

Sustainable Development Fund Committee

13 September 2023

Present: Councillor S Alderman, Councillor S Hancock, Dr M Havard, Councillor M James and Councillor Mrs S Skyrme-Blackhall.

Also in attendance: Jessica Morgan (Head of Decarbonisation), Hannah Boyd (Decarbonisation Officer), Arwel Evans (Farming Conservation Officer) and Georgia Jones (Democratic Services Officer).

(Virtual Meeting: 10.00am –11.28am)

[Councillor M James was not present for Item 1 – Election of the Chair]

1. Election of Chair

The Deputy Chair, Dr M Havard, opened the meeting and reported that only one nomination had been received for the office of Chair: Councillor M James.

On the proposal of Dr M Havard, seconded by Councillor S Hancock, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor M James be elected Chair for the ensuing year.

[Councillor James then joined the meeting and took the Chair]

2. Election of Deputy Chair

The Chair reported that no nominations had yet been received for office of Deputy Chair.

On the proposal of Dr M Havard, seconded by Councillor S Hancock, it was **RESOLVED** that Councillor S Skyrme-Blackhall be elected Deputy Chair for the ensuing year.

3. Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Dr R Plummer.

4. Disclosures of Interest

Councillor S Alderman disclosed a personal interest in GA23/CLE and GA23/TED due to his former involvement with the National Farmers Union.

5. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 26 April 2023 were presented for confirmation and authentication.



On the proposal of Dr M Havard, seconded by Councillor S Alderman, it was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 26 April 2023 be confirmed and authenticated.

6. Action Log

a) To circulate the different rates for volunteer in-kind support

A Member highlighted that these rates should include a tier for a Professional Rate. The Head of Decarbonisation agreed to add this information and recirculate to Members.

7. Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) Report

The Chair welcomed the new Decarbonisation Officer, Hannah Boyd, who presented the SDF report that included a summary of current financial commitments for the scheme, a map of approved projects, an update of projects completed since the last meeting and the SDF financial position 2023/24.

The Officer began by taking Members through a table that demonstrated the current financial commitments of the scheme, providing a brief summary of the status of each project.

One Member noted the significant SDF investment in the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority Dark Skies project and asked if this project would focus on a particular location. The Officer confirmed that this was a 3-year project that would look at the area of Pembrokeshire rather than a particular location. In response to interest from Members, the Officer confirmed that she would invite the Dark Skies Officer to a future meeting to provide an update of the project. Members were happy with this proposal and requested that they be sent a report from the Dark Skies Officer in advance of the meeting to allow the opportunity to ask questions. A Member asked if the project had the aim of achieving an accreditation for Dark Skies in the area and the Officer confirmed that she would enquire and request that this information be featured in the upcoming report.

With regards to the financial position of the SDF scheme, a Member asked whether Officers had any indication of whether, with the financial climate and reduced funding, this resource would be impacted in future. The Head of Decarbonisation responded by confirming that the Sustainable Landscapes, Sustainable Places (SLSP) funding (that covers SDF, the Greening Agriculture Scheme and other decarbonisation actions around the Park) awarded by the Welsh Government was a three year application and the schemes were in their second year. It was confirmed that in the third year (next year), £50k had been allocated for SDF. Based



on this, the Head of Decarbonisation recommended that no other round of SDF funding take place in the current financial year with the aim of moving the underspend to the next financial year. The Head of Decarbonisation added that she aimed to discuss the matter with the Authority's Finance Manager to understand if there could be any contribution from the National Park's future budget funding to boost the SDF budget to £100k as per previous years and an update would be provided at the next meeting.

On the proposal of Councillor S Hancock, seconded by Councillor S Alderman, it was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) the underspend from the current year's Sustainable Development Fund be rolled over to the next financial year.

8. Greening Agriculture Project Update

The Chair welcomed the Farming Conservation Officer who presented a report that provided Members with an update of current projects and the current financial commitments of the Greening Agriculture scheme.

The Officer confirmed that two of the projects had been completed; GA22/REEF and GA22/CAERFAI, with comprehensive impact reports expected by the next meeting.

One Member requested that a summary of the overall finances of the scheme be featured in future reports and the Officer agreed to this.

Noted.

9. Exclusion of the public

It was noted that in discussing the applications, information might be shared which was personal or commercially sensitive, and it was therefore requested that the public be excluded from the meeting.

On the proposal of Councillor S Hancock, seconded by Dr M Havard, it was **RESOLVED** that the public be excluded from the meeting as exempt information, as defined in Paragraphs 12 and 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, would be disclosed.

10. Applications for Consideration

In response to a query raised by a Member, the Farming Conservation Officer confirmed that a budget of £100k had been allocated in the current financial year to the Greening Agriculture Project (the budget covered the Greening Agriculture scheme, Traditional Boundaries programme and the Commons Resilience project).



The report before the Committee outlined four prioritised applications made to the fund since the previous meeting that had been scored using a priority matrix. It was noted that four formal applications had been received in total in the most recent round.

Ref no	Applicant	Description	Score (20)	Cost
GA23/CLE	Clerkenhill Farm, Slebech, Haverfordwest	Solar System with battery storage	16	£31,261.59
		Heat Recovery System		£6,989
GA23/HAF	Hafod Grove, Moylegrove	Solar System and battery storage	13	£20,000
GA23/PEA	Pearson farm, St Brides	Solar System with Battery storage	15	£60,078.93
GA23/TED	Tedion Farm, Lawrenny	New Lobe Vacuum Pump with VOD	14	£13,000
		Or VOD for existing pumps		£4,670
		Upgraded Heat Recovery System		£9,000

Each application was considered in detail against the scoring template and following discussions, it was **RESOLVED** that:

A) funding be granted to the following applications, subject to the usual conditions of the grant.

	Ref no	Applicant	Description	Funding Awarded
i)	GA23/CLE	Clerkenhill Farm, Slebech, Haverfordwest	Solar System and battery	Grant of £21,000 (70% of £30,000)
ii)	GA23/HAF	Hafod Grove, Moylegrove	Solar System and battery	Grant of £14,000 (70% of £20,000)
iii)	GA23/TED	Tedion Farm, Lawrenny	New lobe vacuum pump with VOD and upgraded heat recovery system	Grant of £15,400 (70% of 22,000)

B) GA23/PEA Pearson Farm, St Brides – this application be deferred until the applicant obtains the necessary planning permission.

