

Draft Minute

LAG Meeting – 6 October 2017

Winchester House, Elgin

Present	Alastair Kennedy (Chair), Bea Jefferson (Deputy Chair), Fabio Villani, Alex Walker, Debbie Herron, Jana Hutt, Drew McFarlane-Slack, Aileen Buchanan, Ian Cowe, Iain Findlay, Fiona Robb, Franziska Smith,
Apologies	Gordon Methven, Pearl Hamilton, Reni Milburn
In attendance	Norman MacAskill (Leader Programme Manager), Michelle Gillibrand (Leader Development Officer), Davina MacLennan (Leader F&A Officer note-taker)
Private / Public Split	10 private, 2 public

Details	Action
<p><u>Welcome & Introductions</u></p> <p>AK welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies.</p> <p><u>Quorum</u></p> <p>AK noted that should any decisions be needed the quorum was met.</p>	
<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>The following declarations of interest were noted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debbie Herron – Findhorn Social Enterprise Hub - Ekopia • Alex Walker – Findhorn Social Enterprise Hub - Ekopia 	
<p><u>Minutes of previous meeting held 20th September 2017</u></p> <p>Accuracy of minutes were approved by AW and seconded by DMS. Minutes are accepted.</p> <p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <p>AK referred to the minutes of the previous meeting and asked for any matters arising.</p> <p>NM informed that he was still working on updating the EOI template to identify areas of project spend.</p> <p>AW queried if there was any update from the Scottish Government in relation to the process for paying applicant claims. Previous indications were that this could take in the order of 90 days which was a concern.</p> <p>NM informed he was in continuing discussions with the SG and their commitment was that it would be less than 90 days and more like 30-35 days. He advised that we would now have a single point of contact at SG for any queries which was positive and offers consistency.</p> <p>AK noted there were no further matters arising from the previous meeting.</p>	NM

Team Update and overview by Programme Manager

NM updated that the Team had a particularly busy period and worked extra hours to get through the first round of applications. This was felt necessary due to it being the first round of applications which helped with learning about the process, LARCS and also identified good practice, learning and possible pitfalls for future applications.

Concern was noted by some members about the extra hours staff were working. NM assured the LAG that hours were recorded that they were operating a TOIL system and hours due will be taken back by staff.

AK mentioned that moving deadlines in this first round of applications contributed to current pressures in the Team.

NM reiterated that future deadlines would be strictly adhered to.

NM stated that to ensure Continuous Improvement there would be a review completed on how things have been working to date. This would include looking at the current capacity of the team.

He further mentioned that he had discussed with the Chair the possibility of increasing the size of the team by 0.5 FTE and highlighted that one area that was currently beyond capacity in the current team was in relation to Co-operation Projects. At least 10% of the budget needs to be allocated to this, so consideration needs to be given on how to achieve this.

Workshops on Application Process – NM advised that the Team were looking to hold workshops for applicants on the application process before the next deadline in January 2018. Provisional date being considered in 7th December 2017.

LEADER Events – NM updated the LAG on LEADER Information Events he had recently carried out at Keith, Buckie and Aberlour. These had gone well and there had been good publicity for the events. Events at Forres and Elgin are being carried out w/c 9 & 16 October 2017.

Norman had also attended the Federation of Community Halls and FACT AGM as guest speaker and both were worthwhile in promoting LEADER. As such the team will continue to seek invitations to events as guest speaker.

Internal Audit - NM informed the LAG that the Internal Auditors were carrying out a comprehensive audit this week and the report would follow. Some recommendations may be around processes and frequency of meetings with the Scottish Government.

Budget Spend Forecast - Figures have to be submitted to the Scottish Government for Admin and Animation costs to the end of 2020. This work had been completed and the figures would be uploaded on to LARCS by DM.

Reports on budget and actual expenditure will be available for the next LAG meeting in December.

Expressions of Interest - There are approximately 9 EOI's waiting to be assessed. The aim is to turn these around in approximately 10 days.

NM

Project Assessment Committee (PAC) held on 4 September 2017

The minute of the PAC meeting of 4 September 2017 was approved as an accurate record.

PROJECTS FOR DECISION

AK informed the meeting that there were 3 projects for discussion and decision.

1. Findhorn Social Enterprise Hub

Debbie Herron and Alex Walker both declared an interest in the project and left the meeting. Declaration of Interest forms were completed and will be retained on file.

NM introduced the project and updated the meeting that the project scored 5.15 (86%) at the Project Assessment Committee.

Project	Project No	Total Project Cost	LEADER Intervention
Findhorn Social Enterprise Hub	13/P00001	£527,518.02	£369,262.61 (69.99999924%)

A question was raised if there was demand for office space in the area and whether the applicant had reached out to businesses out with the park. MG stated that the applicant has made links with businesses out with the park and also provided evidence in relation to demand for office space.

The general consensus was that there was a demand and market for social enterprise space and a real desire for social enterprises to work in co-operation.

It was felt that the project was a strong fit with Objective 1 in the Local Development Strategy

“To increase participation in local labour markets through Social Enterprises and Social Entrepreneurship”

There was discussion over the potential issue of state aid and it was agreed that the Programme Manager NM would confirm with the State Aid Unit that there was no issue around distortion of competition.

AK asked the meeting if there was any reason why the project could not be approved on the basis that confirmation was received in relation to there being no issue with State Aid.

The LAG decision was informed on the information within the Technical Assessment and recommendations and score at the Project Assessment Committee.

The project was approved subject to their being no issue in relation to state aid.

LAG Decision	Quorum	Project Score
Approved (no vote)	8 private, 2 public	5.15 (Max 6) = 86%

There are no conditions in relation to the Offer of Grant.

Debbie Herron and Alex Walker re-joined the meeting.

NM

2. Moray Poverty Conference

There were no declarations of interest in relation to the project.

NM introduced the project and informed the meeting that the project scored 4 (67%) at the Project Assessment Committee.

Project	Project No	Total Project Cost	LEADER Intervention
Moray Poverty Conference	13/P00006	£4,489.00	£3,142.00 (69.99331700%)

There was initial discussion between the LAG over the strategic fit of the project with the Local Development Strategy and any lasting legacy to funding the event.

Following dialogue, the general consent was that if the conference leads to a shift in awareness, attitudes and offers access to opportunities that the legacy will be reinforced.

AK asked the LAG if there was any reason the project could not be approved.

The LAG were content to approve the project as follows:

LAG Decision	Quorum	Project Score
Approved (no vote)	10 private, 2 public	4 (Max 6) = 67%

There are no conditions in relation to the Offer of Grant.

3. Renovation of Elgin Museum for Modern Tourism

There were no declarations of interest in relation to the project

NM introduced the project and informed the meeting that the project scored 4.7 (78%) at the Project Assessment Committee. He said it was a solid project that passed the Technical Assessment, although it scored low on eligibility.

Project	Project No	Total Project Cost	LEADER Intervention
Renovation of Elgin Museum	13/P00003	£114,240.00	£28,560.00 (25%)

Some LAG members raised initial concerns about the fit of the project with the Local Development Strategy and how investment in building and infrastructure would attract more visitors to the area. However, it was highlighted that renovation to the building may make it more appealing to visit thereby attracting more visitors to the area.

It was noted that information was still needed in relation to the planning permission, building consent and that the title deed had not yet been made available. It was agreed that should the project be approved that these should be conditions attached to the offer of grant.

<p>AK asked the LAG if there was consensus to approve the project which there was not. The LAG then voted on the project as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="147 394 959 548"> <thead> <tr> <th>LAG Decision</th> <th>Quorum</th> <th>Project Score</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Approved – 9</td> <td>10 private, 2 public</td> <td>4.7 (Max 6) = 78%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Abstain – 3</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Conditions attached to Offer of Grant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information to be submitted in relation to planning permission and building consent • Title Deed to be made available 	LAG Decision	Quorum	Project Score	Approved – 9	10 private, 2 public	4.7 (Max 6) = 78%	Abstain – 3			
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<p><u>Review of Project Assessment and Decision Making Procedure</u></p> <p>Guided Tour of LARCS – Using a data projector and screen, MG provided a tour of LARCS to LAG members.</p> <p>There was discussion around Change Requests and who has the authority to approve changes at what level. MG to clarify and report back to LAG.</p> <p>Project Assessment Committee and Scoring – AK asked for feedback on the Project Assessment Committee, which he felt went well. BJ agreed and felt the scoring worked well. However, she thought it would be beneficial to get clarity on how this then feeds into the LAG to ensure there is not duplication of roles when considering applications.</p> <p>NM informed the LAG that the purpose of the PAC was to score applications and put recommendations to the LAG thereby reducing the amount of time the LAG spends on applications. It was felt by the LAG that clarity was needed on the information flow between the PAC and LAG.</p> <p>IC felt that the minute of the PAC needed more detailed information which would support the LAG when considering applications. It was agreed that ‘Points for Discussion’ and ‘Summary of recommendations to LAG’ would be included in the minute.</p> <p>AW suggested that it would be useful to have a template of scores on all projects for the LAG meeting. NM advised that scores and decision could be added to the Project Register Template for the next meeting.</p> <p>It was agreed by the LAG that the score was a guideline and applications were reviewed and considered on their own merits.</p>	<p>MG</p> <p>NM</p> <p>DM</p> <p>NM/DM</p>									
<p><u>Moray LEADER LAG Sub Groups</u></p> <p>LDS Review Group – AK confirmed the volunteers for the group as FV, BJ, DH, NM. NM said that he had been in contact with John Grieve, who wrote the LDS, and he might be available to advise informally on updating it. NM will convene first meeting. Date to be circulated.</p>	<p>NM</p>									
<p><u>Co-operation Projects – Including Report from Co-operation Café</u></p> <p>AK updated the LAG on the recent co-operation café both he and NM recently attended. Workshops included, Youth LAG, Fabric Trail, Food and Drink Route Map, and Community Transport.</p>										

<p>NM advised that the café seemed more targeted for projects in Scotland and there was potentially a couple of relevant opportunities to work in co-operation with Highland, Cairngorm and Outer Hebrides. IC commented that 10% of the LEADER budget for co-operation projects was a significant amount. FV confirmed to LAG that 10% was the minimum amount and it could be more. There was discussion about the need to think ‘further afield’, and develop some transnational projects. DMS suggested it may be worthwhile forming a group of volunteers to liaise and come up with a plan and ideas on how this can be delivered. AK asked the LAG for any volunteers. DMS, NM, IC agreed. First meeting to be arranged by NM.</p>	NM
<p>AOCB</p> <p>JH queried whether the LAG need to consider a minimum amount of funding for projects. NM said that the LAG had previously agreed to not set a minimum amount for projects and would consider applications on a case by case basis, although those seeking less than £10,000 would be advised that it might be worth looking elsewhere because of the demands of the LEADER application and claim process. This decision by the LAG had been noted in previous minutes.</p> <p>DMS felt it would be worthwhile having an awareness of what exists in relation to other charitable funds/alternative funding options for smaller grants in the event LEADER does not fit.</p> <p>FV agreed to pull together a list for information in relation to different funding available. This will be circulated to the LAG.</p>	FV
<p>Meeting Closed</p> <p>AK thanked all for attending and closed the meeting.</p>	

Minute noted by DM on 06/10/17

Draft minute typed by DM on 10/10/17 – Updated 18/10/17

Draft Minute Checked by – NM on 11/10/17 and BJ/AK 12/10/17