



Good Governance

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust (SFCT) Directors highlight the need for Good Governance to keep future grant funding decisions local.

As SFCT prepares for its AGM and the election of new Directors in November, the current Board highlights the need for continued Good Governance as a top priority for the organisation. The Board agreed that good management and governance of SFCT must be a priority. If we are to retain the confidence of the energy companies that fund SFCT and the support of our members and the wider community, there is no alternative for directors but to invest time and effort in ongoing good governance with clear grant procedures and openness in decision making.

Governance does not end there. Making sure money already received from our funders is wisely safeguarded and being used for appropriate community purposes is also part of the exemplary governance SFCT must display.

SFCT is fortunate and receives direct payments from the windfarm and hydro companies. Other areas are not so fortunate and have to go 'cap-in-hand' to green energy generators or other funders every time they want a grant. Here in Stratherrick and Foyers, SSE and other wind and hydro firms have the confidence in SFCT to manage our community benefit funds and make payments to us regularly. They trust SFCT to manage the fund and keep proper financial records that they are free to inspect at any time. SFCT also needs to meet the legal requirements of a Limited Company, monitored by Companies House. Individual volunteer directors have a legal duty to look after the interests of the company as detailed in our Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Of equal importance is the way SFCT is perceived by local residents. All residents need to know what SFCT is and what it does. Our website, social media, and SFCT Newsletters, are tools to help keep everyone informed. Other than the need for residency in our area, there are no barriers to membership. SFCT needs members to stand for election as directors – and keep the decisions on how our funds are used in the hands of local people. If SFCT cannot continue to show a wide local membership with volunteer directors willing to serve on the Board then we are risking the thing we value most – the local decision making on the use of the substantial funds which flow from the local windfarms and hydro schemes.

There have been recent improvements in the way grant applications are dealt with by SFCT with updated guidelines and application forms. Grants are assessed by SFCT staff and are then considered by directors at Grant Board meetings held four times per calendar year.

Good governance also needs to extend to the local community groups and individuals who apply to SFCT for grants. Our funders trust SFCT because we have agreed our grant procedures with them. The Board stressed that grant applications must be submitted with all supporting information that backs up the application. Local groups must keep good financial records and supply annual accounts. SFCT's funders have the right to see all grant documents and if supporting documentation is not provided, agreed procedures will have been breached and community funds could be removed. Staff and directors will not risk SFCT's future by accepting incomplete grant applications or by funding ineligible projects.

Grant applications are collated by the Trust Administration and HR Officer and will not be passed for assessment unless they are complete. Please ask for guidance if you are in any doubt.

In conclusion, if SFCT slips up on good governance the whole future of local grant decision making is at stake. There is simply no alternative to getting the governance right every time!

This policy was last reviewed on 1 December 2025 and will be reviewed every two years.