

Forestry Commission Benevolent Fund (FCBF)

Purpose

- 1) The purpose of this paper is to ask the FC: -
 - Is there enough awareness of the fund?
 - Is the decision criterion too difficult to achieve?
 - Is enough being done to promote the availability of short term financial assistance?

Background

- 2) The FCBF is a registered charity that has been set up to help FC staff who are facing financial hardship. The terms of the charity are that money can be paid out in one of two ways, namely:
 - An interest free loan
 - A non repayable grant in cases of extreme hardship

Contributions to the fund are/have been made by FC staff, past and present and in addition it receives interest from a high yield investment account as well as Gift Aid from those contributors who pay tax. The fund currently stands at £83,570. Interest of £4,331.38 was received during the last tax year. A total of £1,640 was paid out to three beneficiaries and £400 to one beneficiary the previous year.

Proposal

- 3) The FCTU fully accept that the Trustees have a responsibility to ensure that the money is managed and disbursed in compliance with the terms of the Fund has the decision making criteria been reviewed lately?

Action

- 4) The Council is asked to agree to raise the profile of the FCBF in not only dispersal of loans and grants but so FC members of staff can contribute to the fund.

Allan MacKenzie
FCTU Secretary
26th October 2009