

£eith Chooses Steering Group

Zoom Meeting 3 pm-4 pm Wednesday 13 May

Present – Bruce, Caroline (by phone), Douglas, Don, Sally, Susan

Urgent issue – has £eith Chooses funding actually been sent out by CEC to the successful groups?

Sally had heard today from ELREC that the money was not in ELREC's bank account. Caroline had an enquiry about the same issue from NE Food Banks.

Caroline was trying to check with Finance Dept. The papers had gone from her desk to Finance on 21st February 2020 (possibly one or two slightly delayed by paperwork problems with project group) but she had not received confirmation from Finance Dept. that payments had been released and had gone to LC groups.

On checking, she received notice that the payments to those two projects had NOT gone out, but that Finance Dept. would be processing them today. She will now make efforts to check that payment has been made to all the other groups.

LC Steering Group noted its shock and extreme disappointment that this could have occurred. There should be some system whereby Finance Dept. sends £eith Chooses an 'audit trail' with timelines to show that all payments have been made, and when. And/or, at the very least, LC process will need to be adapted to include a 'checkback' to check that groups have received their money.

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It was agreed that no members of SG will contact projects groups further until the above matter has been sorted out and there is confirmation that all groups have been paid.

Don noted that he is due to meet with Dr. Bells on Zoom tomorrow.

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Follow Up with 2019/2020 groups

Steering Group is in contact with all groups except DIY Skateparks

The Email 'Follow Up 2' has now gone out to most groups, possibly excepting Pilmeny and DIY Skateparks.

Current status of 2019/2020 projects

A. The following Projects are steaming ahead fine with modified projects.

YMCA (Bruce), Citadel (Don), NE Food Bank (Douglas)

ACTION: Each named person as relevant to check / confirm that each project group has had an 'official' approval email back from £eith Chooses, via their named person.

B. The following projects have not yet replied at all to attempts to contact them

DIY Skate-park (Caroline)

ACTION – keep trying to get a reply, by whatever means possible.

C. The following projects had been saying that they planned to 'hold back' money and delay project etc. but are now committed to thinking proactively about project modifications aiming to spend the funding more quickly.

Project 42 (Sally), ELREC (Sally), Dr. Bells (maybe, not yet clear)(Don)

ACTION – Leave them for a wee while. Decide at next meeting (20th May) when/if to ‘prod’ them further.

D. The following projects have been touch, but unclear as yet what their position is.
Pilmeny (Caroline), Feniks (Douglas)

ACTION – Send out ‘gentle reminder’ asking them how they are getting on with forming new plans

2020/2021

Susan made the point that the City Council’s Recovery Plan is long and complicated, in short, medium and long term stages. She is afraid that if the Community Grants fund are not proactively claimed, and if we just ‘cancel’ Feith Chooses for 2021, there would be a concern that it would never be reinstated. We need to go and ask for the funds and have a ‘Plan’ of action about how LC 2021 will be delivered.

Points in Susan’s email (see below)

If LeithChooses 2021 goes ahead, what format will that take?

Will Covid response play a key role?

What issues do we want to address with funding?

What will we be asking those who apply to achieve with their funding?

What will our aims, goals and objectives be as a steering group / team?

And then there is the perennial ‘how do folk cast their vote’ issue.

Obviously, we are almost at the point of approaching Evelyn regarding securing finance which may be difficult. I think we would be better placed to secure it if we have a clear vision and a plan going forward that will fit with the recovery plan.

We agreed that we would need to get started on something straight away, ready to launch in August /September. Can’t be ‘caught out’ unprepared in, eg. October, by Council.

ACTION: All members will consider the points and note down responses, in preparation for a brain storming discussion next week’s meeting

Agreed deadline of 28th June for formulation of Feith Chooses Plan 2021

Meanwhile

30 January and 6th Feb 2021 provisionally booked for LC at Community Centre.

We discussed possible use of Postal Voting and/or online voting. Online is preferable, probably using Consul software. Has the Council progressed with developing this for use?

Does it meet Edinburgh’s stringent data protection standards?

LC team could probably manage the software as such, but would need to be free from Council barriers / problems.

?Distribute money by Funding Panel (wider panel with more people from the community)?

?Invite new proposals and let groups from previous years submit their previous project (if it didn’t get delivered this year)?

Same theme? New theme(s)? Covid -19 recovery theme?

