

BIG LOTTERY FUND

**MINUTES OF BIG LOTTERY FUND ENGLAND COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13 OCTOBER 2010 AT 0900
AT THE BIG LOTTERY FUND, PLOUGH PLACE, LONDON**

PRESENT:

Sanjay Dighe	<i>England Chair (in the Chair)</i>
John Gartside	<i>Board Member and England Committee Vice Chair</i>
Alan Billings	<i>England Committee Member</i>
Sue Charteris	<i>England Committee Member</i>
Danny Silverstone	<i>England Committee Member</i>
Albert Tucker	<i>Board Member and England Committee Member</i>
Geoff Wilkinson	<i>England Committee Member</i>

IN ATTENDANCE:

Peter Wanless	<i>Chief Executive</i>
Dharmendra Kanani	<i>Director for England</i>
Linda Quinn	<i>Director of Communications & Marketing</i>
Tim Davies-Pugh	<i>Deputy Director Operations & Programme Management</i>
Margaret Cooney	<i>Deputy Director Regions & England External Relations</i>
Ambreen Shah	<i>Head of England Policy</i>
Lyn Cole	<i>Senior Head of Function</i>

Sally Musson	<i>Head of Board Secretariat</i>
--------------	----------------------------------

The Chair welcomed Dharmendra Kanani to his first meeting of the England Committee since formally taking up post as Director for England. He also expressed appreciation on behalf of the Committee to Mark McGann for his work and contribution to the Committee. Thanks were also extended to Tim Davies-Pugh and Margaret Cooney as the other members of the 'troika'.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies had been received from Margaret Hyde (*England Committee member*) and Nalini Varma (*England Committee member*).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 The following was declared:
Albert Tucker noted that he is a member of the board of a Housing Association. This was not a disqualifying interest at this stage but might be pertinent at the decision making stage on the Improving Financial Confidence programme.

3. MINUTES OF ENGLAND COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2010 (EC/(MINS10)7)

3.1 These were agreed and signed as a correct record of the meeting.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF ENGLAND COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2010
- 4.1 NAVCA Solicitation (Item 4.4)
This had been included in the budget, as noted previously and Tim Davies-Pugh reported an ongoing dialogue. **ACTION: T Davies-Pugh**
- 4.2 Volunteering England: Solicitation (Item 4.5)
The Committee had agreed previously to delegate decision-making on the solicited application, once assessed, to Chair's action. **ACTION: T Davies-Pugh**
[Secretary's note: It was subsequently confirmed that Volunteering England had until 1.12.2010 to submit their bid which would then be considered by Chair's action in early 2011]
- 4.3 Advice Strategy: Solicitation (Item 4.6)
A proposal from the Advice Services Alliance was expected that week. **ACTION: T Davies-Pugh**
Albert Tucker reported a perception that the Big Lottery Fund was no longer supporting advice projects. He would investigate the specific case further. **ACTION: A Tucker**
- 4.4 Youth in Focus (Item 4.8)
It had previously been agreed that a proposal for further target groups for Phase 2 of Youth in Focus should be submitted to the Committee in October. Lyn Cole reported that a draft proposal would be discussed with the lead Committee members before it was put to the Committee. It was noted that there were differing views about how Phase two of Youth in Focus should be developed. **ACTION: L Cole/A Shah**
- 4.5 Strategy for Older People (Item 5.3)
Discussion were ongoing with the lead Committee members and there would be a further report to the Committee in due course. The Chair suggested, and it was agreed, that there should be a further lead member for this phase of the programme and Geoff Wilkinson agreed to take this on. **ACTION: A Shah/L Cole**
- 4.6 Financial Capability in Social Housing Solicitation Approach (now called Improving Financial Confidence (Item 6.4)
It had been agreed at the last meeting to delegate to the England Chair final agreement to solicit an application from the National Housing Federation (NHF) and also to delegate decision-making on the NHF's proposals, once assessed, for Chair's action. Officers were preparing the guidance and specification for NHF for the Chair's agreement. This had been signed off under Chair's Action on 7 September 2010 **ACTION: A Shah**
- 4.7 MP's Survey (Item 7.1(4))
As agreed, this had been circulated to the Committee on 28.9.2010.

- 4.8 Big Lunch (Item 7.1(5))
Linda Quinn provided a brief oral overview of the evaluation of the Big Lunch and a summary would be circulated to the Committee by correspondence.
ACTION: L Quinn/S Musson
- 4.9 Community Libraries (Item 7.1(7))
Linda Quinn assured the Committee that, wherever possible, the opening of local community libraries would be given a high profile.
- 4.10 England Committee Presentation to the Board (Item 8.2)
It was noted that this had been well received although the Board Chair had questioned whether the presentation had considered sufficiently the linkage of the England portfolio with the Strategic Framework. Dharmendra Kanani said that this would be addressed in a short report to the November Board meeting.
ACTION: D Kanani
- 4.11 Grant Commitment and Spend on New Programmes (Item 9.2)
An update report would be submitted to the November Committee meeting.
ACTION: T Davies-Pugh
- 4.12 New Government Updates (Item 10)
Peter Wanless reported that the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) had completed its consultation on shares and published its response. It planned to lay the Order in Parliament that week. That could generate discussion on the draft policy direction for England.
Gerald Oppenheim had issued an update on myplace (EC/(P10)81C) dated 27 September 2010 and the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) was awaited.
- 4.13 Support for Advice Services (Item 16.1)
The suggestion made at the last meeting that the issues arising from this work could usefully be revisited at an appropriate time was being addressed by officers.
ACTION: A Shah
5. ENGLAND COMMITTEE EFFECTIVENESS (EC/(P10)89)
- 5.1 This report provided a summary of the results of the questionnaire that had been circulated during summer 2010 seeking the views of the England Committee members on a number of issues relating to the effectiveness of the Committee. Dharmendra Kanani said the survey built on his presentation at the July Committee meeting. He encouraged Committee members to consider this report as a working document and strategic framework against which the Committee's effectiveness could be measured. He intended to map out a work programme to enable progress to be tracked.
- 5.2 In discussion the main points raised included:
(1) Although the majority of members favoured monthly meetings it was questioned whether this made the optimum use of the Committee's time. This could be considered further in the context of the forward work plan.

- (2) If the Committee did meeting monthly, it should receive a different style of paper to release some of the pressure on officers. Dharmendra Kanani said he intended meetings to be “paper light” and “discussion heavy” with relevant external input.
- (3) However, fewer meetings could mean more decision/discussions by correspondence which often resulted in less clear outcomes.
- (4) The Committee should have the opportunity for focused discussion on specific issues.
- (5) Committee members asked whether, if there was disagreement on the response to a question, officers could understand the reasons.
- (6) It was suggested that the Committee should receive less detailed reports.
- (7) However, it was also important to remind members of previous decisions and discussions so they knew their views had been considered.
- (8) The commissioning of papers should be agreed between non-executives and officers at an early stage to ensure a common understanding of what the Committee required and expected.
- (9) The discussions between lead Board Members and officers should be appropriately reflected in the papers.
- (10) If the decision-making processes and options available to reach a decision by the Committee were clear, made sense and were transparent this should result in improved papers.
- (11) Powerpoint presentations should only be used if they added value.
- (12) Committee members who were not Board Members did feel divorced from the rest of the system. The Chief Executive explained how the creation of the specific England directorate and the Strategy Performance and Learning directorate aimed to address this. The latter would oversee how the five funding portfolios fitted together.

5.3 The England Committee agreed:

- (a) to note this report;**
- (b) the Committee should receive recommendations based on the previous day’s discussion and issues emerging from this report at its meeting on 9.11.2010; ACTION: D Kanani/A Shah**
- (c) that meetings should continue to be held monthly with the England Committee and Reaching Communities on consecutive days (the second Tuesday and Wednesday in the month if possible). The timings of the meetings should be: England Committee 1100-1700 and Reaching Communities 0900-1300; ACTION: S Musson**

6. PROACTIVELY CREATING A SPACE TO INFORM AND SHAPE AN EMERGING AGENDA – RESPONDING TO ‘BIG SOCIETY’ (EC/(P10)90)

- 6.1 This report presented a series of options to develop the Big Lottery Fund’s thinking, approach and funding to respond to the emerging environment resulting from the economic and financial situation of the public sector as well as reflecting on the new coalition Government’s policy driver of the Big Society.

- 6.2 Dharmendra Kanani informed the Committee that the Big Lottery Fund was considering on a UK-wide basis how it would respond to the Coalition Government's proposed policies and agenda. The Fund had delivered, and would continue to deliver, funding that supported the principles behind Big Society. A number of tests had been agreed by the Board in relation to Big Society ideas to ensure that the Fund would remain true to its mission.
- 6.3 Dharmendra Kanani emphasised two underpinning drivers in the report which are to reflect and devise an approach to respond to a dynamic external environment which would demonstrate our Intelligent Funder credentials and to be regarded as a responsive and flexible funder. The other is to inform and influence the Big Society debate in which currently there is a vacuum which we can fill through our funding history, expertise and knowledge. This report outlined a framework for taking this dialogue forward and identified the outcomes which the Fund might wish to achieve. It also highlighted some of the concerns held by the voluntary and community sector and others about the concept and terminology of Big Society. Dharmendra Kanani sought members' approval in the first instance of the framework and outcomes for the proposals and thereafter for each option in detail
- 6.4 In general discussion the main points raised included:
- (1) The Big Lottery Fund should approach Big Society with an open mind and should not become a conduit for delivering funds.
 - (2) The Chief Executive emphasised the importance of both the political context and the position of the groups which the Big Lottery Fund supported. The Fund should be seeking, in the short term, to influence the Big Society agenda and achieve the best outcomes for its customers.
 - (3) It was suggested that the Big Lottery Fund might focus on specific relevant aspects of the Big Society agenda rather than considering it all. The Fund should be true to its values in deciding what to support.
 - (4) It should not be seen to take over the role of local authorities in the light of their cutbacks.
 - (5) The Fund should make clear its interest in isolation and transition.
 - (6) It was commented that Big Society looked to be a 'top down' model. However, the Big Lunch had been successful and that had adopted a similar approach.
 - (7) Consultation with the intended beneficiaries might identify whether people and communities welcomed the Big Society initiative.
 - (8) The challenges and risks of devolving decision making to a local level were highlighted and exemplified.
 - (9) In response to a question, it was explained that the Big Society Network was an aspiration to connect various parts of society to tackle problems. It was suggested that a change of name would be helpful if the Big Lottery Fund was to support any of their activities..
 - (10) The Big Lottery Fund should involve those organisations it normally associated with and bring the learning from its legacy programmes.
 - (11) The urban/rural aspects were more complex than presented in the report.
 - (12) Inclusivity, as a proxy for equality considerations, should be added to the intended outcomes.
 - (13) The outcomes intended to cover both making resilient people and communities and getting people to work together.

6.5 Focusing on the options in the report the main points raised included:

General comments

(1) It was questioned whether the Big Lottery Fund would be considering these options if the Big Society agenda did not exist in its present form.

(2) The view was expressed that the options tended to be London-centric.

Option 1

(3) It was questioned how this fitted with BIG Local.

(4) It would be good to collaborate with NESTA but on an appropriate basis and not co-financing £1m.

(5) The Big Lottery Fund should focus on the poorest areas and bring these into the Neighbourhood Challenge when that programme had been firmed up.

Option 2

(6) This option fitted well with the BIG Local programme.

6.6 **The England Committee agreed:**

- (a) **to approve the framework and outcomes as in paragraph 2.5;**
- (b) **to note the relevance of the Big Society agenda to the Big Lottery Fund's work in England;**
- (c) **to note the range of ideas emerging around this agenda and the options available to the Big Lottery Fund;**
- (d) **the following in respect of the options:**
 - (i) **Option 1. Partnering the Neighbourhood Challenge**
Officers should consider possible collaborative arrangements to work with NESTA;
 - (ii) **Option 2. Supporting 'Your Square Mile'**
Officers should explore this option further;
 - (iii) **Option 3. Developing BIG's own prize/challenge fund**
This was agreed in principle and should be worked up linking with Option 4.
 - (iv) **Option 4. A themed 'Investing in Ideas'**
This was agreed in principle and should be worked up linking with Option 3.
 - (v) **Option 5. Other emerging ideas**
These should not be supported at the present time.
- (e) **Options 1-4 above should be rationalised and formal proposals submitted for decision at the Committee meeting on 9.11.2010.**
ACTION: D Kanani

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

7.1 There was none.

8. DATE TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

8.1 Tuesday 9 November 2010 at 1100 the Big Lottery Fund, Plough Place, London.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 1105.

CHAIR