

CAITHNESS & NORTH SUTHERLAND FUND

2nd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Caithness & North Sutherland Fund, 2nd Annual General Meeting was held on 29th of November 2013 at 2pm, Caithness Horizons, Thurso.

Present: CNSF Directors
John Henderson
Koreen MacDougall
Frances Gunn
Cllr Linda Munro

CNSF Observers
Anna MacConnell, NDA
Mary-Jane Statham, DSRL

Secretariat
David Shearer, Fund Coordinator

In Attendance:

Ken Nicol - DSRL
Eann Sinclair – CNSRP
Philip Arthur - Thurso Players
Johanna Geddes – 1st Thurso Boys Brigade
Lorraine Geddes – 1st Thurso Boys Brigade
Graeme Robertson – Wick Coastal Rowing Club
Shona Kirk – Caithness Rugby Football Club
Rory MacDonald

MINUTES

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Chairman John Henderson welcomed everyone to the 2nd Annual General Meeting of the Caithness & North Sutherland Fund and introduced the Fund Directors and Observers. The Chairman explained the format of the AGM in terms of the formal business items of its members and highlighted that it was also an open public meeting to enable the Fund to report to the Caithness & North Sutherland Community on its activities throughout the year as well as to seek the views of the Community regarding the Funds performance.

Apologies were received from CNSF Directors Cllr Gail Ross, Cllr John Rosie and Munro and Shona Munro.

Apologies were also received from the following community groups:
Transport for Tongue Ltd, Caithness Deaf Care, House of Gaelic Melness, Wick High School Parent Council, Helmsdale & District Development Trust, Ormlie Community Association, Dunnet Forestry Trust.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous AGM meeting CNSF2012AGM001 were approved by members and adopted, proposed by Koreen MacDougall and seconded by Cllr Linda Munro.

3. CHAIRMANS REPORT

The Chairman presented the following report at the meeting and copies of the Chairman's Report were distributed. A statistical report of the Fund activity was also distributed at the meeting. *(See appendix 1)*

CHAIRMANS REPORT

Introduction

May I welcome you to the second Annual General Meeting of the Caithness and North Sutherland Fund. This meeting provides an opportunity for us to tell you what the Fund has achieved over the past year, and how we will go forward in the next year. It also provides the opportunity for you to tell us anything you feel we should be taking on board in the future operation of the Fund.

Background

Firstly, a little background on the origins of the Fund:

The Caithness & North Sutherland fund was established by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and Dounreay Site Restoration Ltd. Its remit is to distribute funding to community organisations for projects that will increase the attractiveness of Caithness & North Sutherland as a place to live, work and invest. Particular emphasis is placed on achieving environment, social, cultural and infrastructure improvements. The geographic area covered by the Fund is the Dounreay Travel to Work Area.

The funding package was agreed as part of the development of a new disposal facility for low-level waste from decommissioning Dounreay. The NDA will provide £4M to the fund – £1m has been provided in late 2011, and £300,000 will be provided in 2014 and each year until 2023.

Our Structure

Caithness and North Sutherland Fund is a company limited by guarantee, with seven Directors. Four of these Directors are appointed from the general public in the area through an open recruitment process, and three are appointed by the Highland Council.

The four appointed directors are myself, Koreen Macdougall, Frances Gunn and Shona Munro. These four directors were appointed by the NDA, through an open recruitment process, for a three year term. The three Highland Council directors are Cllr John Rosie, Cllr Gail Ross and Cllr Linda Munro.

I believe the fund has been managed very effectively by the existing Board, who have worked hard over the past year to ensure that our objectives are met. In doing this we have been particularly well served by our Co-ordinator, David Shearer.

Our Work

The Board of the Fund meet quarterly to consider applications. In doing this we are joined by observers from NDA and DSRL, currently Anna McConnell and Mary-Jane Statham. This ensures that our processes and decisions are consistent with the socio-economic policies of those organisations.

I do not propose to go through the application process and eligibility criteria in detail today; these are clearly outlined on our website and individual queries can be answered by the Co-ordinator. We do believe in helping and guiding applicants, especially those with limited experience of managing projects, to achieve the best possible application. A substantial part of David's time is spent on this. Our other guiding principle is flexibility; we are determined to ensure that good quality projects do receive support.

The quarterly application rounds are competitive, and we have various criteria by which we judge applications. It is the case that we cannot support every application we receive. However, the overriding consideration is the degree of community benefit which we feel the project will deliver.

Throughout the process of applications, awards and claims we endeavour to make life as uncomplicated as possible for applicants, and I believe that all those we have dealt with so far have appreciated David's efforts to see that this is the case.

As part of activity we seek feedback from applicants once projects are complete, and I am pleased to say this has invariably produced very positive comments about dealing with the Fund. Applicants find the process to be quick, helpful and efficient. Internally, as a Board, we formally review our processes and progress each year.

Recently we have moved our office, from Rhind House to Telford House in Wick. This was largely due to Highland Council reorganisation of office space, but has the advantage of being in closer proximity to a number of voluntary groups and improves our accessibility.

At our last AGM the broader aspects of community funding were raised. Concern was expressed that a proliferation of community benefit funds, each with their own funding criteria and geographic coverage, could dilute the potential benefits to the area. The need for a more coordinated and strategic approach was clearly desirable. With this in mind we met with Community Scotland, and their survey work confirmed this was a widely held view. Our understanding is that the Dounreay Stakeholder Group is now looking to provide a focus for such an approach.

Grant Awards

David has prepared a report which is available, giving details of what we have done in the past two years. I would just highlight a few of the relevant features.

Over three quarters of a million pounds has been awarded by the Fund across fifty seven community projects. These projects have a total value of three and a half million pounds, representing a considerable investment in improving the attractiveness of the North as a place to live and work. It is pleasing to note the variety of activities that have been supported – they cover a wide range, both geographically and thematically.

When looking at the funding commitments, it is apparent that we are ahead of a profile that would spend equally over the life of the Fund. This has been an intentional decision, based partly on need and partly on the assumption that other community benefit funds will come 'on stream' over the next few years.

With the Fund now two years into its work, we feel we have made a significant progress in supporting community activity through the area. The many community groups that we have been able to help have made an impressive contribution to enhancing the quality of life in the North, and we are greatly encouraged by the enthusiasm and commitment they have demonstrated.

We hope that we have made a real difference to the ability of community groups to achieve their plans, and look forward to continuing to do this.

Conclusion

In closing, I would like to thank my Vice-Chair Koreen Macdougall and the other Directors for their support and their very positive approach to the work of the Fund. Most importantly, I would like to thank our Co-ordinator, David Shearer. He has provided a great deal of help and support to applicants to the Fund, and has demonstrated enormous commitment to ensuring that our business is carried out in the most effective manner possible.

John Henderson
November 2013

Following the Chairman's Report, the Chairman then invited discussion from the floor on views of how the Fund was felt to be doing. A summary of the main points recorded were;

Community Groups feedback recorded:

- The level of support provided by the Fund was very much appreciated and helpful.
- The quick response received from queries and grant claims and the level of efficiency that matters were handled were also highly appreciated and felt to be important in successful delivery of projects. It was also reiterated that this was not the experience of accessing many other funding sources where significant delays in responses were experienced.
- The Fund awarding grants on the condition that match funding is secured was also felt to be very helpful as some funds ask for the majority of funding to be in place before applying.

Questions Raised

- It was queried why the Fund is not able to pay for contingency costs. The Coordinator advised that this policy was in line with a number of other funding bodies and was recognised as good practice. The Coordinator also advised that whilst contingency costs cannot be funded by CNSF, they are recognised and can be attributed from other funding sources or applicants own contributions.

- The number of funding applications that were unsuccessful was queried. The Coordinator provided the following statistics: The Fund has processed 127 formal enquiries to date, held 7 assessment meetings and assessed a total of 65 funding applications, resulting in 8 unsuccessful applications and 57 grants being awarded.

No further comments were recorded from the floor and the Chairman thanked everyone for their views.

4. AUDITORS REPORT & ACCOUNTS FOR ADOPTION

Copies of the annual signed Report of the Directors and Financial Accounts for the Period ending 31st March 2013 were distributed at the meeting and were presented by the Fund Coordinator.

The Report of the Directors and Financial Accounts for the Period ending 31st March 2013 were adopted, proposed by Frances Gunn and seconded by Cllr Linda Munro.

4. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR

Reid & Fraser Chartered Accountants were re-appointed as Caithness & North Sutherland Fund Independent Auditors, proposed by Koreen MacDougall and seconded by Frances Gunn.

5. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

No further business was raised and the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and formally closed the meeting at 2.50pm.

Chair: John Henderson
Secretary: David Shearer
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Date of Issue: 03-12-2013

APPENDIX 1

CAITHNESS & NORTH SUTHERLAND FUND

Statistical Report November 2013

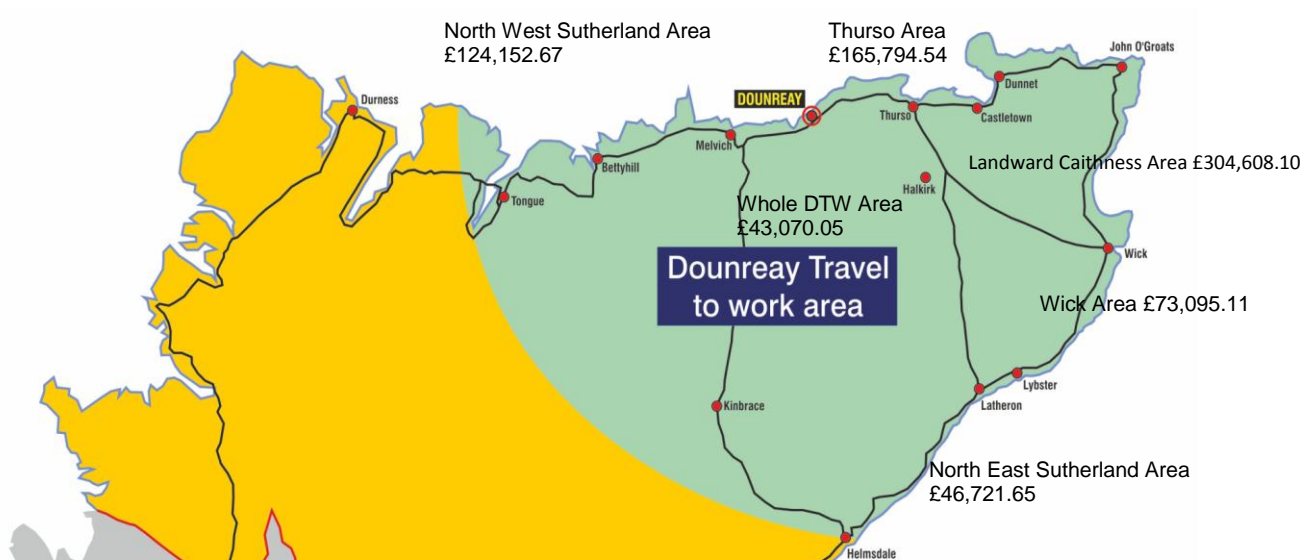
Summary

Since launching in October 2011 the Fund has awarded a total of £757,442 to fifty seven community projects that will benefit people living in the Dounreay travel to work area. The total value of these projects is projected to be in excess of £3.5M.

The Caithness & North Sutherland Fund Community Benefit Package Committee has held seven assessment meetings assessing a total of sixty five funding applications. The projects supported by the Fund are projected to attract a total funding leverage sum of £2.5M as well as attracting a substantial in-kind contribution valued at over £271k. (Table 1 & 2)

A geographical breakdown of the allocated funding within the DTW area is provided below: (Figure 1)

Geographical Allocation of Funding Awarded



(Figure 1)

Geographical Allocation of Funding Awarded and Projected Funding Leverage for Each DTW Area

DTW Area	Project Cost	Leverage Funds	In Kind Value	CNSF Awarded
North West Sutherland	293,534.67	142,366.00	27,016.00	124,152.67
Thurso	863,738.79	609,788.59	88,155.66	165,794.54
Wick	237,369.55	128,106.44	36,168.00	73,095.11
Landward Caithness	1,268,616.83	918,325.33	45,683.40	304,608.10
North East Sutherland	723,666.57	602,423.00	74,521.92	46,721.65
Whole DTWA	168,065.77	124,795.72	200.00	43,070.05
TOTAL	£3,554,992.18	£2,525,805.08	£271,744.98	£757,442.12

(Table 1)

A further breakdown of the awarded projects is provided below including the amount of funding drawn for each project. The table also details which of the Funds improvement themes; Environmental (E), Social (S), Cultural (C), Infrastructure (I) that each project demonstrates providing for their area.

North West Sutherland Area		Project Cost	Leverage Funds	In Kind Value	CNSF Awarded	CNSF Funds Drawn	Improvement Themes			
Organisation	Project						E	S	C	I
Bettyhill Village Hall	Bettyhill Village Hall Performance Improvements	13,055.00	6,738.00	1,825.00	4,492.00	4,492.00		x	x	
	T for T 16 seater disabled access vehicle Project	58,378.00	30,000.00	8,320.00	20,058.00	15,435.82		x		x
Mackay Country Community Trust Limited	MCCF- Establishing a Social Enterprise Project	52,181.00	21,444.00	3,081.00	27,656.00	15,262.13		X	X	X
Tongue & Farr Sports Ass	Clear Water Project	62,002.00	37,202.00	0.00	24,800.00	0.00	X	X		X
North Coast Community Transport Ass	Replacement Minibus Project	13,270.00	7,270.00	0.00	6,000.00	5,966.09		x		x
Strathnaver Museum	Museum Development Project	50,146.67	24,000.00	3,500.00	22,646.67	0.00		x	x	
Farr Edge 2000	Children & Youth Club Project	25,800.00	4,300.00	8,000.00	13,500.00	0.00		x		
House of Gaelic - Melness	Rob Donn - Songs Still Sung Project	18,702.00	11,412.00	2,290.00	5,000.00	0.00		x	x	
	Totals	293,534.67	142,366.00	27,016.00	124,152.67	41,156.04	1	8	4	4
Thurso Area		Project Cost	Leverage Funds	In Kind Value	CNSF Awarded	CNSF Funds Drawn	Improvement Themes			
Organisation	Project						E	S	C	I
Caithness Biodiversity group	Therapeutic Garden Project	32,742.00	5,995.00	19,712.00	7,035.00	6,726.03	x	x		
2nd Thurso Scouts	Thurso-Brilon 40th Anniversary Joint Summer Prog	16,710.00	11,065.00	2,800.00	2,845.00	2,191.27		x	x	
Caithness Horizons	Joint Museum Information Management System Project	6,797.00	1,797.00	0.00	5,000.00	5,000.00			X	X
Thurso Heritage Society	Thurso History Interactive	19,660.00	4,500.00	7,160.00	8,000.00	0.00			X	X
Ormlie Community Ass	Young & New Mothers Support Group	73,127.88	51,189.52	0.00	21,938.36	0.00		X		
Caithness Rugby Football Club	Four Change Room Rugby & Associated Facilities Project	383,180.00	327,180.00	26,000.00	30,000.00	18,000.00		x		x
Reay Golf Club	Replacement of Essential Golf Equipment Project	25,784.00	18,180.00	2,104.00	5,500.00	0.00	x	x		x
Pentland Canoe Club	Paddlesport Coach & Leader Development Programme	77,356.37	26,181.81	21,246.38	29,928.18	0.00	x	x	x	x
Thurso high School Mountain Bike Riders	Start-Up THS Mountain Bike Riders	23,136.00	17,878.00	0.00	5,258.00	1,851.75	x	x		x
Thurso Players	Mill Theatre Roof Project	98,500.00	78,500.00	0.00	20,000.00	12,017.73		x	x	x
1st Thurso Boys' Brigade	1st Thurso Boys Brigade Hall Refurbishment Project	69,471.76	42,971.76	7,500.00	19,000.00	12,369.11		x	x	x
Caithness Horizons	Year of Ancient Ancestors Festival 2014	30,390.50	20,390.50	0.00	10,000.00	0.00		x	x	
Pentland Firth Yacht Club	Training of Sailing Instructors Project	6,883.28	3,960.00	1,633.28	1,290.00	0.00		x		x
	Totals	863,738.79	609,788.59	88,155.66	165,794.54	58,155.89	4	11	7	9
Wick Area		Project Cost	Leverage Funds	In Kind Value	CNSF Awarded	CNSF Funds Drawn	Improvement Themes			
Organisation	Project						E	S	C	I
Caithness Harbourfest Committee	The Wick Diamond Jubilee Harbourfest	58,100.00	33,100.00	5,000.00	20,000.00	20,000.00		x	x	
The Wick Society	Stairlift & Wheelchair Project	6,836.00	1,500.00	560.00	4,776.00	4,004.59		x	x	x
Highlife Highland	Active Schools Summer Programme Activities 2012	3,819.11	2,000.00	0.00	1,819.11	0.00		x		
Wick Coastal Rowing Club	Wick Coastal Rowing Club Project	42,915.00	13,855.00	21,060.00	8,000.00	4,081.05		X		X
Wick High School Parent Council	WHS Belize 2013 Project	28,271.44	26,271.44	0.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	x	x	x	
Friends of Newton Hill Woodland	Derelict Croftouse to Community Shelter Project	48,000.00	31,500.00	0.00	16,500.00			x	x	
Pulteneytown Peoples Project	Contracts & HR Manager Post Project	49,428.00	19,880.00	9,548.00	20,000.00			x	x	
	Totals	237,369.55	128,106.44	36,168.00	73,095.11	30,085.64	1	7	5	2
Landward Caithness Area		Project Cost	Leverage Funds	In Kind Value	CNSF Awarded	CNSF Funds Drawn	Improvement Themes			
Organisation	Project						E	S	C	I
Dunnet Forestry Trust	Dunnet Forest Woodland Shelter	26,588.00	7,390.00	4,950.00	14,248.00	14,248.00	x	x	x	x
LLCCDC	South East Caithness 2012 Development	42,850.00	6,000.00	7,000.00	29,850.00	29,850.00	x	x		x
Thrumster Park Regeneration Fund	Thrumster multi-sports area	11,658.00	6,658.00	0.00	5,000.00	0.00	x	x		
Keiss Family Community Project	Keiss Family Community Park Project	66,866.00	36,526.00	5,340.00	25,000.00	24,256.82		x	x	x
Lybster Primary School Parent Council	Illuminating the past	9,000.00	1,000.00	500.00	7,500.00	7,305.91		x	x	
North Lands Creative Glass	North Lands Creative Glass Studio Assistant	24,500.00	15,000.00	0.00	9,500.00	0.00		x	x	
St Johns Loch Improvement Ass	Anglers Lodge Project	23,950.00	10,000.00	1,700.00	12,250.00	10,816.92	X	X		X
Dunbeath Centre	Heating System Upgrade Project	8,586.50	2,811.50	775.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	X	X		X
Britannia Hall Committee	Essential Building Refurbishment Project	20,306.00	10,153.00	0.00	10,153.00	10,153.00				X
Home-Start Caithness	Home-Start Parents Group Project	10,126.59	4,820.09	486.40	4,820.10	3,306.21		X		
Bower Community Centre	Bower Community Centre Energy Efficiency Improver	48,180.00	20,000.00	3,000.00	25,180.00	25,180.00	X	X		X
Reiss Killimster & Sibster Hall Committee	Reiss Hall Refurbishment Project	58,440.06	29,220.06	0.00	29,220.00	0.00		X		X
Berriedale Portland Hall Committee	BPH Refurbishment Project	380,277.00	333,845.00	16,432.00	30,000.00	0.00	x	x		x
Watten Improvements Group	Watten Play Area Refurbishment Project	109,999.00	89,999.00	0.00	20,000.00	0.00		x		x
Lyth Arts Centre	Lyth Residences Development Project	168,600.00	138,600.00	0.00	30,000.00	0.00		x	x	
The Castletown Community Project	The Castletown Community Project	152,180.00	125,180.00	0.00	27,000.00	0.00		x	x	x
Lybster Outdoor Bowling Club	Lybster Outdoor Bowling Hall Refurbishment	10,232.68	4,232.68	1,500.00	4,500.00	0.00		x		x
Yarrow Heritage Trust	South Yarrow South Laser Survey Project	8,487.00	800.00	4,000.00	3,687.00	0.00	x	x		x
South Lybster Residents Group	South Lybster Play Area Project	47,040.00	37,040.00	0.00	10,000.00	0.00		x		x
Ploughing Championships (Scotland) Ltd	51st Scottish Ploughing Championships	40,750.00	39,050.00	0.00	1,700.00	0.00		x	x	
	Totals	1,268,616.83	918,325.33	45,683.40	304,608.10	130,116.86	8	19	7	14
North East Sutherland Area		Project Cost	Leverage Funds	In Kind Value	CNSF Awarded	CNSF Funds Drawn	Improvement Themes			
Organisation	Project						E	S	C	I
Helmsdale & District Community Ass	Helmsdale Community Housing Project	676,827.00	578,983.00	68,000.00	29,844.00	0.00		x		x
Helmsdale Community Golf Club	Greens Replacement Project	13,499.57	5,000.00	1,621.92	6,877.65	5,937.05	X	X		X
Timespan - Heritage and Arts Society	Translocation Excavation Project	33,340.00	18,440.00	4,900.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	x	x	x	x
	Totals	723,666.57	602,423.00	74,521.92	46,721.65	15,937.05	2	3	1	3
Projects weighted to Whole DTW Area		Project Cost	Leverage Funds	In Kind Value	CNSF Awarded	CNSF Funds Drawn	Improvement Themes			
Organisation	Project						E	S	C	I
Caithness Citizens Advice Bureau	Volunteer Recruitment, Training Support Project	24,785.00	13,341.00	0.00	11,444.00	8,728.66		x		
Melvich Gaelic Choir	Pan Celtic International Festival	80,500.00	75,500.00	0.00	5,000.00	3,650.00		X	X	
Caithness Big Band	Bring The Band Outside Project	6,904.00	4,766.00	0.00	2,138.00	2,138.00		x	x	x
Elise Lyall School of Highland Dance	Scotdance 2013 Canada Project	21,600.00	19,600.00	0.00	2,000.00	2,000.00		x	x	
Advocacy Highland	Caithness Advocate Project	23,582.37	6,241.52	200.00	17,140.85	0.00		x		x
Caithness Agricultural Society	New Portable Toilets & Sheep Gates Project	10,694.40	5,347.20	0.00	5,347.20	5,347.20	x	x	x	x
	Totals	168,065.77	124,795.72	200.00	43,070.05	21,863.86	1	6	4	3
	Totals	3,554,992.18	2,525,805.08	271,744.98	757,442.12	297,315.34	17	54	28	35

(Table 2)