

Proposal to the Partnership Oversight Committee May 2023

Future of the Margaret Williamson Fund in the absence of Congleton 4 Congleton.

The Margaret Williamson Trust was set up in 2016 following the death of Margaret Williamson in 2015. The idea of the trust was to keep Margaret's memory alive by continuing to support three of the areas that she was most passionate about in Congleton – the arts, the environmental schemes and teaching people about the environment. The fund is held and managed via the Cheshire Community Foundation. Once a year, on the request of Jackie from the Town Council, Congleton 4 Congleton applied to CCF for the interest on the fund. The interest funds are then held in ring-fenced account and following the annual grants meeting, C4C was supplied with a list of people to pay with amounts and bank details.

The grant applications are opened once a year – through March and the grants distributed in April.

At a meeting managed through the Partnership when the fund was formed it was agreed that the following would be the on the group that considers the applications. This group has largely remained the same since it set up.

- Jo Money – Congleton Community Projects
- John Doe – Congleton 4 Congleton (now replaced with **Jill Dooney**)
- Steve Foster – was the Partnership chair immediately after Margaret
- Rebecca Franklin – representing the interests of the William Dean Trust (major donor)
- Dawn Gibbins – (now replaced by **April Wild**) – donor
- Rob Barrow - part of the Lieutenancy (indicated will step down)
- Jackie MacArthur – CTC and involved in many projects with Margaret and carries out the admin for the group as well as voting on the applications.

With C4C making the decision to close, we need to look at a new process for handling the interest on the account.

The Town Council cannot hold the grant and then make grants to organisations in a way that is different to its own grant procedures.

Congleton Partnership, which has its own constitution, could potentially collect the funds once a year, hold in a ring fenced account and the CTC accounts team issue the payments from the partnership account as instructed by the Partnership. Suggest that the Margaret Williamson Trust group was able to become a working group of the partnership, and if the limit of any grant were £1000 then the working groups could authorise the payment under the Partnership constitution without needing to clear it with the Partnership exec. The total interest is likely to be around £2000 to £2,500 per year.

Positive reasons to move the group to the Partnership:

1. Margaret was the founder of the Partnership and the trust aligns with partnership aims
2. The Partnership is a trusted and stable group that has been in existence for 15 years
3. The accounts team at CTC which handles the payments for the Partnership is happy to issue these payments on behalf of the partnership.

Possible downside – the decisions on the distribution of grants must be in accordance with the statement when the trust was formed and include the representatives of the donors. It will not be passed to the Partnership leadership.

Recommendation: For the Partnership to authorize the chair to sign the agreement with the Cheshire Community Foundation to enable the Congleton Partnership to fulfil the role previously carried out by Congleton4Congleton in regards to the Margaret Williamson Fund.

KEY

CCF: Cheshire Community Foundation

C4C: Congleton for Congleton

MMWDT: Margaret Williamson Distributing Team

CTC: Congleton Town Council (admin the MMWDT group)

Suggestion that Congleton Partnership takes role of C4C and Partnership Officer takes on more of the admin of the group.

CTC Finance officers happy to make payments from a ring fenced account within in the partnership funds as long as signed off by Cathy as Partnership Officer.

Problem

CCF alerts C4C. C4C alerts MMWDT via Jackie at CTC. Discuss if allocating funds to others or add to pot for following year.

MMW Trust Fund

£72k – held by CCF in trust. CCF invests the fund. C4C applies for interest, asking for CP to take the role of C4C.



Feb:

JMac request C4C to contact CCF to check on interest on capital.



Feb:

JMac alerts MMWDT group to amount. Agree worth open grants for the year. Opens for applications.



Feb/Mar:

Publicise grants as open – forms come in via emails



Early April

MMWDT group meet to go through applications and make recommendations.



May allocate all, some or no funds depending on appropriateness of application.



April

JMacA Gives recommendations to C4C who communicates MMWDT decisions to CCF. CCF makes checks on groups and alerts C4C if there is a problem. CCF moves appropriate lump sum to C4C and C4C makes payments.



No Problem

CCF moves funds to C4C. C4C makes BACS payments based on recommendations of the MMWDT.



Partnership may get more funds to increase the lump capital sum.



MMWDT Group makes sole decision on sustainability & best way to allocate grants based on the criteria agreed when the fund was created. JMacA feeds back to applicants on grant results. Collects monitoring forms

MMW DT current voting members

- Steve Foster
- Jo Money
- Jill Dooley
- April Wild
- Rob Barrow
- Rebecca Franklin
- Jackie MacArthur