had a recent focus on farms being sold for planting, some houses in the village have recently been sold and children coming back in. The school consultation will begin in the autumn. There is an interest in pursuing community ownership of the pub which has been empty for some years; identifying housing that could be take into community ownership; paths for recreation and getting a development plan in place for more money coming in. The need for paid support was reiterated. The Woodlands project was discussed which will create employment and training opportunities in rural skills, and potentially provides scope for forest school or nursery.

**Patna** has recently re-established its Community Council and has a lot of people of working age involved. Their next big focus will be on creating a new community action plan. There have been some initiatives lately to improve lighting and play equipment on the paths by the river.

The issue of paid support was returned to and Rachel confirmed that from discussions with Vattenfall securing any upfront funding was not possible because of the transfer of ownership.

Elaine Stewart had linked Rachel with a colleague of hers at the Coalfields Regeneration Trust to also discuss opportunities for development officer support.

There was some discussion of statutory provision and it was noted that actually very many things that could be perceived as statutory are often not when examined in detail and therefore it was hard to make generalisations. Rachel noted that Greencoat will want to be led by the community on issues and where something is a community priority, it is likely that Greencoat would want to see this supported, as long as it wasn't something clearly the responsibility of the state such as roads or education.

## **5. Headlines from the Deep Dives & Emerging Fund Design**

Suzy then spoke to the slides, provided with this minute, on the headlines emerging from the Deep Dive conversations and emerging ideas on how fund design could be used to reflect community ambitions.

It was noted that New Cumnock was going to hold a Deep Dive on the Fund Design later in the year rather than on community priorities because it was felt that New Cumnock had done extensive consultation and was feeling fatigued. NCDT had provided the priorities from the strategic plan for the slides so the other communities could see their priorities for the next 2-5 years as well as the Deep Dive headlines from Patna, Carsphairn and Dalmellington.

The Deep Dive headlines showed that all four communities had significant and ambitious community projects in their sights, at differing stages of development. These conversations had also shown that paid support was felt to be crucial in being able to take these forward and that every community wanted to see a strong youth focus in the Fund design.

A recap of fund design principles was presented, primarily that the fund design needs to be reflective of local priorities, workable, equitable and designed to ensure these significant levels of funding could achieve the maximum amount of impact; and that the final design needs to be acceptable to both the communities and to the site owner.

Emerging ideas for the fund design were presented, which covered paid support, area community funds, a youth component, an education and training fund and an

idea called the 'big ticket' rotating budget. However it was noted that time was running short and it was agreed that rather than trying to work through each one of these in detail tonight that the community reps would take these ideas away for consideration and the next meeting would focus solely on the Fund Design with no preliminaries.

It was noted that many of the potential components had initial consensus support but the two areas that would require more focus were the youth element of the fund design, which had strong support but less tangible ideas around implementation at this stage; and the 'big ticket' operating budget idea, as this was quite a novel concept and would need a detailed exploration to see if it was workable.

Foundation Scotland outlined why it was proposing this component of the fund, which may appear relatively unusual, against the projects being put forward by the communities and the aim to accelerate and achieve maximum impact with this significant single source of funds. This is also reflected in the slides. The primary drivers were: to respond to these significant capital projects; to take into account the different places in their journey that each community was at in developing these; to be able to use other elements of the fund design to facilitate these 'big ticket' items; to minimise time spent sourcing match funding; to maximise the opportunity to leverage other funds with a bigger sum; to avoid competing for external funds at the same time; to create an opportunity to accelerate the progress of legacy projects with a substantial investment at a known time. The alternative is each community accruing funds, which essentially means each would be delayed to the same pace, even though some projects are ready or close to being ready.

NCDT noted that they had experience with large capital projects and they could see this concept being workable for them as it would reduce time spent fundraising for match and allow them to plan ahead. Carsphairn noted that it would be important for the communities to work together. It was agreed that this was a new idea and would need detailed discussion to explore feasibility and that there were lots of things to discuss and people should have time to reflect.

Ahead of the next meeting, the community reps were asked to consider placing nominal budgets against each element of the fund design and bring those thoughts to the next meeting. The fund is around £1.52m per year in total. It was also agreed that the Big Ticket idea would need to have agreement or to be put aside over the next two meetings, so as not to disrupt the timeline to being ready when the wind farm becomes operational.

**ACTION:** Community reps to consider budgeting.

## **6. Date of next meeting**

It was agreed that the meetings should become monthly for the remainder of the year. It was agreed that the meetings would take place on the second Wednesday of the month for the foreseeable but that the start time should be revised to 7pm. The

next meeting will be on the 20<sup>th</sup> April at 7pm in the Lagwyne Hall in Carsphairn, which Sylvia kindly agreed to book.

**ACTION:** Sylvia Sinclair to book the Hall for the 20<sup>th</sup>.