

**Meeting of Cross-Party Group on Industrial Communities in the Scottish Parliament
Wednesday 3 October 2012 at 5.15pm, Room TG20/21, Scottish Parliament**

Attending Councillors	Attending Officers		Attending MSPs
Lisa Beattie Jane Crawford Adiba Farrah William Menzies Andrew Wood Bob Young	Linda Aird Pauline Douglas Steve Fothergill John Gray Anne Houston Jackie Killeen Kenny Lean	Ian McDougal Robert McGill David Parry Carolyn Sawers Ian Smith Margaret Tonner Dianna Whyte	Helen Eadie John Mason

Apologies	
John Beveridge Darren Burns Murray Collins Carol Coull Gill Dykes	Ewan Green Malcolm Leitch Brian McColgan Tony McLaughlin Douglas Reid

Helen Eadie began the meeting by welcoming everyone and suggested that we move immediately on to agenda item 1.

1. BIG Lottery in Scotland – Presentation and Discussion

Steve Fothergill suggested that it might be helpful to add some context to the discussion. The background to today’s meeting is that the share of funding received by industrial communities of BIG Lottery funding has worked to round about 60% of the national average. This equates to a figure of around £3 billion. However, he also recognised that statistics did not tell the whole story.

Jackie Killeen – Director of BIG Lottery in Scotland, highlighted the fact that when people talked about The Lottery, they also included heritage, sport and art bodies. However, she pointed out to the group that she could only usefully comment on the BIG Lottery position. Jackie confirmed that the BIG Lottery was particularly concerned with tackling economic, social and health issues in Scotland, but also focused on targeted work on specific themes, for example, domestic abuse.

The Big Lottery distributes a wide range in terms of size of grants, with small grants being particularly popular (under £200k). Jackie also acknowledged that there is significant demand for awards for all (up to £10k) and she also noted that there had been an increase in hardship projects, for example, food banks and clothes recycling. Investing in communities is the BIG

Lottery's largest programme which focuses on the most excluded young people, for example, care leavers and those leaving the criminal justice system.

Another issue that the BIG Lottery is working on is supporting parents to manage debt and they would like to focus more on this in the future. The Growing Communities Assets Fund, which enables communities to take control of their own assets, is building momentum, however, Jackie acknowledged that it takes time and patience and requires a great deal of support for communities to successfully complete this process.

1. **BIG Lottery in Scotland – Presentation and Discussion** (continued)

The Our Place Programme was an initial response to getting investment into areas of high need. Five areas were identified which received specific communities development support and were guaranteed up to £1 million in grants and indeed Jackie confirmed there was some evidence that these communities have reaped specific benefits from this investment. BIG are looking at a new generation of Our Place communities even although the programme itself can be extremely resource intensive.

Jackie also highlighted the Growing Community Spaces Programme which brings communities together to focus on improving physical spaces and, again, the programme is aimed at the highest deprivation areas with a balance being sought between urban and rural communities. This has been a particularly successful programme.

Finally, Jackie also highlighted that the JESSICA Trust and Life Changes Trust are both beginning to show some signs of early investment.

Helen Eadie then invited questions from the group.

Councillor Young questioned whether the imbalance of investment was down to capacity, and Jackie Killeen replied that she was aware that there is a capacity issue, but that there are many different reasons behind that. She also confirmed that BIG had been trying to do targeted geographical support in communities and have carried out 40 outreach events over the last nine months.

Bobby McGill asked how BIG Lottery can challenge themselves to improve from the 60% figure. Jackie highlighted that BIG were already targeting those communities with needs, and that they also work closely with local authorities to support their priorities.

Barney Menzies also questioned why our communities were losing out and pointed out that in East Ayrshire it was the small rural communities that were not getting their fair share and wondered what could be done to address this. Jackie confirmed that the BIG Lottery was always willing to have needs and opportunities highlighted and was always willing to talk to anyone who needed further information. She also went on to say that there continued to be a mix of reasons for low levels of success.

Ian Smith also went on to comment that, in his community, there is a perception that it is too difficult to get money from the BIG Lottery. Jackie highlighted that information on where the money is spent is held by Camelot and is classed as being “commercially sensitive”, therefore, it is very difficult information to access.

Pauline Douglas confirmed that the CRT is working alongside the BIG Lottery to support organisations that have a very basic level of skill in terms of filling in application forms. She acknowledged that these organisations have a long way to go to get up to speed in terms of capacity to apply effectively for funding.

Helen Eadie wondered whether there was a BIG mentoring programme between experienced and less experienced organisations, to which Jackie replied that BIG do help organisations by putting them in touch with businesses that assist them with activities such as self-evaluation.

1. BIG Lottery in Scotland – Presentation and Discussion (continued)

Linda Aird highlighted the fact that the problem may really be the fact that there are not enough funds available to BIG in Scotland, and Jackie acknowledged that that figure had reduced to 40% in recent years. Linda therefore suggested that the key issue was a strategic one, i.e. how do we increase the BIG Lottery share in Scotland?

Bob Young also raised the issue of large-scale projects which purport to support smaller communities, but he was not aware of many in which that was the case. Jackie Killeen did say that they had examples of large-scale projects, for example West Fife Enterprises in Fife.

Kenny Lean also highlighted that between South Lanarkshire and North Lanarkshire the deficit funding from BIG Lottery is around £12 million and that the arts and heritage split is particularly poor, although he was also keen to acknowledge that BIG have made huge improvements over the last few years, for example, community open spaces. However, he was of the opinion that it would be more effective if it was an open submission, rather than a phased process. Jackie confirmed again that BIG meet each local authority once a year to discuss their strategic priorities. She is concerned to make sure that there is a balance between large-scale, strategic projects targeted at need rather than focusing efforts on small communities.

Helen Eadie concluded the discussion by suggesting that the Cross Party Group might think about organising an event which would allow community organisations to come together with professionals who could help them build capacity and improve their funding application skills. It was agreed that this should be remitted to the Cross Party Funding Group to consider at their next meeting on 25 October 2012. John Gray also highlighted the fact that it is difficult to identify key organisations in communities who would be able to put funding applications in and questioned whether public sector organisations can put in lottery bids. Jackie replied that the majority of funding goes to voluntary organisations but public sector organisations are eligible to apply.

Steve Fothergill made three final points:

- i) It is important to remember that the differences and imbalances in funding are huge, for example, Edinburgh receives three times as much as smaller communities around it; and
- ii) he doesn't believe that the imbalance is only explained by a lack of capacity; and
- iii) the structural problem is a strategic issue which requires increased funding. In addition, sports and heritage bodies in particular are certainly less likely to target areas of need.

Jackie concluded by saying that BIG was always happy to meet halfway and talk about how they can improve. Their key challenges are around about a balance of strategic issues and how money gets dispersed. Helen thanked Jackie for her honest and direct approach to the discussion. Helen also suggested that a parliamentary motion might be tabled commending BIG Lottery's progress, but also picking up on Steve Fothergill's three issues.

Pauline Douglas of the CRT suggested that holding an event for business mentors as discussed previously would be worthwhile. This would allow them to meet with community organisations who need capacity in terms of funding applications. She suggested that BIG could be invited to support this financially. It was also suggested that sports and heritage

lottery bodies might also be happy to be involved. Finally, it was highlighted that BIG Lottery in Scotland receive their policy direction from the Scottish Government and therefore it might be worthwhile raising this issue with Nicola Sturgeon on 29 October 2012.

2. Attendance and Apologies (see page 1)

3. Note of Cross Party Group Meeting, 6 June 2012 (enclosed)

4. Report on Incapacity Benefit Reform Event, 20 June 2012 (enclosed)

Anne reported briefly on the event and members had previously received a report on this. It was agreed that the event had been successful in continuing to raise the profile of this issue, however, it was also agreed that we should continue to monitor developments and raise issues as appropriate. Steve Fothergill also told the group that he had been speaking to other people within the Scottish Parliament who are keen to commission research into the ongoing impact of wider benefit reform.

5. Report on Meeting with Derek McKay – Minister for Local Government and Planning

Barney Menzies highlighted that an early issue that he had raised with the Minister was the potential over-capacity of windfarm developments in our industrial communities. He is particularly concerned that our communities will become overwhelmed with the number of potential applications. He also highlighted that there is no evidence that there has been an impact on jobs as the manufacturing elements of windfarms are generally not within our community. He suggested that this also be an item that is raised with Nicola Sturgeon. In addition, the meeting with Derek McKay received an update on the Review of Community Planning and the Minister gave some very useful input on progress in implementing actions arising from the Review of Community Planning and single outcome agreements led by the Scottish Government and CoSLA earlier this year. Members welcomed the Minister's update and his confirmation of the continuing role that CPPs make at a local level.

6. Any Other Business

Meeting with Alex Neil MSP, Monday 29 October 2012

Anne informed the group that the meeting on 29 October would now be with Nicola Sturgeon instead of Alex Neil. It was suggested that the main agenda item for the meeting be the Scottish version of the Industrial Communities Ten Point Plan for economic recovery, which will be ready for that meeting. It was agreed that the attendees at the meeting would be Helen Eadie, Steve Fothergill, Anne Houston, Barney Menzies, Bob Young, Andrew Woods and Malcolm Leitch. It was also agreed that there would be a pre-meeting at 1pm that day.

Helen closed the meeting by highlighting to the group the ongoing lobbying activities on Remploy's closures and that group members are welcome to an event in the Parliament on 20 October 2012.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next Cross Party Group Meeting will be Wednesday 23 January 2013.