

Approved Minute

LAG Meeting – 28 March 2018

Winchester House, Elgin

Present	Alastair Kennedy (Chair), Bea Jefferson (Vice Chair), Alex Walker, Aileen Buchanan, Laura Sutherland, Iain Findlay, Jana Hutt
Apologies	Gavin Clark, Pearl Hamilton, Reni Millburn, Sarah Lamb, Fabio Villani, Fiona Robb, Drew McFarlane-Slack
In attendance	Norman MacAskill (LEADER Programme Manager), Michelle Gillibrand (LEADER Development Officer), Davina MacLennan (LEADER F&A Officer- note-taker), Chris Muir (new Development Officer)
Private / Public Split	6 Private, 1 Public

Details	Action
<p><u>Welcome & Introductions</u></p> <p>AK welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Chris Muir the new LEADER Development Officer who will be in post as of 9 April 2018.</p> <p>Apologies were noted and it was agreed that the meeting was quorate and the public/private balance was observed.</p>	
<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest noted.</p>	
<p><u>Minutes of LAG meeting on 7 February 2018</u></p> <p>AK referred to the minutes of the previous meeting and asked for any matters arising.</p> <p>AK advised that the Co-operation sub-group had not yet met but a meeting was arranged for later today with Don Morrison from the Scottish Rural Network to discuss Co-operation projects and potential support.</p> <p>Accuracy of minutes moved by AW and seconded by JH.</p> <p>There were no further matters arising from the previous meeting.</p>	
<p><u>Team Update and overview by Programme Manager</u></p> <p>NM said he was delighted to welcome Chris Muir to the team and advised that the main focus of his role would be developing Co-operation projects. It would be a steep learning curve and a work plan would be developed to support this.</p>	

<p>NM said that the team had been very busy dealing with all stages of applications from reworks to claims. Pressure points in dealing with applications being returned for rework had been managed better this time round.</p> <p>NM confirmed that the contracts for current staff would be extended to run in line with the programme end date which is Dec 2020. This was supported by tsiMoray and Scottish Government.</p> <p>Project Register</p> <p>NM presented a draft Project Register to the group which provides details on projects approved and current funds committed, while further allocating a percentage across the six strategic priorities in the LDS for each project. This captures the overall estimated expenditure against each priority.</p> <p>The Register also provides detail on projects going to committee which will inform the LAG on the new budget position against the priorities should the projects being considered at the time be approved.</p> <p>The group agreed that this was useful information and provides more in-depth detail on budget allocations and individual projects.</p> <p>NM said that it was still in 'draft' and he will circulate it to members for further comment.</p> <p>There was discussion around adding the allocated figure for co-operation projects as well as for each strategic priority. NM said the allocation for co-operation projects was 10% of the total budget and that this target is cross cutting and that co-operation projects need to relate to one or more of the priorities.</p> <p>The group agreed that it would be useful to also see the geographic split of successful projects and asked if this could this be captured in the spreadsheet. NM said that the website was currently being updated with case studies and information on successful projects and would offer this information. It was agreed that this would also help target areas where activity was low.</p> <p>Claims Guidance</p> <p>NM said that claims guidance had been put together and circulated to applicants who are currently in the claims process. Robust evidence for every single cost, in line with the local and national guidance, must be provided.</p> <p>IF queried the timescales for applicants being paid their grant. DM said that current claims to date were showing no more than a turnaround of 33 working days. Turnaround times are also dependent on the make-up of the claim in terms of the number of individual costs associated with the claim and not the value.</p>	<p>NM</p>
<p>Revised Local Development Strategy (NM)</p> <p>NM tabled the redrafted version of the Local Development Strategy, with changes previously agreed by the LDS Working Group. He said that changes were mostly to objectives and in particular targets as it was felt the original version was sometimes ambiguous and some targets would have been difficult to measure.</p> <p>There was discussion around promoting the changes and making more people aware, especially relating to objectives that require to be targeted to attract more applications. LS suggested that this could be promoted via the Community Engagement Group.</p> <p>There was discussion in relation to the tourism targets and collaboration across priorities. It was agreed that AK would do a further revision of the LDS and this would be circulated to members.</p> <p>AB asked if targets could be added to the project register to ensure these were being met. There was agreement that this would be helpful and would also be covered in the monitoring and evaluation once the LDS changes were approved.</p>	<p>AK</p>

<p>NM to look at adding targets to the project register.</p> <p>Following discussion there was consensus that members would review changes and feedback any comments to NM by Tuesday 3 April 2018.</p>	<p>NM ALL Memb ers</p>																										
<p><u>Eols</u></p> <p>MG tabled a paper on current Expressions of Interest (Eols) and advised on potential applications. She further updated that whilst all Eols had been acknowledged, checks were still needed on at least ten Eols and that this would be completed this week. Since circulating the table a further two new Eols had been received.</p> <p>MG advised members who had any further comments or wished for more information to contact her by email.</p> <p>There was discussion around the split of Eols across the priorities and if there were opportunities to target groups who may apply for funding related to priorities that seem to be less popular. NM agreed that this could be done to provide support to groups.</p>																											
<p><u>Application Assessment and Decision</u></p> <p>Two applications were considered at the Project Assessment Committee on 20 March 2018 are presented to the LAG.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="110 886 1352 1073"> <thead> <tr> <th>Ref</th> <th>Project Name</th> <th>PAC Score</th> <th>PAC Recommendation to LAG</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>13/P00021</td> <td>Celebrating the Spirit of Crofting</td> <td>84%</td> <td>Approve</td> </tr> <tr> <td>13/P00015</td> <td>Marcassie Farm Lodges</td> <td>86%</td> <td>Approve with conditions</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>1. Celebrating the Spirit of Crofting</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest noted.</p> <p>MG mentioned that further information has been received from the Scottish Crofting Federation on Crofting in Moray.</p> <p>She updated the group that Moray became a new crofting area on 4 February 2010. Currently there are no crofts that come under crofting legislation yet but there are lots of smallholdings in Moray with a similar status to crofts i.e. small agricultural units. It is hoped the event will raise the profile of crofting and promote a way of rural life that supports the local economy.</p> <p>AK invited comments from the group in relation to the project and recommendations.</p> <p>Whilst there were some reservations expressed over the amount of funding for a two-day event and the sum towards travel and accommodation, there was a positive view of the project overall, as it was felt it was relevant for smallholders and food suppliers as well as the small Moray Crofting Community.</p> <p>The LAG agreed the score of 84% and APPROVED the project.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="110 1671 1352 1843"> <thead> <tr> <th>Project</th> <th>Project No</th> <th>LAG Decision</th> <th>Quorum</th> <th>Project Score</th> <th>Project Total</th> <th>Leader Intervention</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Celebrating the Spirit of Crofting</td> <td>P00021</td> <td>Approved</td> <td>6 private, 1 public</td> <td>84%</td> <td>£17,723.94</td> <td>79.99998872% £14,179.15</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Ref	Project Name	PAC Score	PAC Recommendation to LAG	13/P00021	Celebrating the Spirit of Crofting	84%	Approve	13/P00015	Marcassie Farm Lodges	86%	Approve with conditions	Project	Project No	LAG Decision	Quorum	Project Score	Project Total	Leader Intervention	Celebrating the Spirit of Crofting	P00021	Approved	6 private, 1 public	84%	£17,723.94	79.99998872% £14,179.15	
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2. Marcassie Farm Lodges

There were no declarations of interest noted.

AK invited comments from the group in relation to the project and recommendations.

There was extensive discussion about the large tourism related element of the project with the current pressure and level of demand on the tourism related budget.

The group recognised that the project had demonstrated good links with partners and good fostering of local businesses, had a strong strategic fit and scored well in the technical scoring.

MG informed the LAG that the project had considerably reduced in size and value since first being worked on.

It was noted that a successful planning application was needed. Re-tendering of costs may be needed where only one tender was received at application stage, and this could be made a condition of grant.

The project had received a good overall score and the LAG were content that the project was strong.

On this basis the LAG agreed the score of 86% and APPROVED the project with the following conditions.

- Successful planning application
- Re-tendering

Project	Project No	LAG Decision	Quorum	Project Score	Project Total	Leader Intervention
Marcassie Farm Lodges	P00015	Approved with Conditions	6 private, 1 public	86%	£313,402	52.13814845% £163,402

The following application had previously been considered by the PAC on 29 November 2017. It had not passed a Technical Assessment and had been returned for re-work. It was then presented at the LAG on 7 February 2018 and 'Deferred' awaiting further information about match funding. The application has now been re-worked but the Technical Assessment was unable to be completed before the LAG meeting today.

Due to the size of the project and its proposed timescales, the LAG agreed to have an extraordinary PAC meeting to consider the application on 5 April 2018 at 2 pm in Winchester House.

Technical Assessment to be completed by 3 April 2018.

Project	Project No	Project Score	LAG Recommendation (7.2.18)
Cabrach Distillery and Heritage Centre	P00008	86%	DEFER

MG/
NM

Finance Report

DM tabled a paper on Finance, including current and projected spend on administration and animation and information on live projects and claims to date.

BJ asked if a budget for Evaluation had been included in the projected forecast. DM to check and report back.

DM

NM

<p>Now that staff contracts are being extended to the end of the programme which is Dec 2020, it was asked if redundancy costs were taken into account. NM said that this was a matter for the Accountable Body and would raise it there.</p> <p>BJ queried if there would be merit in extending the projected forecast to March 2021 for Admin and Animation costs. This would allow budget, should the programme run over. NM to confirm if there is a requirement to do this and report back.</p>	NM
<p>National Council of Rural Advisors Workshop – Update AK</p> <p>AK said that the recent meeting was well represented by farming and rural businesses with two main issues being looked at, rural housing and local development plans.</p> <p>Notes will be circulated to all when received.</p>	AK
<p>Co-operation Projects</p> <p>AK informed the group that Don from Scottish Rural Network was arriving today to discuss where we are with co-operation projects and if there was any assistance or support they can offer.</p> <p>NM updated that there were currently two main possibilities for co-operation projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism related project - Moray and Aberdeenshire Coast • Eco Village Association Findhorn - Promoting the concept, reducing carbon footprint. Keen to bring in academic partners for research and may be submitting an EoI for a preparatory project. <p>NM said that the recent appointment of the new Development Officer will support the development of co-operation projects.</p> <p>NM said that, as previously noted, there had been discussion among accountable bodies in other areas about reducing the requirement for 10% of budget to be spent on co-operation projects, with the approval to vire monies. Because this is a requirement at national programme level, it was thought all LAGs would need to request the change. This is still being explored.</p> <p>NM said that the matter was being discussed further and that he would report back any update on the national position.</p>	NM
<p>FLAG update</p> <p>NM reported that a meeting was scheduled later that day with Moray Council, Scottish Government and Highland LEADER to resolve the issue on how animation is delivered in Moray.</p>	NM
<p>Accountable Body update</p> <p>In the absence of FV, NM updated the group that the SLA was due to be reviewed at a national level for all LAGs and that the consequences of this would be reported to the LAG. He also noted that the Scottish Government LEADER Team would be carrying out monitoring of Moray LEADER's via the LARCS system during May 2018.</p>	
<p>AOCB</p> <p>It was agreed the Next LAG Development Day would be held on 16 May 2018 – 1000 hours to 1500 hours. Further details to be circulated</p>	NM
<p>Meeting Closed</p> <p>AK thanked all for attending and closed the meeting.</p>	

Draft Minute Noted and typed by – DM 29 March 2018

Draft Minute Checked by – NM 3 April 2018