

Draft Minute

LAG Meeting – 7 February 2018

Winchester House, Elgin

Present	Alastair Kennedy (Chair), Bea Jefferson (Deputy Chair), Fabio Villani, Alex Walker, Aileen Buchanan, Fiona Robb, Franziska Smith, Gavin Clark, Jana Hutt
Apologies	Iain Findlay, Pearl Hamilton, Laura Sutherland, Jim Grant, Reni Millburn, Sarah Lamb
In attendance	Norman MacAskill (Leader Programme Manager), Michelle Gillibrand (Leader Development Officer), Davina MacLennan (Leader F&A Officer- note-taker)
Private / Public Split	7 private, 2 public

Details	Action
<p><u>Welcome & Introductions</u></p> <p>AK welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>AK gave an update on changes to members of the Local Action Group and advised that Anita Milne, Moray Federation of Community Halls and Associations, was a new member and that Ian Cowe had moved on in his role but would be replaced by another representative.</p> <p>NM said that there had been no contact from member Janne Pirie and in terms of the rules this would mean that her membership has lapsed. This was agreed by the LAG.</p> <p>It was noted that there are currently 16 members of the LAG. AK asked current LAG members to have a think about any potential new members.</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 13 December 2017</u></p> <p>It was noted that the date of last meeting on the current agenda was in error. AK referred to the minutes of the previous meeting and asked for any matters arising.</p> <p>NM noted that on the agenda and papers for the previous meeting there had been an error with the figure quoted for the total cost and intervention relating to the Glamping Development at the Loft. This had been noted at the meeting but the error had been carried over into the minutes, which would now be corrected with the actual figures for cost and LEADER intervention at that stage.</p> <p>Accuracy of minutes moved by AW and seconded by FV.</p>	NM

<p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <p>The protocol for dealing with Change Requests will be circulated to LAG members along with the March papers for the meeting.</p> <p>NM said that the presentation from the recent workshops with applicants, held in December had not been uploaded to the website. The Scottish Government are issuing a short video through SRN that will show the process for applicants. It was thought this would be a more useful and user friendly guide and tool for applicants.</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 that the team had been very busy dealing with applications that had been reworked and that the main issue was around evidencing costs, and that applicants had to understand that it was vital to provide robust evidence for every single cost, in line with the local and national guidance.</p> <p>The number of reworked applications had been causing time issues and pressures with carrying out full technical checks within the deadlines for committee. It has been agreed with the Chair and Vice Chair that there will normally be a maximum of two reworks allowed per application.</p> <p><u>Co-operation Projects</u></p> <p>Whilst there has been some interest in possible co-operation projects with North Aberdeenshire and Highland LAG and also a recent new enquiry from Lithuania, these have not been progressed, largely due to lack of capacity in the team. This will hopefully be addressed with the appointment of a new Development Officer who will have a specific remit for developing co-operation projects.</p> <p>Interviews for the position will be held on Friday 23 February 2018.</p> <p>NM said that other LAG Areas had approached Scottish Government to ask for the allocation of 10% of their budgets to co-operation projects to be reduced, 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.</p> <p>AK sought views on the matter and it was agreed that the LAG would be happy with a proposal to reduce the allocation towards co-operation projects to 5% but would still aspire to achieving 10% for Moray.</p> <p>NM said that the matter was being discussed further and that he would report back any update on the national position.</p> <p><u>Visit from Fergus Ewing, Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy and Connectivity</u></p> <p>NM said that the team had an excellent visit and meeting with the Cabinet Secretary in January 2018, which had received great publicity. It was attended by four successful applicants, several LAG members and representatives of tsimORAY.</p>	<p>NM</p>
<p><u>Summary of Project Applications received by 26th January 2018</u></p> <p>NM tabled a paper for information on Applications received and which will – subject to Technical Assessment – be sent to the LAG on 28 March 2018. He stated that five out of the six applications related to tourism projects, Objective 3.</p> <p>FV said that the information was useful and asked if information could be provided on how the allocations to successful projects have been so far across the Objectives. NM agreed to provide this for the next LAG meeting, although it was noted that where projects match more than one objective, there would inevitably be a degree of subjectivity in allocating proportions to each.</p>	<p>NM</p>

considered. It was agreed that it would not be possible to stop Eols being submitted and that it would not be appropriate to refuse eligible ones the go ahead to proceed to full application.

The LAG agreed to continue to accept Eols for this Objective but to issue applicants with a strong caveat that the LDS is under review, that funding for this objective is extremely limited and very competitive, and that only exceptionally strong applications are likely to succeed. Projects need to be collaborative and have a strategic long term impact and lasting legacy.

It was agreed that this message should be published on the website and the Moray LEADER Newsletter, as well as promoting the other Objectives.

Dealing with demand

There was extensive discussion about how to manage demand across the LDS objectives, with consideration given to reducing the intervention rate and putting a ceiling on funding payable for applications under specific objectives. It was noted that both of these measures could cause difficulties for applicants in securing match funding.

It was agreed that Moray LEADER will continue to normally fund up to 70% but that there was no guarantee that applicants will get that intervention rate.

The general consensus was that there should be no change to the intervention rate and that the LAG will consider each application on its own merits and decide what intervention rate to apply.

The group again emphasised the importance of drafting and delivering a clear message to potential applicants on all the points discussed.

NM

NM

Application Assessment and Decision

Four applications were considered at the Project Assessment Committee on 29 November 2017 and are presented to LAG.

Ref	Project Name	PAC Score	PAC Recommendation to LAG
13/P00010	Glamping Development The Loft	82%	Defer
13/P00008	Cabrach Distillery and Heritage Centre	83%	Approve subject to TA
13/P00007	Speyside Hobbit Homes	44%	Defer
13/P00013	Making More of Moray	78%	No recommendation

1. Glamping Development – The Loft

There were no declarations of interest noted.

NM updated that the application was considered by the LAG at their meeting on 13 December 2017 and it was agreed that the applicant should be asked to reconsider the size of the application. The application has now been reworked and the amount reduced from the original application.

The group recognised that glamping was popular and in high demand and that the application had a strong fit with tourism, Objective 3. There was discussion on the value for money for the development and initial concern over the project amount. It was also noted that the application demonstrated extensive collaboration and partnership as well as providing accessible accommodation and that the applicant had significantly reduced the project amount from the initial submission.

It was noted that the organisation has a good business history in terms of technical scoring.

The LAG agreed the score and voted as follows: Approve 6, Abstain 3.

The application was APPROVED with the following conditions

- Provide confirmation of match funding
- Provide evidence of building warrants

Project	Project No	LAG Decision	Quorum	Project Score	Project Total	Leader Intervention
Glamping Development at The Loft	P00010	Approved - 6 Abstain - 3	7 private, 2 public	82%	£320,231.07	55.00000047% £176,528.59

The following applications were considered at the Project Assessment Committee on 29 November 2017. They did not pass the Technical Assessment prior to the LAG on 13 December 2017. They have been reworked by the applicant.

2. Cabrach Distillery & Heritage Centre

There were no declarations of interest noted.

AK invited comments from the group in relation to the project and recommendations. The group agreed the project had a strong strategic fit with several Objectives in the LDS but some reservations were expressed over the amount of funding applied for.

The application had passed a Technical Assessment after Rework but further information had been received from the applicant about additional match funding which would clearly have implications for the amount of the award and the intervention rate. It was agreed that further information was required about this and the LAG agreed to DEFER the application until this issue was clarified, with the applicant being invited to Rework the application if circumstances have changed.

Project	Project No	LAG Decision	Quorum	Project Score	Project Total	Leader Intervention
Cabrach Distillery & Heritage Centre	P00008	Defer	7 private, 2 public	83%	£538,031.72	69.96459614% £376,431.72

3. Speyside Hobbit Homes

There were no declarations of interest noted.

It was noted that the application had been reworked and had now passed a full Technical Assessment.

The LAG revisited the PAC score which was 44 and scored low on Technical criteria. The LAG agreed that there was better evidence in relation to organisational competence and robust delivery plans and increased this scoring which brought the score to 53.

Because of the limited amount of funding and the high level of demand, there is very strong competition for funding for tourism-related projects under Objective 3 of the Local Development Strategy. While the LAG recognized the merits of this proposed project, it was not seen as strong enough across the board to succeed on this occasion.

The LAG voted as follows – Approve 0, Abstain 3, and Reject 6.

The LAG REJECTED the application.

Project	Project No	LAG Decision	Quorum	Project Score	Project Total	Leader Intervention
Speyside Hobbit Homes	P00007	Approved - 0 Abstain - 3 Reject - 6	7 private, 2 public	53%	£159,822.16	69.27835289 % £110,200

4. Making more of Moray

There were no declarations of interest noted.

NM gave an update on the project since the Rework and informed the group that milestones would still need to be tidied up and that evidence of two small cost elements had been submitted late by email

There was discussion around the lasting legacy of the project. It was agreed that there was a good link with local businesses and in particular food and drink initiatives.

The LAG agreed the score of 78% and APPROVED the project with the following conditions

- Supporting evidence must be formally submitted by letter for the costs of 1. Cleaning of Vintage Bus and 2. Artists at the two Culture Cafes.

Project	Project No	LAG Decision	Quorum	Project Score	Project Total	Leader Intervention
Making More of Moray	P00013	Approved - 9	7 private, 2 public	78%	£46,678.66	69.99999572% £32,675.06

FLAG Update

NM reported that discussions continued with the FLAG Co-ordinator, Scottish Government and Moray Council about the delivery of development and animation work in Moray but that, more than a year on, the matter was still unresolved.

NM

AOCB

It was noted that the Co-operation sub group, which had been due to be convened in January, had not yet met. This will happen before the next LAG meeting.

AK

Meeting Closed

AK thanked all for attending and closed the meeting.

Draft Minute Noted and typed by – DM 9 Feb 2018

Draft Minute Checked by – NM 12 Feb 2018