

DOLAU COMMUNITY BENEFITS GROUP

Briefing for Llanfihangel Rhydithon Community Council 28th November 2013

1. Background

Following a request from the Community Council (CC), a Dolau Community Benefits Group (DCBG) has been established to administer and distribute funds received from developments such as wind turbines. Its members are Bob Kennard (Chairman); Fran Garman; Richard Thomas; Nigel Topley and Gillian Preece.

2. Legal entity

The developer of a proposed turbine at Lower Farm has agreed to make £500 available to the group upon planning being approved, for DCBG to seek independent legal advice.

3. Separation of CC & DCBG

The Group has drawn up some protocols for the development and management of a Dolau Community Benefits Fund. Whilst the CC was keen for there to be a clear gap between themselves (who have an impact on the planning process) and the DCBG, the group is acutely aware that any democratic legitimacy they have will be through the CC. For this reason it is important that the CC approves the principles the DCBG have followed in drawing up their rules, even if the individual decisions made by the DCBG under these rules must be seen to be separate from the CC.

4. What is 'Community Benefit?'

Rural communities and economies are in decline in many areas, with services reducing. In broad terms, we define "Community Benefit" as something which adds to the quality of life for those who live in Dolau. When judging a Community Benefit, the questions should be asked "Does this add to the overall attractiveness of living here?" and "Are we as a community better off (in all senses, not just monetarily) as a result?"

5. Procedure

The DCBG have drawn up a procedure, based on the distribution of interest from the sale of the old Village Hall, for applications to the fund. The general rules are that applications must:

- a. Be from individuals or on behalf of groups, and can be for the benefit of the applicant or others. Applicants can make only one application per year as an individual or as an organisation.
- b. "Items" can be objects or non-tangible experiences.
- c. Applications must be for one-off items, not any considered to be recurring maintenance needs.
- d. Applications should not be for items where similar items can be wholly obtained through subsidised government and other schemes.

Public notices announcing the distribution of funds, together with the selection criteria will be made public on the usual notice boards in the Parish. One month will be given for applications, which must be made on DCBG applications forms.

6. Eligibility Criteria

Once applications are received, they will be checked against the general rules, and those which pass will be scored by DCBG against a set of criteria:

a. **Community Benefits General**

Items offering real benefits within the community (where that benefit would not be available through normal government services or readily-available charities). Would Dolau Community as a whole be better if money was given to this application?

(score 1-10)

b. **Specific Benefits**

Specifically, does it add to improvements

i. **Environmentally**

(score 0-10)

ii. **Health and wellbeing**

(score 0-10)

iii. **Educationally**

(score 0-10)

c. **Target Groups**

Items helping particularly:

i. **The young** (under 25)

(score 0-10)

ii. **Pensioners**

(score 0-10)

iii. **Those suffering from serious long-term illness, disability, disadvantage or deprivation**

(Score 0-10)

d. **Numbers of Beneficiaries**

Number of Dolau residents benefitting directly from payment, based on claim from applicant and DCBG assessment. **1-5 people** – 5 points; **6-10 people** – 10 points; **11-20 people** – 15 points; **21+ people** – 20 points

e. **Period of Benefits**

How long will the benefits last? 1 point per year up to a maximum of 10 years, based on applicant's claim and DCDG's judgement.

7. **Scoring**

Each DCBG member will complete a score sheet for each application, and the scores will be amalgamated.

8. **Allocation of Funds**

Funds will be allocated depending on the total funds available, the amounts claimed by eligible applications, and the scores received by the applications. Applicants will be informed in writing of the outcome of their applications, and successful candidates will be listed on publicly available notices.

9. **Appeals**

Should any applicant disagree with the decision of the DCBG, they can appeal to the CC, who will view the procedures carried out by DCBG. If any faults are found, the Chairmen of CC and DCBG will agree what action to take.