**MINUTES OF THE WALES COMMITTEE MEETING12q**

**15th June 2022, 09:30 – 14:00**

**Online via Zoom**

**MEMBERS**

Simone Lowthe-Thomas Wales Committee Chair

Nicola Russell-Brooks Wales Committee Member Fadhili Maghiya Wales Committee Member

Trystan Pritchard Wales Committee Member

Kate Young Wales Committee Member Gwenllian Lansdown-Davies Wales Committee Member

**ATTENDEES:**

John Rose Wales Director

Andrew Owen Head of Funding

Rob Roffe Head of Knowledge and Learning

Elizabeth Watson Executive Assistant (Minutes)

Ruth Bates Head of Communications

Gareth Williams Funding Manager

Sally Williams Funding Manager

Osian Rhys Translator

1. **Chairs Welcome**
   1. The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.
   2. The Committee approved the 2nd March 2022 meeting minutes.
   3. Actions from matters arising were noted.
   4. One disqualifying interest was noted with regard to Kate Young who is a board member of WCVA relating to Supporting Great Ideas from Promo Cymru.
2. **Portfolio Update**
   1. The Chair thanked everyone for their in-depth reports.

2.2 The Committee queried whether more could be done to share learning and information such as the analysis provided in the Committee papers. GLD highlighted the potential use of blogs to share insights highlighting how this would benefit organisations that may not have the resources to undertake similar research.

2.3 The Committee noted a mixed performance in the Employee Engagement Survey. JR highlighted the further work that would be undertaken to consider possible improvements and that the Board will be following up on the employee engagement survey at the end of June.

1. **Reflections on the Strategy Day**

The Committee noted the summary provided by the strategy renewal team and agreed that it was an accurate summary of discussions.

1. **Responding to the Cost of Living Crisis (WBM 22/12)**
   1. The Committee were provided with an overview of the paper presented and were invited to consider the emerging evidence from grant holders relating to the impact of the cost-of-living crisis and agree to the proposed funding response outlined in this paper.
   2. The Committee noted that the impact is being felt by both organisations and their beneficiaries. In addition to the 3 issues of, food, transport and energy, people are seeking additional support with money management and benefits advice as well as mental health and anxiety issues caused by the crisis.
   3. The committee discussed the impact that the increase in capital, energy and transport costs is having on projects. In some instances, there had been reported increases of up to 40% in capital costs.
   4. The Committee noted that communities and organisations are facing increasing demands and need additional support. They considered two options and agreed to allocate, (subject to the conditions set out in the paper) an additional £2m to support grant variations for existing grant holders and new applications for grants of up to £100,000 for projects running for up to 2 years.
   5. The Committee proposed to undertake a further review to take place in December to consider whether additional grant funding is needed.
2. **Communities: Capacity, cohesion and safe spaces (WBM 22/13)**
   1. The Committee were provided with an overview of the challenges being faced by communities due to deprivation, poverty, intergenerational differences including the rise of hate crime. Predominantly Welsh speaking communities face challenges as young people are moving away therefore causing a decline in the use of the language in some rural areas.
   2. Committee noted the importance of physical and increasingly virtual space to support communities. Differences within communities, and changing patterns in the way people live could also lead to challenges including struggling to recruit community focused activity.
   3. The Committee agreed to consider the key findings at a later date in order to inform the future portfolio.
3. **Supporting Great Ideas (WBM22/14)**

6.1 **Black Mountain College Project**: This is a five-year application requesting £549,419.00. The project will shorten supply chains to fill skills gaps and create new jobs. There will be a focus on biodiversity, climate action, nutrition and waste reduction, teaching and outreach.so that the organization can deliver activity that pushes forward their social mission.

6.3 **Promo Cymru Limited;** this is a three-year project requesting £499,095.00 to improve how the third sector in Wales can apply digital approaches.

The committee discussed both applications in detail seeking clarity from officers and subsequently agreed to support both applications to the full budget requested.

1. **Engaging Young People in our Governance – Next Steps. (WBM 22/15)**
   1. Committee noted the recommendations for the future involvement of young people in the Fund’s work in Wales.
   2. Committee agreed to support the youth voice strategy and use it as a framework for working with the youth voice Wales team and to extend the appointment of the five current members until the launch of UK fund wide strategy in 2023.

7.3 The Committee agreed with the proposals highlighting that the contributions of young people across the fund was invaluable, as they all have different backgrounds and perspectives.

1. **Forward work plan (WBM 22/16)**

The Committee noted the paper and agreed to feedback any suggestions for future items.

1. **Feedback from Corporate Meetings**

9.1 **UK Funding Committee**

9.1.2 Committee noted that the UK Funding Committee had met recently and provided an opportunity to meet with the new Deputy Director, Mel Eaglesfield.

9.1.3 The meeting focused primarily around the strategy review with more of an emphasis on the UK Portfolio and what its purpose would be.

9.1.4 Committee noted that UKFC had discussed the cost-of-living crisis at the meeting and a further paper would be considered shortly. The UK funding team will work closely with the country funding teams to either distribute funds more locally or complement existing funding.

9.2 **Climate Action Fund**

9.2.1 Committee noted that the CAF had also met recently and had made decisions on three grants. The next round of funding which will be launched in July and will be centered around nature-based solutions that address climate change.

**9.3 UK Board:-**The Committee noted that the update given was from March, as the next Board meeting will be at the end of June.

9.3.2 Discussion at March Board focused on the EDI strategy and the strategy renewal process.

9.3.3 Updates on KPI’s and performance, and the corporate plan were included.

9.3.4 Four new board members are being recruited at present and should be in attendance at the September Board meeting.

1. **Informal closed session for Wales Committee.**

10.1 Committee noted that the purpose of the closed session was to share more information about what was required with regard to the terms of the review of the performance for the Wales committee. This, however, will now be built into the 1-1 discussions.

The meeting closed at 15.00