

Creelough Community Grant Scheme – Advisory Committee

Rationale, Guiding Principles & Terms of Reference (last updated 15th November 2024)

1. Rationale & Background Factors

- i. Current Status: €165,406 remains in the Fund (November 2024)
- ii. Bereaved families and those injured or made homeless or whose employment was compromised have received significant emergency and pre-planned lump-sum payments amounting to €1,745,857 to date.
- iii. The remaining amount is, as agreed with the local community in 2022 and again in 2023 and 2024, earmarked for short to medium term support in the community in response to identified current/emerging needs arising from the tragedy.
- iv. While having a strong presence in Donegal, the Irish Red Cross is not a local service-provider in the Creelough Community.
- v. Irish Red Cross has a responsibility to its donors to ensure effective management and allocation of the remaining fund, and to account for its expenditure.
- vi. Effective allocation of the Fund will require local knowledge and advice and close ongoing links with the Community.
- vii. The best opportunity to progress matters in this regard is to work with existing community groups and local service-providers.
- viii. The community has proposed establishment of a community-led '**Advisory Committee**' to advise Irish Red Cross on the promotion, reception, evaluation and funding allocations of applications for financial support from the Fund based on three priority Strands agreed by the community.
- ix. The agreed priorities are:
 - **(Strand 1)** Youth Development/Support
 - **(Strand 2)** Trauma Support (trauma informed community)
 - **(Strand 3)** Commemorative Projects (the nature of which has yet to be decided).

2. Overall Objectives of the Advisory Committee

- i.** The Advisory Committee (circa 5 persons) will advise Irish Red Cross on applications for funding received to assist Irish Red Cross in prioritising financial grant aid in line with identified current and emerging need, aligned to the Guiding Principles and Terms of Reference outlined below.
- ii.** The Advisory Committee will review and recommend on eligible applications to the Fund and will advise Irish Red Cross in their decision-making.
- iii.** Irish Red Cross Administration Committee (comprised of senior staff and board members) will be the sole deciding body in determining successful applications for funding.
- iv.** The Advisory Committee will consider how the remaining fund will be utilised, and may advise Irish Red Cross on locally identified needs to be prioritised for financial support.
- v.** The Advisory Committee will maintain open communication with Irish Red Cross regarding applications and will be advised on any remaining funds.
- vi.** Irish Red Cross will record all decisions and payments made and will keep the Advisory Committee informed in this regard.

3. Guiding Principles and Terms of Reference

- i.** The Fund is no longer making cash grants to individuals and will not accept such applications from individuals.
- ii.** Grants may be approved to establish a recommended programme or to support a capital or commemorative project.
- iii.** No grant will exceed €40,000 in any one instance.
- iv.** Payment for a professional service (such as Trauma Support) may be approved. It may not be a transfer of funds to an individual applicant (save in exceptional circumstances for the vouched reimbursement of a professional service deemed necessary that was already received and paid for by an applicant).
- v.** The Advisory Committee will assist Irish Red Cross on application criteria to be communicated on a dedicated website which facilitates Online Application from potential applicants.
- vi.** The Advisory Committee will assist Irish Red Cross in ensuring that information is communicated to applicants who reside outside of the Creeslough area but who have been directly affected by the tragedy.
- vii.** If the Committee requires professional advice in relation to a particular proposed project, costs for this may legitimately be drawn from the fund, as may any necessary operating cost.
- viii.** Irish Red Cross will provide an annual report on: Applications received; Applications approved; Amounts approved for each successful application; and the total amount of drawdown and balance remaining for future application.
- ix.** A report of all expenditure (compliant with GDPR) will be posted on the Scheme Website.
- x.** Once the Fund is fully expended, the Committee will be disbanded and the website taken down six months after the last payment.

4. Structure, Composition & Membership of the Advisory Committee

- i. To facilitate provision of constructive advice and guidance to Irish Red Cross, the Committee should ideally comprise of not more than five members.
- ii. The Committee will be community-led, and its membership will consist of community representation drawn from recognised sectors within the wider community, such as The Community Association, First Response Forum and Youth, Education, Faith, and Pastoral Sectors.
- iii. The Committee will ideally be composed of nominees from groups and service-providers representative of the community.
- iv. The Committee will advise on funding priorities, with regard to the already identified current needs and those which may emerge.
- v. Nominees should be appointed for a fixed term which concludes when all the remaining funds have been designated for expenditure.
- vi. Nominees are not representatives of their nominating group and should seek to operate on a consensus basis within the Committee, based on its deliberations.
- vii. The deliberations of the Committee and the advice it provides to Irish Red Cross are confidential