

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND COMMITTEE

20 January 2016

Present: Councillor Mrs L Jenkins, Councillor DWM Rees and Mr AE Sangster; Mr S Bradley (PLANED), Mr P Howe (Pembrokeshire County Council) and Mr P Stone (Natural Resources Wales)

[Ms L Livock (Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services) arrived following the first presentation]

(NPA Offices, Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock: 10.00am – 13.55pm)

**1. Appointment of Chair**

It was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that Mr AE Sangster be appointed Chairman for the ensuing year.

**2. Appointment of Deputy Chair**

No nominations were received for the position of Deputy Chair and this item would therefore be reconsidered at the next meeting of the Committee.

**3. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor RM Lewis, Mrs M Thomas and Councillor M Williams; Mr R Smith/Ms S Burnett (Pembrokeshire Business Initiative) and Ms L Williams (Pembrokeshire Tourism). Ms L Livock had informed officers that she had a previous appointment and would be arriving late.

**4. Disclosures of Interest**

There were no disclosures of interest.

**5. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 28<sup>th</sup> January 2015 were presented for confirmation and signature.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 28<sup>th</sup> January 2015 be confirmed and signed.

**6. Sustainable Development Fund Update Report**

The Committee was reminded that in September 2015, application SDF 352 by the Bumblebee Conservation Trust 'Bee Wild West Wales' had been subject to an electronic consultation and had been approved with funding over four financial years.

The report of the Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) Administrator went on to outline the six applications before the Committee for consideration that day; she

noted that if the Committee approved application SDF 0356 On the Trail of Wild Honey, any grant would be offered under the agricultural de minimus Regulation in order to comply with state aid rules; the agricultural limit was €15,000 over three fiscal years. The report also updated the Committee on all current projects and their progress, and of those projects currently being progressed, she highlighted two in particular that had changed or been delayed since funding had been granted. The two projects were:

- (i) SDF 0345 Biomass Firewood Kiln: as reported at the previous meeting of the Committee, difficulties had been experienced with the siting of the kiln, and the SDF Administrator had agreed an extension to the project timescale. It had been intended that the kiln would be fuelled by a biomass boiler, however further research had identified an even more sustainable compost heat recovery system and this was the subject of a new application (SDF 0357) which would be considered by the Committee that day.
- (ii) SDF 0349 Dr Beynon's Bug Farm Phase 3: this phase planned to build on earlier phases to see the Bug Farm open to the public and in addition to on-site bug hunts, guided walks, workshops and discussion events there would be a Pembrokeshire (temperate) walk through bug house, a tropical bug experience, a cocoon and a ticket office/shop and gallery. Work on the project had been relentless, however due to delays in building works and material deliveries to the Farm, the site only partially opened to the public in late October 2015. A full launch was now re-scheduled for spring 2016 when all Phase 3 work would be complete. A final claim for Phase 3 of the project had been submitted but 10% of the overall SDF payment had been withheld because of the uncompleted elements of the project.

It was reported that the SDF progress report 2014-15 had been presented to the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee in November 2015. Members were pleased to learn what had been achieved and commended the fund, particularly its ability to support projects that were innovative and therefore took a risk. As a result of that meeting, officers were investigating whether an evaluation project to look at the success or continuation of previously funded projects was feasible.

The SDF Administrator went on to report the financial position for the year 2015/16. She referred to her report, which set out the summary financial position for the Fund and showed that at the beginning of the year £135,186 was the overall amount available to support projects. Due to project SDF 0329 ending prematurely, previously committed funds became re-available and therefore £18,966 was available to support new projects. It was noted that applications under consideration were requesting £23,377 in the coming year which meant there was a deficit of £4,411 if all applications for funding were considered worthy of approval. However past experience was that a number of projects did not claim their committed funding allocation by the end of a financial year and any over

commitment of funds could be made on the expectation that there would be some slippage.

With regard to the Little Green Grant (LGG) scheme, it was reported that three applications had been approved to date this financial year, details of which were set out in the report. Eleven new LGG project applications had been received in December 2015 requesting £13,560.75 of LGG funding. However there was only £2,060.34 of the LGG funding allocation left to distribute this financial year. Assessment of the applications was currently taking place and officers would meet the Chair of the Committee after the meeting when a final decision on these would be made.

It was **RESOLVED**:

- (a) that the final 10% of the project funding for SDF 0349 Dr Beynon's Bug Farm: Phase 3 would not be paid until such time as all work on The Cocoon and Temperate polytunnel had been finished, thus completing the SDF Phase 3 project as approved
- (b) that the remainder of the report of the Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) Administrator be noted.

#### **7. Applications for funding under the Sustainable Development Fund**

The Committee considered six new applications for funding under the Sustainable Development Fund (SDF). The applications were considered in detail against the fund assessment criteria, following a brief presentation by each of the project applicants. The SDF Administrator reminded Members that a number of the applications included on the agenda that day contained commercially sensitive information.

| <b>Ref No</b> | <b>Project Name</b>                                  | <b>Presentation by</b>                            | <b>Organisation</b>   |
|---------------|--|---|---|
| SDF 0355      | Strumble Tidal Flow                                  | Jane O'Brien<br>Tom Latter<br>Ben Ferguson-Walker | Transition Bro Gwaun  |
| SDF 0358      | Pembrokeshire Park Play, Our Way                     | Alexandra Fudge<br>Hayley Timms                   | Clybiau Plant Cymru Kids Club   |
| SDF 0354      | Pembrokeshire Sustainable Shellfish Pilot Initiative | Sue Burton<br><br>Stephen DeWaine                 | Pembrokeshire Marine SAC Relevant Authorities Group<br>West Wales Shell - fisherman's Association |
| SDF 0356      | On the Trail of Wild Honey                           | Matt Sutton                                       | Jordanston Mountain   |
| SDF 0357      | Compost Heat Recovery                                | Liam Morris                                       | LM Tree Solutions   |

| <b>Ref No</b> | <b>Project Name</b>              | <b>Presentation by</b>                    | <b>Organisation</b>                          |
|---------------|----------------------------------|---|--|
| SDF 0359      | Pembrokeshire<br>Outdoor Schools | Graham Peake<br>Simon Thomas<br>Alex Moss | Pembrokeshire Outdoor<br>Schools Partnership |

The Chairman reminded the Committee that, under its terms of reference, the decisions were to be taken by the Members of the National Park Authority, taking into consideration the views of those Advisory Members present.

Following discussions, it was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) the full amount of funding requested be granted to the following applications, subject to the usual conditions of grant and any additional caveats agreed at the meeting (and detailed below):
  - (i) SDF 0354 Pembrokeshire Sustainable Shellfish Pilot Initiative
  - (ii) SDF 0356 On the Trail of Wild Honey: The Committee would encourage the applicant to develop closer links with the Pembrokeshire Beekeepers Association in order to advance the project to its next stage.
  - (iii) SDF 0357 Compost Heat Recovery
  - (iv) SDF 0358 Pembrokeshire Park Play, Our Way
  - (v) SDF 0359 Pembrokeshire Outdoor Schools: The Committee would look with interest at the regular monitoring reports submitted and asked that greater links be developed with the Local Authority to help embed the project. It was also suggested that mentoring by those teachers who are committed to the project could support those who were currently less enthused.
  
- (b) the following application be refused :
  - (i) SDF 0355 Strumble Tidal Flow – while supportive of the concept, the Committee felt that the application needed to be developed further and were happy to reconsider a further application in future. It was also noted that PLANED would be administering LEADER funding at a local level, with one of the themes being renewable energy. It was likely that some assistance could be offered to the group under this funding stream.

**8. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Review of the Sustainable Development Fund**

Members were reminded that in 2014, the five Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in Wales had commissioned an independent review of the Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) from 2009 to 2013. This was intended to provide robust evidence about what SDF had achieved, to assess the SDF model and help to inform thinking about future implementation. The executive summary of the report was attached for the Committee's information.

It was **RESOLVED** that any comments on the report be passed to the SDF Administrator.