



DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Title: Community Benefit Fund Working Group – Terms of Reference

Adopted: July 2020

Review: May 2021

Background

A solar farm has been constructed at Hungerford Farm, which is situated on the border of Winchfield and Dogmersfield parishes. The company developing the site agreed to pay a small proportion of revenue annually over a 25-year period to the Parish Councils of both parishes. This money was to be used to spend on local social and environmental projects.

When a new company, Anesco Ltd, acquired the solar farm they requested that the two Parish Councils accept a lump sum payment rather than small annual payments spread over 25 years. Dogmersfield Parish Council agreed to this request and the £28,000 received in spring 2016 has formed a Community Benefit Fund (CBF).

Limitations on Use

Under the terms of the Parish Councils' agreement with Anesco Ltd the CBF:

- Has to be used for charitable, educational, environmental, amenity or other appropriate purposes within and adjacent to the Community.
- Must not be used for political, religious, entertainment or hospitality purposes.

In addition, the agreement stipulates that '*an Approved Project means a Project which the Parish Council approves by a majority vote at a meeting of the Parish Councillors which it determines will be of an environmental or social benefit to the communities within Dogmersfield Parish*'.

DPC Vision

Dogmersfield Parish Council intends that the fund will be spent over a period of time on projects which will benefit the parish over the long term. There will be some flexibility to make small one-off grants to smaller projects and events which meet the criteria above and offer significant benefit to the Community as a whole.

As the CBF is in lieu of 25 annual payments it is the intention of Dogmersfield Parish Council that it remains available to support suitable projects over an extended period. However, the rate of expenditure from the fund can be flexible particularly if a strong case is evident for undertaking a large project with significant long-term benefits.

In all cases an important criterion will be that the projects and any grants benefit the community over the longer term.



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Management of CBF

DPC has established a resident's group (the CBF Working Group) under the leadership of a Parish Councillor to identify suitable activities or projects which the CBF can be used for.

The CBF Working Group will be chaired by a Parish Councillor, appointed by Dogmersfield Parish Council, and will include a minimum of 3 residents. The Group will report to Dogmersfield Parish Council, who will approve all projects and grants and be responsible for overall control of the fund as required by with agreement with Anesco Ltd.

Tasks of the CBF Working Group

- Identify general 'themes' for use of the CBF so as to establish some consistency in the projects proposed.
- Identify a short-list of themes which receive the greatest support from the CBF working group and from consultation with residents where possible.
- Produce a list of projects which can be progressed in support of the themes and prioritise where possible.
- Cost the projects, including identification of suitable resources, contractors and quotations for the work, and develop outline project plans. Where necessary, seek planning permission or permissions from Highways etc. for the work/s, projects proposed.
- Submit to, and seek the full approval of, the DPC to costs, timings and for the implementation of recommended project(s).
- Work with the Parish Clerk and other Councillors as appropriate to ensure the successful implementation of the project.
- Scrutinise and make recommendations to Dogmersfield Parish Council on smaller projects.
- Where appropriate, locate other sources of grant funding to support the proposed projects.
- Maintain a record of all project work and expenditure for the benefit of the Community for submission to Anesco Ltd (via Dogmersfield Parish Council and the Parish Clerk) should they request it under the terms of the agreement with them.
- Produce an annual report on all activities to Dogmersfield Parish Council.