

**MINUTE OF NESFLAG PROJECT ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE (PAC)
WEDNESDAY, 17 APRIL 2024 AT 10.00AM
MICROSOFT TEAMS CONFERENCE CALL**

Present

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Anne Birnie | North East Scotland Fishermen's Organisation (Private) |
| David John McRobbie | The Don Fishing Company Ltd (Private) |
| Robin Maddock (Chair) | Banffshire Partnership (Private) |
| Andrew Newton | Kincardineshire Development Partnership (Private) |

Officers in Attendance

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Jamie Wilkinson | Investments & Projects Executive |
| Anne MacLennan | Investments & Projects Officer |

Apologies

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Martin Brebner | Team Manager – Economic Strategy & Policy |
|----------------|---|

1. Welcome & Apologies

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed those present and thanked David John McRobbie for agreeing to assist on the PAC on this occasion.
- 1.2 Apologies were noted as above.

2. Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 CCCF100 – Andrew Newton is the applicant. Andrew will leave the meeting during the project discussion and will not score the project.
- 2.2 CCCF104 – Robin Maddock is the applicant. Robin will leave the meeting during the project discussion and will not score the project.
- 2.3 CCCF112 – Andrew Newton declared an interest in this project. However, the PAC decided that Andrew will be able to participate in the project discussion but will not score the project.
- 2.4 CCCF120 – David John McRobbie declared an interest in this project. However, the PAC decided that David John will be able to participate in the project discussion but will not score the project.

3. Minutes of Last PAC Meeting, 15 March 2023

- 3.1 The minutes have already been approved and are provided for information only.

4. Overview of Scoring Process

- 4.1 As a refresher for PAC members, the scoring criteria was summarised. PAC members were reminded to base discussions on a qualitative assessment of the applications up for consideration.

5. Applications for Consideration and Scoring

The Chair confirmed that there is an available budget of £377,616. However, the total of all applications up for consideration is £546,075. The PAC will score the projects and make a recommendation to the FLAG.

5.1 CCCF100 Paving of Tolbooth Inner Courtyard (Stonehaven)

Total project cost: £35,160

NESFLAG grant: £28,128

Intervention Rate: 80%

- 5.1.1 DOI – Andrew Newton is the applicant. Andrew left the meeting for the duration of the discussion and did not score the project.

- 5.1.2 This application is for improvements to the inner courtyard at the Tollbooth Museum in Stonehaven. Work includes clearing vegetation, new paving, pointing of boundary walls, wheelchair ramp and outdoor water and electrical supplies.

The outdoor space will be utilised by the Tolbooth Restaurant over the summer months and it will also be available for community use and public events. It is difficult to know how well used the area will be but an increase in visitor numbers of up to 2000 per annum is predicted.

Planning permission has been granted.

The PAC agreed that the applicant organisation is very capable and the match funding contribution of 20% of total project costs shows commitment to the project.

The PAC considered the project to be fairly easy to deliver within the timescale. The end result will redevelop a derelict space which will be a valuable resource for the local community.

If this application is approved, any offer of grant will be conditional on the success of Community Asset Transfer process.

- 5.1.3 Recommendation to the FLAG - Approve
PAC Score – 44

5.2 CCCF101 Storm Resilience Project: Tangleha to Johnshaven

Total project cost: £23,760

NESFLAG grant: £21,384

Intervention Rate: 90%

- 5.2.1 The project is to supplement work already carried out on a coastal path from Tangleha to Johnshaven and includes rock armour and rock infill to reinforce path surfaces with crushed stone and aggregate.

The applicant has received funding in the past for similar coastal path upgrade projects and the PAC had some concerns that work on this particular section of path has previously been funded, making the application more of a repair/upgrade. Jamie confirmed that the project area is in the same bay, but it is thought to be a different section of the route.

No maps or diagrams have been provided to evidence the area to be repaired or upgraded. The applicant will be asked to provide a map of the exact area to be covered by this project.

The PAC identified that only one quote has been provided. However, the applicant has provided evidence of attempting to source other quotes and this was accepted under the technical assessment process.

The PAC highlighted that the organisation appears to have received grants from other funders totalling £27,000 earlier this year to repair rock armour in the same area as this application. The applicant will be asked to prove that no other funding has been received for this section of path to ensure that the funding already secured does not overlap with this project.

The PAC questioned the sustainability of the project if the work carried out will continually face storm damage.

The PAC commended the applicant on the amount of path repair work they have managed to carry out in the past but expressed concerns that this small group may be taking on too much and questioned the organisation's capacity to deliver the considerable amount of work required to maintain and improve the full route.

5.2.2 Recommendation to the FLAG - Reject
PAC Score – 32.75

5.2.3 The applicant will be asked:

- To provide a map of the exact area to be covered by this project and reference the areas which have been funded through other current or previous funding applications.
- To clarify what other funding has been received for work on this section or any neighbouring sections of path.
- To clarify that other funding received does not overlap with this project.

5.3 **CCCF103 The State of the East Grampian Coast**

Total project cost: £23,026

NESFLAG grant: £19,571

Intervention Rate: 80%

5.3.1 The aim of the project is to update a report produced in 2009 by delivering a web-based online portal which can be continually updated as new data becomes available. Costs include two part-time student placement posts, project officer time and event costs.

EGCP relies heavily on external funding and has received several grants from NESFLAG in the past.

The PAC expressed concerns about updating data which is more than 15 years old. Although the original website could be used as a baseline for gathering the new data, the PAC suggested that a lot of this information is already likely to be available elsewhere.

In the light of this the PAC questioned the value of the new website and was unsure about who will use this information and how regularly it will be used. The coastline is continually changing so the website would need to be constantly updated.

The PAC had concerns about the sustainability of the website. The PAC also did not feel that the applicant has sufficiently evidenced the need or demand for this website.

The PAC questioned whether this work was a core responsibility of the EGCP Project Officer post and the core responsibilities that Marine Scotland provide annual funding towards. Jamie confirmed that there is a letter from Marine Scotland to confirm that this is not part of the Project Officer statutory remit.

5.3.2 Recommendation to the FLAG - Reject
PAC Score – 26

5.4 **CCCF104 Portsoy Sports Centre – Going Green**
Total project cost: £13,131.56
NESFLAG grant: £11,817.56
Intervention Rate: 89.99%

5.4.1 DOI – Robin Maddock is the applicant. Robin left the meeting for the duration of the discussion and did not score the project.

5.4.2 This application is for the installation of solar panels and a battery storage unit at Portsoy Sports Centre.

The PAC agreed that the applicant has the capacity to deliver the project. This is a very realistic application in terms of calculating the payback period and the projected savings which can be made.

The PAC welcomed fact that the applicant is proactively trying to make the facility more energy efficient and is attempting to combat current high energy prices.

A building warrant is required but even if this process takes up to 2 months, it will not affect the deliverability of this project. If this project is approved, an offer of grant will be conditional on the building warrant being approved.

5.4.3 Recommendation to the FLAG - Approve
PAC Score – 51.33

5.5 **CCCF105 Feasibility Study, Swimming Pool & Changing Rooms, Tarlair Pool, Macduff**
Total project cost: £29,992.50
NESFLAG grant: £10,000

Intervention Rate: 33.34%

- 5.5.1 The project is for a feasibility study to be carried out for Phase 3 of the renovation of the Tarlair outdoor pool in Macduff. Costs include surveys, heritage consultancy and business planning. This phase relates to the swimming pool and changing rooms to bring the whole site into use.

Jamie confirmed that the technical assessment for this project has not been fully signed off at this point. The applicant is half way through the much larger project at the Tarlair complex and they would like to keep the same architect for this new phase. Architect costs are an integral part of the project so the FLAG will have to decide whether it is reasonable to retain the same architect for the next phase without a competitive procurement process.

Capital funding received to date has been for the pavilion building only. Work is now underway and the pavilion building will work independently of the pool complex.

The applicant has confirmed that they have now received match funding from the Architectural Heritage Fund for this project. However, the amount approved is £5,000 less than the grant requested. The applicant will be asked to confirm how this shortfall will be funded.

The PAC expressed concerns about funding this feasibility study because there is no guarantee that the capital work on the pool will then go ahead.

Letters of support provided are out of date and relate to an earlier phase of the project.

This is a very large, complex project and the PAC had some concerns about the capacity of the relatively small applicant group to deliver the project.

- 5.5.2 Recommendation to the FLAG - Reject
PAC Score – 28.75

- 5.5.3 The applicant will be asked:
- To confirm how the £5,000 shortfall in match funding will be funded due to a lower amount being approved from the Architectural Heritage Fund.

- 5.6 **CCCF106 The Wee Gaitherin 2024**
Total project cost: £16,627.63
NESFLAG grant: £14,964.87
Intervention Rate: 90%

- 5.6.1 This application is for funding to run a series of creative writing and poetry workshops and run a three-day festival of poetry in Stonehaven.

The Technical Assessment is not fully signed off for this application due to some issues with fully costing the event. Events are more difficult to accurately cost but Jamie is confident that this can be signed off by the time of the FLAG meeting.

This started off in previous years as a small event where people gave their time for free. However, the event is gradually expanding and it has been suggested that it will not be able to go ahead this year without funding. It is organised by local writers and project costs include fees and accommodation costs for writers to come to Stonehaven for the event.

The PAC could not find any evidence of evaluation or numbers provided to demonstrate how well attended the previous events have been. The application has proposed that the event will result in an increase of up to 300 visitors, which was not considered to be very high.

The project proposes to support local cultural development and therefore the PAC was surprised that there is no evidence provided of links being made with the Elphinstone Institute.

The PAC questioned legacy and sustainability and considered a grant of £15,000 to be fairly high for an event which will probably need to be funded every year.

5.6.2 Recommendation to the FLAG - Reject
PAC Score – 22.75

5.7 **CCCF107 SRG Stonehaven Fireboules (Petanque Pistes)**
Total project cost: £10,832
NESFLAG grant: £9,748.80
Intervention Rate: 90%

5.7.1 The project is to create a pétanque facility at Stonehaven recreation grounds for use by members, the local community and visitors.

The amount of grant requested is under the £10,000 minimum grant threshold. This was due to VAT costs being removed because the applicant is VAT registered. The applicant will be asked to add some additional equipment to the application in order to get them above the minimum grant threshold.

The applicant is a trust made up of three sub-units, the indoor bowling club, the outdoor bowling club and the tennis club. The PAC questioned whether there could be any conflict of interest with the bowling club. However, it was agreed that the re-development of this piece of rough ground would possibly complement the offering at the bowling club.

No building warrant is required due to this being a redevelopment of an existing space.

The PAC questioned where the equipment will be stored when not in use and would welcome a letter of confirmation from whichever group has agreed to store the equipment.

The PAC was supportive of the application and would encourage the applicant to consider becoming a member of the Scottish Petanque Association.

5.7.2 Recommendation to the FLAG - Approve
PAC Score – 38.75

- 5.7.3 The applicant will be asked:
- To include additional equipment in order to increase the project costs to meet the minimum grant threshold of £10,000 for CCCF.
 - To confirm if the Trust is providing the match funding.
 - To clarify where the equipment will be stored and provide a letter confirming this from whichever organisation has agreed to store the equipment.
 - To consider becoming a member of the Scottish Petanque Association.

5.8 **CCCF109 RCBC – ‘Topper’ Sail Training Project**

Total project cost: £13,208.80

NESFLAG grant: £11,208.80

Intervention Rate: 84.86%

- 5.8.1 This application is to purchase of two ‘topper’ sailing dinghies and associated equipment to be used for sailing courses for young people.

The applicant group has had to use the sailing dinghies from Aberdeenshire Sailing Trust for activities held in the past but now want to purchase their own equipment.

There are no letters of support but previous courses have been heavily oversubscribed so there is evidence of demand for the project.

The PAC appreciated that the applicant is providing more than the 10% minimum requirement for match funding. This shows commitment to the project.

The PAC considered this to be a good community project which will be fairly easy to deliver for a reasonable cost.

Recommendation to the FLAG – Approve
PAC Score – 45.25

5.9 **CCCF110 Longhaven Cliffs – Coastal Path Improvements (Phase 3)**

Total project cost: £11,437.57

NESFLAG grant: £10,293.81

Intervention Rate: 90%

- 5.9.1 The project is the third phase of a bigger project. Costs include the installation of four interpretation boards (3 replacement and 1 new) and additional access signage for safety along the coastal path near Longhaven. A grass mower to maintain the path will also be purchased.

Phases 1 & 2 were also funded by CCCF for new steps and path improvements for the coastal walk at Longhaven.

The applicant has not provided any indication of an increase in visitor numbers following the path improvements.

The new steps and work done on the paths is very impressive. It was agreed that signage on the walk is quite poor. The PAC suggested that the applicant would have a duty of care to provide proper signage so the installation of way markers

was considered to be the responsibility of the applicant on health & safety grounds.

The PAC also pointed out that there are spare signs included in the quotes. The PAC would not be willing use CCCF grant to fund additional signs to be kept in storage for future use.

The PAC did not consider the replacement of interpretation boards or the purchase of spare signs to be good value for money and it was suggested that the applicant could afford to pay for these costs and the mower from their own funds.

5.9.2 Recommendation to the FLAG - Reject
PAC Score – 32

5.10 **CCCF111 Apex Centre Community Wellbeing Garden Project**
Total project cost: £35,040
NESFLAG grant: £30.040
Intervention Rate: 85.73%

5.10.1 The proposal is to create a community 'wellbeing garden' at the rear of the Apex Centre in Broad St, Peterhead. The garden will be open to the public and is aimed specifically at those with mental health challenges. Costs include ground works, planters, benches, lighting and security measures.

The PAC considered the proposed area for the garden to be quite small and had reservations about whether the available space is of sufficient size to suitably deliver the proposed outcomes.

The PAC highlighted that the applicant organisation is not contributing any of their own funds to the project despite a very healthy bank balance. The PAC would expect the applicant to contribute an equivalent amount to that of the other match funders.

The applicant is proposing to include an external access ramp and the PAC suggested that a building warrant could be required for this.

The PAC questioned the applicant's capacity to deliver because an earlier CCCF application from this organisation required an extension to allow for completion.

The PAC expressed concerns about the current state of the existing boundary wall. This is a safety issue but it is not clear if costings have been provided for repairs to the wall. The grant request of £35,000 was not considered to be good value for money for such a small space and especially if it does not include the cost of fully repairing the wall.

The garden area of this religious facility must be made available for use by members of the general public in order to be eligible for a CCCF grant. The PAC expressed concerns because it appears that the only access to the garden is through the Apex building. This does not make it easily accessible for members of the community who are not users of the Apex Centre.

5.10.2 Recommendation to the FLAG - Reject
PAC Score – 30

5.11 **CCCF112 Bringing the Wee Train Home to Stonehaven**
Total project cost: £11,524.95
NESFLAG grant: £10,372.46
Intervention Rate: 90%

5.11.1 DOI Andrew Newton. Andrew will take part in the project discussion but will not score the project.

5.11.2 The project is to re-introduce the 'land train' tourist attraction to Stonehaven as a means of transporting visitors around the town. The costs relate to start-up recommissioning costs including mechanical works, transport, driver training and equipment.

The PAC agreed that the train was a very popular and well used tourist attraction in Stonehaven in the past. The applicant has provided a large number of letters of support for the train to be re-introduced.

The PAC questioned the costs for getting the train road worthy again. It was unclear if the train had been in use in Brechin where it is being stored. The applicant will be asked to confirm if the train has been in regular use for the past few seasons in Brechin.

With regard to sustainability, it is hoped that the train will be self-financing once it is back on the road. Local business sponsorship will also be sought.

The lack of availability of trained drivers was one of the main reasons for the train ceasing to operate in Stonehaven. The PAC agreed that for the project to succeed in the future, it will be essential to have a number of drivers lined up to be trained in order to fully staff the rota.

The PAC highlighted potential issues with capacity to deliver for the organisation's one member of staff. There will be a significant amount of admin involved with this project.

The PAC liked this application and agreed that train will prove to be a valuable tourist attraction again in the future. The project should be fairly easy to deliver.

5.11.3 Recommendation to the FLAG - Approve
PAC Score – 37.33

5.11.4 The applicant will be asked:

- To confirm if there are any concerns about driver recruitment and whether there are sufficient drivers lined up to be trained.
- If the train has been in use in Brechin over the past few seasons.

5.12 **CCCF114 St Cyrus Community/Visitors Car Park**
Total project cost: £147,959.16
NESFLAG grant: £50,000
Intervention Rate: 33.79%

- 5.12.1 The application is to create a landscaped car park in the centre of St Cyrus village. The land is a small field owned by the local parish church and the new car park would serve the church as well as the adjacent primary school, the community and visitors to St Cyrus nature reserve and beach.

The applicant is the Church of Scotland. The PAC was confident that evidence has been provided to show that the car park will be available for the benefit of the community rather than just church members. This is a free to use car park which will be available to all members of the community.

There is no evidence of support provided with this application but Jamie confirmed that there were approximately 117 letters of support at the time of the planning application which are publicly accessible on the planning application portal.

The PAC welcomed the fact that the applicant is contributing a significant amount of match funding for what is a fairly expensive project. Jamie pointed out that the approved contractor has agreed to a discounted amount of £12,000 for the work due to the fact that local farmers will be used to remove the topsoil.

The PAC liked this application for a safe car parking space which will be primarily for use by the community. The PAC would like the applicant to confirm that the car park will be free of charge for all users. If the project is approved it will be a condition of grant will the car park remains free of charge.

- 5.12.2 Recommendation to the FLAG - Approve
PAC Score – 47

- 5.12.3 The applicant will be asked:

- To confirm that the car park will be free of charge for all users.

5.13 **CCCF115 Renovation of Outdoor Bowling Green & Surrounds**
Total project cost: £23,000
NESFLAG grant: £20,700
Intervention Rate: 90%

- 5.13.1 The application relates to repairs and improvements to the bowling club green in Stonehaven. The proposal includes work on the edges, banks and paths around the green.

The applicant states that the site is owned by the Stonehaven Recreation Grounds but the PAC felt it was not absolutely clear if the asset is owned or leased.

There are 60 members of the bowling club but there is no indication about the number of users of the facility. No letters of support have been provided apart from a minute of meeting indicating that the trustees are supportive of the project.

The PAC considered the costings to be confusing. There were questions about how the VAT situation has been presented in the cost section of the application. Three quotes have been provided and the applicant has gone for the cheapest quote.

The bowling green surface is currently playable so the PAC questioned whether this application falls more under the heading of routine repairs and maintenance to the bowling green. The PAC had reservations because this does not represent particularly good value for money in terms of what will be delivered.

5.13.2 Recommendation to the FLAG - Reject
PAC Score – 30

5.14 **CCCF116 Mill of Benholm Car Park**
Total project cost: £15,598
NESFLAG grant: £14,038
Intervention Rate: 90%

5.14.1 The project relates to improvements to the car park area at Mill of Benholm. This application focuses on active travel including a bike shed, e-bikes for hire and interpretation/signage.

The development of the Mill of Benholm site has progressed quite substantially in the last couple of years following the CCCF funded feasibility study. The Community Asset Transfer has now been confirmed.

The applicant group originally applied for the full project cost including the resurfacing of the car park. However, the resurfacing cost has now been met from the K&M Area Crown Estate allocation.

Due to this application being part of a larger project, the PAC expressed concerns about a potential risk of the project not going ahead if the Lottery Awards for All funding is not successful. The applicant will be asked to provide an update on the status of the funding application to Awards for All.

The PAC would like to see a breakdown of the total project costs and match funding split because the total project costs appear to differ from those presented in the grant application to the K&M Area Committee.

Planning permission has been submitted for the bike shed.

The bike shed appears to be more of a shelter open to the elements. The PAC was unclear about where the bikes will be stored and what the process will be for charging the e-bikes.

The proposal is a good fit in terms of active travel and connectivity.

5.14.2 No recommendation – FLAG decision
PAC Score – 36

5.14.3 The applicant will be asked:

- To provide an update on the funding application to Awards for All.
- To provide a breakdown of the total costs for the overall project and the match funding split.

5.15 CCCF118 Men's Shed Energy Saving

Total project cost: £16,504.20

NESFLAG grant: £14,853.78

Intervention Rate: 90%

- 5.15.1 The application relates to energy efficiency measures at the Men's Shed community facility in Macduff. The works will involve installation of insulation and led light fittings.

The PAC considered the costs to be fairly high for insulation and lighting. The applicant has gone with the mid priced quote rather than the cheapest quote but a justification for this has been provided. Some of the quotes appear to be out of date but it was accepted that these relate to unsuccessful quotes rather than preferred suppliers.

The PAC commended the work carried out in the Men's Shed and welcomed the attempts made by the applicant to combat the current high energy prices. The group is proactively trying to make this large, old building more energy efficient. Any reduction in running costs will add to the legacy and sustainability of this project, even though the financial payback period could be fairly long.

- 5.15.2 Recommendation to the FLAG - Approve
PAC Score – 42.25

5.16 CCCF119 The Forge, Banff

Total project cost: £56,547.60

NESFLAG grant: £50,000

Intervention Rate: 88.42%

- 5.16.1 The application is from a start-up community company, and concerns the conversion of a former joiners' workshop in Banff into an artists' workshop to host creative classes and activities for local and visiting artists. The works involve replacement of the roof, new doors and windows, electrical work and insulation.

The lease for the property is only for eight years and the PAC had some concerns that the building could be used for something else after this time, especially considering that the building is owned by directors of the CIC.

The PAC was concerned about where the working capital will be sourced in order to provide cash flow for the early operations of the project. The business plan figures were also considered to be rather optimistic.

Planning permission is required and an application has now been submitted. The PAC questioned the deliverability of the project if planning permission and building warrant are not already in place. If this project is approved, it will be a condition of grant that these permissions are granted.

The PAC questioned value for money and had some concerns that the site is very small with only two parking spaces.

- 5.16.2 No recommendation - FLAG decision
PAC Score – 29.5

- 5.16.3 The applicant will be asked:
- To clarify where the working capital will be sourced in order to provide cash flow in the early operations of the enterprise.

5.17 **CCCF120 Solar PV System 2024**
Total project cost: £17,841.67
NESFLAG grant: £15,000
Intervention Rate: 84.07%

5.17.1 DOI - David John McRobbie. David John will take part in the project discussion but will not score the project.

5.17.2 The application relates to the installation of a solar PV and battery system at Inverallochy Golf Club. The system will reduce energy costs and provide a small income to support the club's activities.

The PAC suggested that the projected saving looks to be unrealistically high but it was accepted that these figures are calculated by an algorithm which is essentially an estimate.

If it is possible to keep energy costs down in the clubhouse, then the applicant hopes to be able to reduce the membership fees and therefore attract more members to the club.

The PAC considered this project to be good value for money and any reduction in ongoing running costs will help the sustainability of the golf club.

Recommendation to the FLAG - Approve
PAC Score – 45.67

5.18 **CCCF121 Pennan Village Hall Improvement Project**
Total project cost: £13,966.56
NESFLAG grant: £12,466.56
Intervention Rate: 89.26%

5.18.1 The application relates to a number of improvements to Pennan Village Hall including upgrades to the heating system, installation of AV equipment, blinds for windows, and seating covers.

This project is a basic cosmetic enhancement of the interior of the hall. There is no indication of how well used this facility is. The PAC would welcome more information about the type of events which are currently held in the Hall and what is planned in the future.

The village of Pennan has very few full-time residents. The majority of properties are second homes. The hotel has recently re-opened so it is hoped that this will help encourage more visitors to the village.

The highest quotes have been chosen for the projector and the seat pads. The applicant will be asked to provide a justification for this.

The PAC did not consider this application to represent particularly good value for money, but nevertheless appreciated the benefits it would bring to the facility.

There may be potential for the applicant to increase their match funding contribution which might help to make the application more attractive to the FLAG.

5.18.2 No recommendation - FLAG decision
PAC Score – 36.5

5.18.3 The applicant will be asked:

- To provide a justification for choosing the most expensive quotes for the projector and the seat pads.
- To provide further details about the typical current and future events which are held in the Hall.

5.19 **CCCF124 Fruit Juicing & Packaging Machinery**
Total project cost: £70,000
NESFLAG grant: £35,000
Intervention Rate: 50%

5.19.1 This application comes from a small business which has identified an opportunity to add value and efficiency to its fruit drinks production line by purchasing second-hand equipment from one of its suppliers. This will allow the full production of the product to be undertaken on site at the business premises near Fraserburgh.

The fact that the existing main supplier of fruit concentrate is getting out of the business will have a significant impact on the quality of produce provided by the applicant. The purchase of this equipment will ensure continuity of supply.

The PAC commended the applicant on their plans to sustain the existing business. A need has been identified and, in order for the business to succeed, they have to adapt. The PAC agreed that purchase of the machine and equipment will have the potential to grow the business by enabling the applicant to produce juice concentrate for their own business as well as for other manufacturers.

Some of the land is in the eligible area but the PAC queried the location of the factory which could be located just outside the coastal zone. The project will provide employment to the residents of local coastal villages but the PAC questioned whether that alone represents a strong and tangible link to the sea.

The PAC considered this project to represent good value for money. The applicant is providing 50% match funding which shows a commitment to the project.

The PAC considered the business set up to be good but approval will be dependent on the eligibility of the project location

5.19.2 Recommendation to the FLAG – Approve with the caveat that the FLAG decides about the eligibility of the project location.
PAC Score – 41.5

5.20 **CCCF126 Better Learning for a Brighter Future**

Total project cost: £27,316.18

NESFLAG grant: £24,500

Intervention Rate: 89.69%

5.20.1 This application is from Friends of Macduff Marine Aquarium. The project is to equip and enhance the learning room with specific instruments to enrich the learning experiences offered to visitors to the aquarium.

The aquarium is to undergo an upgrade and extension which includes a dedicated learning room and café. The PAC questioned how the closure will impact on the deliverability of this project.

The plan is to purchase and store the equipment so that it is available for use as soon as the aquarium re-opens. The PAC would welcome clarification from the applicant about where the equipment purchased for this project will be stored during the renovation period.

The other option is to wait until the facility re-opens before purchasing the equipment. However, the PAC acknowledged the potential for costs to increase significantly in a year's time.

The PAC questioned whether it might be possible to use some of the equipment temporarily rather than it being stored whilst the renovation is ongoing.

The PAC liked the application which has been well researched.

5.20.2 Recommendation to the FLAG – Approve but highlight that the Aquarium will be closed for up to a year and the equipment will be stored until the building re-opens.
PAC Score – 46

5.20.3 The applicant will be asked:

- To confirm where the equipment purchased for this project will be stored while the Aquarium is closed for renovation.
- To clarify whether any equipment can be used temporarily whilst the Aquarium is closed for renovation.

5.21 **CCCF127 Johnshaven Boat Centre**

Total project cost: £21,410.10

NESFLAG grant: £10,705.05

Intervention Rate: 50%

5.21.1 This application is from a small business in Johnshaven. The proposal is for an upgrade to a warehouse building to function as a new 'boat centre', providing servicing for local fishing and leisure boats. The upgrades include new windows, signage, perimeter fencing, toilet facilities and tools.

This application is fairly short on detail and the PAC was unclear about what is actually being requested.

The PAC liked the boat compound storage part of the project but some other elements of the project are confusing. There is no indication of the size of building to be upgraded or if there is an area of outside yard space.

No evidence of demand has been provided and the applicant has not chosen the cheapest quotes.

The PAC had concerns about the amount of match funding being committed to the project and also about whether the applicant will have sufficient working capital to carry out the work.

5.21.2 Recommendation to the FLAG - Reject
PAC Score – 27.75

5.22 **CCCF128 Newburgh Village Public Hall Roof Repairs**
Total project cost: £19,284.80
NESFLAG grant: £17,284.80
Intervention Rate: 89.63%

5.22.1 This application is for the replacement of a slate roof at Newburgh Village Public Hall.

This project is to replace the roof on the lean-to section of the Hall and also includes some general repair work to the main Hall roof. The PAC considered this to be more of a repairs and maintenance project.

The PAC had reservations about value for money. The price of the work appears to be fairly high. The major roof replacement appears to be for the lean-to section but there is no indication of the split in costs between the lean-to and the main hall roof. The PAC was unclear about what activities actually take place in lean-to part of the building.

If the applicant group increased their contribution towards the cost of the project, then the value for money score might improve. There is no evidence that the group is proactively trying to raise funds for the roof by holding events.

The PAC is not in favour of funding ongoing repairs and maintenance. However, this is a very well-used facility with approximately 300-350 users per week. It was acknowledged that the condition of the roof will deteriorate further if the repairs are not carried out. The PAC does not want to see the Hall fall into disrepair but by the same token this is a like for like repair project with no energy efficiency improvements being proposed.

5.22.2 No recommendation - FLAG decision
PAC Score – 38.75

5.23 **CCCF129 Banff Castle External Fabric Repairs**
Total project cost: £72,837.01
NESFLAG grant: £65,553.31
Intervention Rate: 90%

- 5.23.1 The application relates to repair works to the exterior of Banff Castle, a community facility and arts venue in the town centre of Banff.

This application is £15,000 over the maximum grant of £50,000 available from CCCF. The applicant will be asked to confirm if and how they will be able to fund the additional £15,000 of project costs. The applicant will now have to find approximately £22,000 of match funding for the project but it will not be possible for them to match that amount from their own funds.

The PAC acknowledged that this application concerns repairs and maintenance, but it was considered that the conservation of an A-listed building is an important priority. The project is part of a much wider restoration project to completely restore the building at a substantial cost. The PAC agreed that breaking the work down into smaller, bite-sized projects was a good idea. This is an important A listed iconic and prominent building so the PAC was more inclined to consider funding the cost of repairs to bring the building back into use.

Two quotes have been provided and the most expensive quote has been chosen. However, a formal tender process has been carried out and the contractor was chosen on the professional opinion of the Architect and QS. The PAC agreed that a specialist contractor would be required for this type of building and was therefore willing to accept the higher quote.

The application cannot be considered by the NESFLAG committee unless a full match funding profile can be provided.

- 5.23.2 No recommendation - FLAG decision
PAC Score – 37.75

- 5.23.3 The applicant will be asked:

- To confirm if and how the additional £15,000 of project costs will be funded as the maximum grant available from CCCF is £50,000.

- 5.24 **CCCF130 Port Erroll Harbour Cruden Bay Enhancing the Leisure and Recreational Area**
Total project cost: £17,006.40
NESFLAG grant: £15,305
Intervention Rate: 90%

- 5.24.1 The application relates to enhancements to the public space around Port Erroll Harbour. The project includes regrading the grass area, installation of picnic tables and benches, erection of new signage and interpretation lecterns, and the installation of a webcam.

The PAC considered this application to be more than just a maintenance project, it is to upgrade the area to make it more attractive for users and visitors.

The applicant group was successful in obtaining a CCCF grant in an earlier funding round for the refurbishment of the toilet facilities at the harbour. This previous project was completed on time and on budget which confirms the group's capacity to deliver. The PAC considered this new project to be fairly easy to deliver.

Only 1 letter of support has been provided but the PAC is aware of how busy and popular the Port Erroll harbour area is with visitors.

The applicant has chosen the more expensive quote for the signage but the justification for this is because the signage company already holds the artwork to be used.

The PAC liked the application from this enthusiastic, small coastal community group to upgrade a popular, well visited harbour along the NE250 coastal route.

5.24.2 Recommendation to the FLAG - Approve
PAC Score – 44

5.25 **CCCF131 AoG Central Community Space Accessibility Project**
Total project cost: £26,640
NESFLAG grant: £23.140
Intervention Rate: 86.86%

5.25.1 This application is for the installation of an accessibility lift to allow all users to access to the first floor of the building.

This is a religious building which is considered to primarily be a place of worship, although it is acknowledged that other activities will be held in the building.

The application is submitted by a financially well-resourced organisation. This has been a mainly self-funded restoration project of a large building on the site of a former supermarket. Work on the ground floor of the building has been completed and the applicant is now looking bring the first floor into use.

The PAC had concerns that this project is primarily for the benefit of church members. It was not fully clear from the application that the first floor of the building will be dedicated for public use and as such, it was not considered that the project will have sufficient wider community benefit.

The letters of support provided all relate to the hall and kitchen project, not to this specific project for the installation of the lift.

The PAC did not consider the installation of a stand-alone lift to access a meeting room and offices on the first floor of the building to represent good value for money.

5.25.2 Recommendation to the FLAG - Reject
PAC Score – 28

Minute Taker: Anne MacLennan, Investments & Projects Officer

Robert A Maddock

PAC Chairman

Date: 14 May 2024