

Report of: The Farm Conservation Liaison Officer

Subject: Designated Landscapes Ffermio Bro Programme – Local Assessment Panel

Decision Required: Yes

Recommendation:

The Authority is recommended to:

- a) Establish a Ffermio Bro Local Assessment Panel and adopt the National Terms of Reference dated March 6, 2025
- b) Appoint three Authority Members to the Panel. Where possible members should have farming experience to contribute to evaluating agri-environment scheme applications
- c) Delegate authority to the Chief Executive to:
 - Make necessary adjustments to panel membership in consultation with the Panel Chair

1. Key Messages

- 1.1 In order to ensure robust Governance, the Ffermio Bro Scheme in PCNPA will require a Local Assessment Panel (LAP) to ratify applications over £10,000.
- 1.2 They assess applications to the programme and make decisions on which projects should be approved, deferred, or rejected.
- 1.3 The LAP would use a standardized scoring system to evaluate papers/applications submitted in advance, ensuring all projects meet a minimum threshold to make meaningful contributions to the programme's aims.
- 1.4 The panels include representatives (6-8) from farming community and conservation bodies and Authority Members, providing balanced expertise in evaluating projects and ensuring they align with local priorities for this reason the Current grants committee cannot be utilised.
- 1.5 Due to the anticipated timeline of the Ffermio Bro Programme the LAP would only meet a few times in the first year during June- July. During years two and three there may be an increased demand for the LAP to meet on a more frequent basis. (4-5 time annually)
- 1.6 The terms of reference are attached to this report.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Ffermio Bro (Farming in Designated Landscapes) scheme will launch in May throughout the Designated landscapes of Wales. Although a national scheme each landscape will have discretion and flexibility to deliver the scheme against its objectives and local priorities.
- 2.2 The programme is a project-based initiative that takes a bottom-up approach, where capital funding supports individual projects proposed by farmers and clusters of farmers, which need to be approved by Local Assessment Panels to ensure they support Designated Landscapes' local priorities when the applications exceed £10,000. Applications of under £10,000 will be agreed by the delegated Authority of the Chief Executive, however, the Panel will review reports on applications approved for funding below £10,000.
- 2.3 PCNPA has received confirmation of funding for 2025/26. £198,000 for capital works with an additional revenue allocation to employ an FTE Ffermio Bro Advisor to help with engagement and delivery. This Capital budget is forecasted to double after the first year.
- 2.4 Ffermio Bro is a fixed term programme (2024-27) designed to provide additional investment in Wales's most special landscapes, working alongside existing schemes to add value where most needed.
- 2.5 The programme integrates farming practices with Designated Landscapes' purposes, focusing on environmental, nature recovery and climate mitigation collaborative projects across multiple farms.
- 2.6 Projects must primarily support the objective of maintaining and enhancing ecosystem resilience, while also potentially delivering other sustainable land management objectives.
- 2.7 The ambition of the Scheme is to foster collaborative working on farms that can be fed into the Collaborative layer of the Sustainable farming Scheme (SFS) when it launches.

Composition of the Panel

- 2.8 It is proposed that the Panel is composed of:

- 3 members of the Authority;
- Natural Resources Wales (where staff are available to so);
- A representative of the farming and land management community;
- A representative of the conservation and environmental sector; and
- A representative of the Local Access Forum.

At least one Member must have significant experience of agri-environmental schemes (either as an applicant or an administrator of a scheme).

3. Consultation

- 3.1 Consultation on the scheme and documentation was undertaken by the Ffermio Bro Co-ordinator.

4. Strategic Policy Context

- 4.1 The information and recommendation(s) contained in this report are consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and its approved strategic policy context.
- 4.2 The recommendations directly support the Partnership Plan's key themes by addressing multiple objectives simultaneously. They contribute to the conservation of natural beauty and wildlife through sustainable farming practices, while supporting cultural heritage preservation through maintaining traditional field patterns. The focus on reducing emissions and improving soil health aligns with climate action goals, while promoting sustainable resource management. This integrated approach helps deliver both environmental benefits and socio-economic well-being for National Park communities, directly supporting the Authority's statutory purposes and well-being objectives.

5. Financial Considerations

- 5.1 There are no resources or financial implications arising directly from the proposals however this proposal forms an essential part of the Ffermio Bro Programme Delivery.

6. Risk and Compliance Considerations

- a. Service Risk: There are risks around panel decision-making and governance that could affect service delivery. These are mitigated through clear Terms of Reference that establish quorum requirements, voting procedures, and conflict of interest protocols.
- b. Reputation Risk: Panel decisions on funding applications could face challenges or appeals. This is managed through a formal appeals process and clear documentation of decision rationales.
- c. Legal Risk: The panel must ensure compliance with scheme guidance and the Agriculture (Wales) Act 2023. This is addressed by requiring all funding decisions to meet Sustainable Land Management objectives.
- d. Financial Risk: The farmer and charitable organisation representatives, will be able to claim expenses. These will be managed through the Authority's Ffermio Bro revenue allocation.
- e. Individual Risk: Panel members need to manage conflicts of interest appropriately. Controls include requiring members to declare any interests and excluding them from relevant discussions.
- f. If the panel is not established, there would be no governance mechanism for evaluating projects above £10,000, which would prevent proper implementation of the scheme.

7. Impact on our Public Sector Duties

- 7.1 Integrated Assessment Completed**: No – since we are adopting a nationally agreed process

7.2 Equality, Socio-Economic, Health and Human Rights Impacts

- 7.2.1 The Local Assessment Panel's establishment promotes equality and fairness through its diverse membership reflecting various demographics and

backgrounds across the Landscape. The panel ensures socio-economic inclusion by reimbursing expenses for farmer and charitable representatives, while offering virtual meeting options to enhance accessibility. Fair decision-making is guaranteed through equal voting powers and transparent procedures. The structure supports farming communities' development while protecting individual rights through robust conflict of interest procedures and a clear appeals process with defined timeframes. This inclusive approach ensures equitable access to the program's benefits while maintaining procedural fairness and transparency in decision-making.

7.3 Welsh Language Impacts

- 7.3.1 The Local Assessment Panel will work in a way that meets the Authority's Welsh Language Standards. Documents will be bilingual and Welsh-speaking officers will be able to discuss and service the agricultural communities that live and work through the medium of Welsh.

7.4 Section 6 Biodiversity Duty and Carbon Emission Impacts

- 7.4.1 The formation of the Local Assessment Panel (LAP) will have positive environmental impacts through its role in evaluating and approving conservation projects. The LAP will prioritise ecosystem resilience and biodiversity enhancement by assessing projects against Sustainable Land Management objectives, including habitat connectivity, species recovery, and climate adaptation measures. Panel decisions will support carbon reduction through funding natural flood management interventions and regenerative farming practices that enhance natural carbon stores. All projects over £10,000 will undergo LAP scrutiny to ensure they deliver meaningful environmental benefits and contribute to landscape-scale ecosystem improvements.

7.5 Well-being Goals for Wales and 5 Ways of Working (Sustainable Development Principles) Impacts

- 7.5.1 : The formation of the Ffermio Bro Local Assessment Panel (LAP) contributes to the Well-being Goals and Sustainable Development Principles in several ways:

The LAP supports a prosperous and resilient Wales by ensuring effective allocation of funding for sustainable farming practices and ecosystem enhancement. It promotes cohesive communities through collaborative partnerships between farmers and stakeholders, while supporting Welsh language and culture through bilingual service delivery.

- 7.5.2 The panel embraces sustainable development principles through:

- Long-term thinking: Supporting projects that have a long-term impact on nature recovery and the sustainability of participating farms.
- Prevention: Focusing on ecosystem resilience and climate adaptation measures
- Integration: Aligning with broader strategic frameworks and management plans
- Collaboration: Supporting partnerships between farmers and facilitating networking opportunities

- Involvement: Including diverse stakeholder representation and local community members in decision-making.

8. Conclusion

8.1 The formation of the Local Assessment Panel for the Ffermio Bro scheme represents a significant step in delivering effective governance and expertise for the programme. The proposed panel structure ensures diverse representation from key stakeholders while maintaining robust decision-making processes. With clear Terms of Reference, conflict of interest procedures, and appropriate expertise requirements, the LAP will enable effective delivery of the scheme's objectives while supporting equality, Welsh language requirements, and environmental considerations. The panel's composition and operational framework align with both governance requirements and the scheme's broader goals of enhancing farming sustainability and biodiversity outcomes.

9. List Background Documentation:

Ffermio Bro Briefing Document

TOR Local Assessment Panel

(For further information please contact Arwel Evans –
arwele@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk)

Ffermio Bro: ***Farming in Designated Landscapes***

Scheme not final – subject to change

Briefing pack

For further information please contact National Ffermio Bro Manager:

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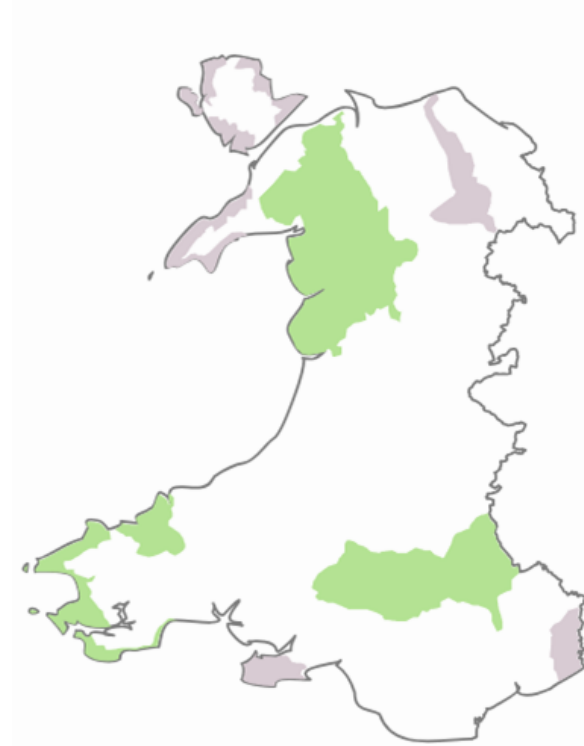
Introduction

Ffermio Bro is a Welsh Government programme, running until March 2028.

It supports farming projects across Wales' National Parks and National Landscapes (Formerly Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty/AONBs) **that make improvements for nature and the environment.**

Tirweddau Cymru Landscapes Wales is a partnership of the Designated Landscapes of Wales, the five National Landscapes: *Anglesey, Clwydian Range and Dee Valley, Llŷn, Gower and Wye Valley*; and the three National Park Authorities: *Bannau Brycheiniog, Eryri and Pembrokeshire Coast*.

Ffermio Bro forms part of the preparatory stage of the Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) and will inform development of the collaborative layer.



Our Designated Landscapes are special and unique places and need to be managed, enhanced and protected while also supporting the farmers and communities who work within them and the wider local economy.



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Farmers and Landscapes, together. The programme is delivered by farmers, working in partnership with National Park Authorities and National Landscapes.

Collaborative. It focuses on activities that span multiple farms, creating collaborative projects that can deliver for nature on a landscape scale.

For nature. It supports environmental, nature recovery and climate mitigation projects that *maintain and enhance the resilience of ecosystems and benefits they provide.*

For farming. It helps farm businesses to become more sustainable and resilient.

For people and communities. Projects provide opportunities for people to discover, enjoy and understand the Designated Landscapes and their cultural heritage.



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Scheme details

Where	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Farms and other landowners/managers in Welsh National Parks and National Landscapes (formerly AONBs).
When	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ffermio Bro is a 3 year scheme running until March 2028, but with the possibility of running beyond this.The first year of the Programme begins on 1 April 2025 - all works must be complete by 31 March 2026.Ffermio Bro will be officially launched on 1 May 2025 at the Tirweddau Cymru Annual Seminar.
Who	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ffermio Bro is a collaborative scheme and so focusses on projects across multiple farms to deliver landscape scale change for nature and environment.But collaborations don't need to be formal clusters. We want projects that achieve a common goal across multiple farms, and will seek to fund projects that achieve this broad sense of collaborative action.Ffermio Bro advisors will facilitate development of these collaborations – but we welcome support from eNGOs and other organisations.Note that individual farm projects will also be considered.
How much	<ul style="list-style-type: none">C. £1.5m in year 1 across all Designated Landscapes.Funding is capital only and there is no allocation for maintenance or management.Each Designated Landscape will have its own allocation and will decide individually how to spend this.
What	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Designated Landscapes will decide what they will fund and where in the Landscape they will prioritise funding.Almost anything that benefits biodiversity is possible – but in year 1 activities should in general be straightforward and not require complex permissions/consents to ensure works can be complete by the 31 March 2026 deadline.



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Types of activity

- Projects that support the Welsh Government's Sustainable Land Management Objective '*Maintain and enhance resilience of ecosystems and benefits they provide*' can be funded. While this is our primary goal, projects that are also aligned to the other SLMs will be viewed favourably.
- This means that Ffermio Bro is able to support an extremely wide range of landscape scale activities – and we are keen to facilitate innovative concepts that enable farmers to help nature and biodiversity.
- **Designated Landscapes determine what type of project** they will focus their funding allocation on locally, and advisors will work with farmers and landowners to develop these. A detailed list of the types of activity that will be supported by Ffermio Bro in Year 1 will be made available.
- Designated Landscapes may focus on **certain actions, habitats or geographic areas** and not all activities will be supported in all areas.
- Timing constraints relating to obtaining consents and permissions mean that certain activities may not be possible during year 1.

Ffermio Bro can provide capital funding linked to on-farm activities. Activities can include:

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| • Low density targeted tree planting where improving habitat. | • Enhancing and creating wetland. | • Improving access to the countryside through upgrading/enhancing public paths, open access land and green spaces. |
| • Woodland restoration | • Enhancing and creating riparian habitat. | |
| • Natural regeneration. | • Enhancing upland and unenclosed habitat & peatland. | • Targeted measures to support the recovery of the wildlife species and habitats. |
| • Restoring and creating hedgerows | • Enhancing and creating lowland habitat. | |
| • Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) removal and eradication. | • Restoring traditional hay meadows, and creating wild bird, wildlife and pollinator strips and plots. | • Targeted measures to improve water quality such as stock control. |
| • Natural flood risk management (NFRM) interventions (where consent is not required). | • Traditional boundary restoration, stone walls, earth banks and slate fences. | |



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How projects are assessed



Specialist advisors based in National Parks and National Landscapes advise farmers and land managers on developing projects.

Applications for **under £10,000** are assessed by the Designated Landscape body.

Applications over **£10,000** are assessed by an **independent Local Assessment Panel** made up of:

- *Representatives of the Designated Landscapes*
- *Farmers*
- *Conservation experts*
- *NRW*
- *Other experts and specialists*



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FAQs

What kind of activities will be eligible for funding?

- The scheme will fund a wide range of activities across the Welsh Government's Sustainable Land Management (SLM) objectives. Projects can be funded that support the sustainability of farm businesses, help reduce emissions or mitigate the impacts of climate change, improve biodiversity and create habitats, and maintain heritage features such as walls.
- The scheme is aimed at work undertaken on a landscape scale, with multiple farms in an area participating in projects.
- Some examples would be:
 - Planting of low density woodland
 - Measures to improve rivers and wetlands
 - Natural Flood Management
 - Fencing and other grazing management activities
 - Activities to enable management of habitats such as semi-natural grasslands, Rhos pasture or hay meadows
 - Creating new habitats
 - Reducing carbon emissions on farms
 - Providing new access routes and permissive paths

These are examples only and not a comprehensive list. A full list will be available closer to the launch date of the programme.

What are the timelines?

- Ffermio Bro is intended to be a 3 year scheme. Projects will be funded on an annual basis however, and all works must be completed by 31 March the following year to qualify for funding.

FAQs

What makes this scheme special?

- Our Designated Landscapes are special places, and farmers in these areas play an important role in managing them.
- This scheme aims to support farmers in making Designated Landscapes better places both for farming and for nature.
- This scheme is a dedicated programme for Designated Landscapes, giving farmers access to resources to help achieve the biodiversity, habitat and sustainability goals in our National Parks and National Landscapes – while helping farmers to build sustainable businesses in these places.
- Ffermio Bro is also a collaborative scheme – it will normally fund projects that span multiple farms and so deliver benefits across the Designated Landscape more broadly than a traditional single farm scheme.

How will this scheme interact with other elements of the SFS?

- Ffermio Bro is part of the preparatory phase of the SFS. It will also inform the development of the SFS Collaborative layer. Participation in Ffermio Bro will not affect eligibility for the SFS.
- Any habitat that is created or enhanced under Ffermio Bro will be eligible under the Sustainable Farming Scheme and will count towards the Universal requirements for habitat. Farmers who have carried out appropriate works to support habitat as part of a Ffermio Bro project can benefit through SFS. There is no disadvantage to them.
- Payment rates offered through Ffermio Bro will be aligned with other schemes offered by Welsh Government that fund the same activities.
- The key distinctions are the collaborative nature of Ffermio Bro and that the scheme is focussed on Designated Landscapes.



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FAQs

Must applications be from groups of farmers?

- No – the scheme can fund projects undertaken on just one farm, however the priority is collaboration and collaborative projects will be prioritised when applications are assessed.

Will farmers have to apply themselves?

- Farmers will be supported through the application process by specialist advisors, who will work in their Designated Landscape and have the knowledge and expertise to help.
- These advisors will support farmers with choosing projects, creating collaborations and completing applications.

What does collaborative mean?

- We are not looking for farmers to form formal groups or sign partnership agreements. We will work with farmers and facilitate workshops to identify projects that can be undertaken across multiple farms and support farmers in doing this.
- Collaboration for us means projects that occur on multiple farms to achieve a common goal.



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FAQs

Who manages the scheme?

- Ffermio Bro is funded by Welsh Government, but will be administered directly by the Designated Landscapes (National Park Authorities and National Landscapes). Farmers will apply to the Landscape for funding, and the Landscape will make the decision on which activities to fund (with support from a Local Assessment Panel for larger applications).
- Farmers do not need to apply to RPW for funding and will not interact with RPW or have work checked by RPW. The Designated Landscape will be fully responsible.

I have already obtained funding under INRS or another scheme, can I apply to Ffermio Bro?

- Yes, but not for the same work or activity. As long as a farmer is not applying to double fund a piece of work this scheme is independent of others and participating in one does not exclude a farm from participating in Ffermio Bro.

Will Ffermio Bro pay for management or maintenance?

- No, Ffermio Bro is a capital only scheme, and will not pay for maintenance or management costs.

Will farmers need to apply to RPW?

- No, farmers will apply directly to the Designated Landscape Body.

FAQs

Who decides on what will be funded?

- The Designated Landscape Body will decide how they want to use Ffermio Bro and what types of activity they wish to fund.
- Advisors will work with farmers to develop these projects.
- Lower value applications will be decided by the Designated Landscape Body, but higher value applications will be assessed by a Local Assessment Panel, that will include members of the agricultural community and other relevant experts



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Ffermio Bro: Farming in Designated Landscapes

Terms of Reference for Local Assessment Panels

Final version. 6 March 2025



Purpose of the Panel:

To consider and decide on applications for projects above £10,000¹ submitted to the Ffermio Bro: Farming in Designated Landscapes programme, according to the agreed WG scheme guidance criteria for the programme and in accordance with the scoring system provided.

Designated Landscape bodies, where they are leading local programmes, are responsible for appointing the panel, with some landscape bodies sharing panels subject to local capacity and requirements.

Role of Local Assessment Panel (LAP) The panel shall:

- 1.1 Receive a report and recommendation on all valid applications from the relevant Ffermio Bro local advisor
- 1.2 Thoroughly consider all applications for projects above £10,000¹ along with the report and recommendations.
- 1.3 Assess applications, ensuring compliance with the WG Ffermio Bro scheme guidance, and scoring applications against the provided criteria
- 1.4 Award funding only where projects meet the Sustainable Land Management (SLM) objective '*Maintain and enhance resilience of ecosystems and benefits they provide*' set out in The Agriculture (Wales) Act 2023 ('the Agriculture Act')
- 1.5 Make a decision falling into one of the following four categories:
 - Award
 - Partially award
 - Request for more information
 - Refusal of application

¹ Projects below this limit may be determined by the relevant Designated Landscape body. The panel, Welsh Government and the Programme Manager may choose to lower this threshold for future applications.

- 1.6 Provide a clear rationale for decisions taken, making reference to the scheme guidance documents and criteria.
- 1.7 Provide guidance and advice to applications that are not fully awarded to support amendments that would be reconsidered for approval
- 1.8 Review reports on decisions made by the Landscape on applications of under £10,000 and provide comment and feedback to the Landscape
- 1.9 Have the discretion to lower the threshold at which applications must be taken to the panel for approval.
- 1.10 Treat all decisions as confidential until the Designated Landscape body has provided the decision to the applicant.
- 1.11 Champion the Ffermio Bro programme with farmers, the agricultural community, land managers and other organisations.

Panel makeup

- 2.1 Panel members will be appointed by the Chief Executive/most senior officer of the relevant Designated Landscape body(ies) rather than be subject to recruitment processes.
- 2.2 Panel members should be appointed from a range of locations and backgrounds across the Designated Landscape.
- 2.3 The panel should insofar as possible reflect the diversity of the people who live, work and spend time in the Landscape. Panels should endeavour to include members from differing ethnicities, genders, occupations, ages and other such characteristics.
- 2.4 Panel members should also have excellent specialist knowledge in their field and of the Landscape or an area within the Landscape.
- 2.5 The panel should, insofar as possible, consist of representatives of:
 - The Designated Landscape Team;
 - Natural Resources Wales (where staff are available to so)¹;
 - The farming and land management community
 - The conservation and environmental sector
 - The relevant Local Access Forum (LAF)²

Notes:

¹Recognising resource constraints and potential challenges in securing representatives, NRW representatives should be invited to be part of the panel, but recognising that it may not be possible for them to join or to attend on a regular basis

²Where a LAF representative cannot attend every meeting they should be invited to those meetings where applications for which recreation and access issues are critical are being discussed

2.6 At least one member of the panel should have significant experience of agri-environment schemes (this may be as an applicant or as an administrator of such schemes).

2.7 Panels may be made up of one or more Designated Landscape bodies. These shared Local Assessment Panels will assess applications for the Landscapes present.

2.8 Where a panel is shared, at least one farming representative/designated landscape team representative for the landscape under discussion must attend where applications in that landscape are being discussed.

2.9 The panel should keep its membership under review and may, at the discretion of the Chair or the Chief Executive/most senior officer of the Designated Landscape body or their nominee, invite additional members or remove members.

2.10 The Chief Executive of the Designated Landscape or their nominee may, at their discretion, invite additional members or remove members.

2.11 Panels should have at least 5 members

2.12 For shared local assessment panels there should be a minimum of 7 panel members (excluding the Chair)

Governance

3.0 The quorum of the panel should be 50% (at least 3) + 1 of the agreed panel size

3.1 The panel may review and make recommendations for amendments to the Panel's Terms of Reference; these will be considered and approved by the Chair and the Chief Executive of the relevant designated landscape(s)

3.2 The panel will have regard to the Nolan Principles in all its affairs and members will adhere to the relevant codes of conduct applicable to the Designated Landscape.

3.3 The Panel should appoint a chair from among its membership at the first meeting.

3.4 The Panel membership should be available to the public, if requested
Organisation of LAP meetings

- 3.5 Panels will meet at an appropriate frequency. Decision-making meetings will need to be linked to the timetables set out in the WG scheme guidance. The schedule of meetings will be determined by the Designated Landscape body(ies). Additional meetings outside the panel's agreed schedule can be called at a minimum of 5 working days' notice.
- 3.6 All members of the panel should have equal voting powers and decisions should be taken by a majority of those present. In the event of no clear conclusion the Chair should have a second and casting vote.
- 3.7 In the event of any continued deadlock that cannot be resolved by the panel's voting or discussion, the Chief Executive of the Designated Landscape or their nominee will have the final deciding vote.
- 3.8 Panel members will be expected to declare **any** pecuniary interest or other conflict of interest in projects being assessed, including personal or family relationships.
- 3.9 Where it is considered (by officer or panel member) that a member has a conflict of interest in a matter under discussion, that member must be excluded from that part of the meeting (they will have to leave the meeting or disconnect from a video link), they will have no vote on such applications and the conflict of interest noted in the minutes. Panel members will have a responsibility to declare an interest in any application under discussion.
- 3.10 Panel members may apply to the fund but, will not be involved in assessing their own applications nor may they lobby other panel members for support.
- 3.11 Designated Landscapes may apply to fund for activities on land they own or manage, but representatives of the Landscape must be excluded from that part of the meeting and may not vote on the application. In addition, the Programme Manager or a representative of Welsh Government must be invited to sit on the panel when it discusses such an application and will have the right of veto to prevent such an application being approved.
- 3.12 All applications and matters discussed at grants panel meetings should be treated in the strictest confidence, though it should also be noted that all communication in relation to the fund is on the public record and subject to Freedom of Information legislation.
- 3.13 The agenda, supporting papers and report should be issued at least one week before the date of a meeting, by email.
- 3.14 The relevant Ffermio Bro advisor should prepare a report for the panel setting out each decision made below the £10,000 threshold in the period since its last meeting. This report should include details of rationale for approval and alignment with SLM objectives. It should also include

information on levels of engagement, enquiries, feedback and issues from farmers.

- 3.15 The panel may choose to ask for additional information and comment on the decision made by the landscape on projects approved below the £10,000 threshold in the period since its last meeting.
- 3.16 At its discretion, the panel may choose to reduce the threshold at which future applications must be approved by it.
- 3.17 Welsh Government and the Programme Manager may also, at their absolute discretion, choose to lower the threshold at which future applications must be taken to the panel for approval.
- 3.18 Circumstances in which the threshold may be lowered include where insufficient applications are progressing to panel or where additional governance around smaller claims is considered necessary.
- 3.19 Panels can choose to meet virtually and also decide by correspondence by local agreement.
- 3.20 All administration of the panel including minute taking will be the responsibility of the relevant Designated Landscape body. This includes reasons for decisions made at the meeting.
- 3.21 Decisions of the panel including the reasons for those decisions should be issued in writing to applicants within 1 week of the date at which it was agreed.
- 3.22 Minutes of the panel meeting should be circulated to members no more than (2) weeks of a meeting. They shall include:
 - a. Attendance
 - b. Matters arising from previous meetings (e.g. progress on deferred applications)
 - c. A decision record for each application
 - d. Financial information
- 3.23 On receipt of timesheets, farmer and land manager representatives to the panel and those from organisations with charitable status can be reimbursed expenses for preparation for and attendance at panel meetings at the discretion of the lead Designated Landscape body. This spending would come out of the Designated Landscape body's Ffermio Bro revenue allocation or own administrative budgets and be a shared expense across the groups of Landscapes if the panel is a shared panel.

Complaints and appeals

4.Appeals

- 4.1 Appeals on decisions made on applications should be made to the Designated Landscape body in which the applicant is based (regardless of whether the decision was made at a shared Local Assessment Panel).
- 4.2 Applicants can only query a funding decision if they think that the Local Assessment Panel has:
 - a. made a mistake with the application
 - b. made a processing error
 - c. got the law wrong
- 4.3 Applicants must set out to their relevant Designated Landscape body the reason for their appeal under one (or more) of these 3 criteria. Information on how to appeal should be included in the written decision from the panel as a matter of course. Applicants should be provided with the following advice for making an appeal:
 - a. An appeal must be made within 10 working days of receiving your application decision
 - b. The Landscape will aim to communicate with you about your appeal within 15 workings days from when you submitted your appeal
- 4.4 Appeals should be dealt with locally in the first instance by the relevant Designated Landscape body.
- 4.5 Designated Landscapes should set up an Appeals Panel with distinct members to the normal Assessment Panel and comprised of appointees of the Chief Executive of the Landscape (or its most senior officer) to decide on any Appeals.
- 4.6 Applicants making appeals will be provided with detailed information around the original decision, and be given the opportunity to discuss the rationale for rejection with the Chair of the Panel.
- 4.7 Where necessary, Designated Landscapes bodies can escalate the appeal to Welsh Government for advice and further management of the appeal.
- 4.8 Complaints (separate to appeals on applications) should be directed to the Designated Landscape body relevant to the application or project.
- 4.9 Designated Landscape bodies should all have formal complaints procedures in place and there will be some local variation. This procedure should be followed in the event of a complaint.
- 4.10 Applicants should be provided with the relevant advice in accordance with the Landscape's own complaints procedure.