



Business Supporter Affiliation scheme. The LINK process explained.

The LINK Board discussed the rollout of the Business Supporter Affiliation scheme at its meeting on 23 April 2015, informed by research undertaken by Mandy Orr (trustee), with LINK's SEFF members. At April 2015 LINK has one BS, Scottish Power, paying an annual subscription of £2,000.

The rationale for the scheme is that:

- BS should provide some income while helping to open dialogue with the sector;
- the Scheme intentionally seeks multiple *small* subscriptions (£250 to £2000 dep. turnover), complementing the more significant membership income;
- it offers a package of benefits which LINK is already providing for its full members;
- these benefits offer no influence or control to Business Supporters.

The application process for BS is simple. It is open to all businesses which share LINK's vision of contributing to a more environmentally sustainable society in Scotland, whose aims are broadly compatible and which do not preclude the pursuit of sustainable development and the protection of wildlife, landscape and the quiet enjoyment and appreciation of the countryside (our charitable objects). The application form asks applicant BS to state why they wish to become affiliated. Benefits are chiefly the weekly advocacy monitoring service and invitations to LINK receptions and Congress, and a listing on the LINK website as a BS. The terms and conditions cover LINK's right to end the affiliation at the Board's discretion should the T&Cs be abused.

Decisions on the eligibility of businesses are made at Board level in the interests of the network, on a case-by-case basis. From April 2015 member bodies (main reps) will have the opportunity to comment on an application received, and on plans to actively recruit any new BS, within a 2 week timeframe.

If there are no concerns raised the Board will come to its decision based on the judgement of trustees as formerly.

If concerns are raised, this will prompt further investigation by staff using internet resources like Corporate Watch, Business & Human Rights Resources Centre, Corporate Critic, Ethical Consumer, Eiris, (and sources supplied by the concerned member too) to assess the concern addressed by the member(s). The Board will then determine the outcome of the application.

The Board will review the BS Affiliation scheme again in April 2016.