

Approved Minute
LAG Meeting – 17 April 2019
Winchester House, Elgin

Present	Alastair Kennedy (Chair), Bea Jefferson, Erica Beck, Jana Hutt, Fiona Robb, Drew McFarlane-Slack, Fabio Villani, Jacqui Taylor, Franziska Smith
Apologies	Aileen Buchanan, Gavin Clark, Laura Sutherland, Alex Walker
In attendance	Davina MacLennan (LEADER Finance & Admin Manager - NT), Chris Muir and Michelle Gillibrand (LEADER Development Officers)
Private/Public Split	7 Private, 2 Public

Details

Welcome & Introductions

AK welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were noted and it was agreed that the meeting was quorate and the public/private balance was observed.

Declarations of Interest

A declaration of interest was noted from the following members

- Fabio Villani to Moray Enterprising Third Sector Collaborative (13/P00041) project
- Jacqui Taylor to AB56 Futures project (13/P00036)

Minutes of LAG meeting 16 January 2019

AK referred to the minutes of the previous meeting and asked for any changes on the basis of accuracy. All matters arising from the meeting had been dealt with and accuracy of minutes moved by DMS and seconded by JH.

There were no further matters arising from the previous meeting.

Accountable Body Update

Revised version of the Business Plan from 1 April 2019

FV referred to the revised version of the Business Plan which has been circulated to LAG members ahead of the meeting. Amendments reflect changes to the delivery of the Programme since it started as well as recent changes to the staffing structure following the retirement of the Programme Manager.

FV said that discussion regarding the change in structure have involved LEADER staff, Accountable Body, Scottish Government LEADER Team and the Chair and Vice Chair of the LAG.

The proposed new structure will see the current three members of the LEADER Team operating on a self-managed basis with management of the programme being shared between the team. Line Management support in terms of HR functions will be provided by the Accountable Body, Jackie McLaren, and the Governance will sit firmly with the Local Action Group.

The new structure will be operated initially on a pilot basis for 6 months and will be evaluated by staff, accountable body, LAG and Scottish Government.

FV updated members that the Scottish Government LEADER Team was supportive of the changes and pilot period.

AK said following discussions with the staff team and Accountable Body that he was reassured and supportive of the changes. He asked LAG members for any comments.

The LEADER Staff left the meeting at this point.

The following note, on the discussion between the LAG, has been provided by Alastair Kennedy (Chair).

Discussion took place around the new staffing structure for the Moray LEADER team.

It was agreed that this subject should have been brought to the LAG some time previously. However, members understood the difficulty created by busy diaries.

Alastair stated that he had not originally been keen on the idea of a “flat” staffing structure. However, he had attended an earlier meeting with staff before the programme manager had retired. At that meeting he had asked various questions, staff had been given the opportunity to discuss what they felt was the best system going forwards and he left the meeting feeling his concerns had been addressed. He was now comfortable with the proposal as he felt the team had put up a sensible and well-structured argument for the proposal.

It was agreed by the LAG the staff appear to work well together and although there was a concern raised about “flat” staffing structures and the problems and frictions they can cause, the LAG believed that having Jackie Maclaren in place for any HR support that might be required would help ensure the stability of the team.

It was also agreed that this was not a good time to bring in new staff. The focus of the programme will change quite substantially in the near future, the current staff will have clear roles going forwards taking the changes into consideration and they are well placed to progress the LEADER programme considering the changing focus.

Following further discussion amongst LAG members consensus was reached that the proposed structure should be adopted but that monitoring will be required.

Alastair proposed to visit the office more often and report back to the LAG if he has any concerns in future.

Jackie Maclaren, tsiMORAY, joined the meeting at this point. AK introduced JM to members of the LAG.

Co-operation Projects

CM gave a brief update on the current status of co-operation projects in development. Following the approval via written procedure of Foraging Fortnight, an Inter-territorial Scotland Cooperation Project, Moray has committed £145,037.27 of the minimum co-operation budget of £175,000.00.

The ‘Field to Firkin’ 13/P00056 project is to be assessed at today’s meeting and if approved this would ensure Moray will have met the minimum target of 5% for co-operation projects.

Additionally, CM advised that there is a further application in development from tsiMORAY for a Transnational Co-operation project with partners in Finland, Republic of Ireland, Outer Hebrides, and Ayrshire. This was a response to a call for co-operation partners on the ENRD website. The project will explore the creation of Rural Working Hubs.

CM said that where LAGs had not allocated their full budget to co-operation projects that there may be potential for funds to be reallocated between LAGs.

FV said that he was keen that this is explored further with Scottish Government.

Action: CM to liaise with Scottish government re process.

Finance Update (Papers 7A and 7B)

DM tabled a paper on finance which included the revised budget spend forecast for Admin & Animation costs from 1st April 2019 to December 2020, which is reflected in the revised version on the Business Plan. Appendix B shows information in relation to ‘live’ projects and claims to date.

Project Register – Update on applications against strategic objective and budget

MG presented the project register which provided an overview on all current projects approved and budget allocated. It offered information in relation to the projects to be discussed at committee today and showed

the split against objectives and overall budget. It was noted that Objective 3 was already over-subscribed and that this round of applications would be competitive.

Due to the volume of projects being considered today, it was suggested that consideration be given to prioritising and assessing the projects that did not have a strong tourism fit first.

The projects were studied in terms of strategic fit and the remaining budget to be allocated was considered. The LAG agreed that Hillhead Farm Experience Breaks P/130042, had a strong Tourism element and fit with Objective 3 and would be assessed last.

MG highlighted to members that she has been informed by the applicant of Marcassie Farm Lodges project 13/P00015, that it is likely it will come over budget. The applicant will therefore be seeking additional funding through the change request process.

The applicant has forwarded by email the details relating to the costs and this will be assessed by MG and the LAG informed of possible options in due course.

Action: MG to review information and inform LAG.

Application assessment and decision

Six applications were considered at the Project Assessment Committee held on 27 March 2019 and a further four considered at a Project Assessment Committee held on 10 April 2019. A total of ten applications are tabled to the LAG for decision.

Project Title	Applicant	Total cost	LEADER	PAC Score	PAC recommends
13/P00046 - Marine Park Pavilion	Action Marine Park	£350,000.00	£175,000.00	78%	Approve with conditions 27/3/19
13/P00045 - Wellbeing Connected Moray	Moray Wellbeing Hub CIC	£164,639.56	£114,639.56	74%	Approve 27/3/19
13/P00047 - Inclusive Play Park	Moray Sports Foundation	£69,500.00	£48,650.00	83%	Approve 27/3/19
13/P00048 - Creative Opportunities from Waste	Going Nova Ltd	£14,912.29	£11,812.29	83%	Approve 27/3/19
13/P00042 - Hillhead Farm Experience Breaks	The Scottish Goat Meat Company	£160,102.50	£96,062.00	84%	No recommendation – LAG to decide on Strategic Fit 27/3/19
13/P00049 – Findhorn Church Enhanced Access Project	Kinloss & Findhorn Parish Church of Scotland	£317,131.00	£221,126.80	68%	Reject 27/3/19
13/P00052 – Connecting Communities	Speyside Area Forum	£195,538.20	£136,876.70	48%	Reject 10/4/19
13/P00043 - AB56 Futures	Action for Children	£225,480.00	£157,836.00	82%	Approve with conditions 10/4/19
13/P00041 - Moray Enterprising Third Sector Collaborative	tsiMORAY	£214,369.47	£214,369.47	81%	Approve 10/4/19
13/P00056 – From Field to Firkin (Co-Operation)	Windswept Brewing Co.	£53,641.16	£53,641.16	78%	Approve 10/4/19

1. Marine Park Pavilion (13/P00046)

No declarations of interest were noted.

AK advised the LAG of the PAC score. Members agreed that this was a project with authentic community focus and would be a worthy project to support.

There was concerns around match funding which was not currently in place and questions around the financial sustainability of the pavilion following construction and completion of the project.

MG said that further information had been received and circulated to members in relation to cash flow detailing how the facility will be managed and maintained following completion of the project.

There was consensus that this was a positive project overall.

The LAG which was confirmed as quorate unanimously agreed the score of 78% and unanimously APPROVED the project with the following conditions:

- Confirmation of receipt of all pending match funding applications.
- Approval of planning permission.
- Receipt of building warrant.
- Completion of contracts relating to Community Asset Transfer from Moray Council.

Project	LAG Decision	Quorum	LAG Score	Project Total	LEADER Intervention	Award requested
Marine Park Pavilion (13/P00046)	APPROVE with conditions	7 private 2 public	78%	£350,000	50%	£175,000

2. Wellbeing Connected Moray 13/P00045

There were no declarations of interest noted.

AK advised the LAG of the PAC score of 74%.

Members appreciated the collaborative nature of the project with partners across sectors to support effective project delivery. The project demonstrated clear evidence of need and demand.

There was concern about the future sustainability of the project and also around expertise within the applicant organisation in relation to professional health care and current systems in place.

MG updated the LAG that further information had been received in relation to the referral mechanism the organisation had in place for supporting and sign posting service users. Further clarification and information had also been received in relation to the training provided for volunteers.

The LAG which was confirmed as quorate unanimously agreed the score of 74% and unanimously APPROVED the project with no conditions.

Project	LAG Decision	Quorum	LAG Score	Project Total	LEADER Intervention	Award requested
Wellbeing Connected Moray - 13/P00045	APPROVE	7 private 2 public	74%	£164,639.56	69.63062826%	£114,639.56

3. Inclusive Play Park 13/P00047

No declarations of interest were noted.

AK informed the group of the PAC score of 83%. The application scored high in technical criteria.

There was consensus that the project was commendable and had a good strategic fit with the Local Development Strategy.

Questions were raised around the future maintenance of the play park and concerns around the public transport accessibility of the play park.

There was consensus that it was a good project overall.

The LAG which was confirmed as quorate unanimously agreed the score of 83% and unanimously APPROVED the project with no conditions.

Project	LAG Decision	Quorum	LAG Score	Project Total	LEADER Intervention	Award requested
Inclusive Play Park - 13/P00047	APPROVE	7 private 2 public	83%	£69,500.00	70%	£48,650.00

4. Creative Opportunities from Waste 13/P00048

There were no declarations of interest noted.

AK informed the group of the PAC score and recommendation.

There was consensus that the project had a strong fit with Objective 5 of the Local Development Strategy and that it would likely generate significant interest.

Questions were raised in relation to how likely vulnerable groups are to engage in the project. Sustainability of the project following completion was also queried along with the likelihood of people making use of what they had learned at the planned workshops.

MG said that additional information had been supplied by the applicant and she provided an update in relation to the nature of the engagement and support with the T-Exchange and sustainability following the completion of workshops.

Members recognised the support for the intentions of the project.

The LAG which was confirmed as quorate unanimously agreed the score of 83% and unanimously APPROVED the project with no conditions.

Project	LAG Decision	Quorum	LAG Score	Project Total	LEADER Intervention	Award requested
Creative Opportunities from Waste-13/P00048	APPROVE	7 private 2 public	83%	£14,912.29	79.21177767%	£11,812.29

5. Findhorn Church Enhanced Access 13/P00049

There were no declarations of interest noted.

AK informed members that the recommendation of the PAC was to reject the application. The following points were discussed.

There was general consensus that the application overall lacked information. It was unclear on the level of collaboration with other groups and facilities in Findhorn and there was limited evidence on the need or demand for another community space in the area.

The application scored low on return of investment and the added value of the project was unclear.

The LAG which was confirmed as quorate unanimously agreed the score of 68% and unanimously REJECTED the project.

Project	LAG Decision	Quorum	LAG Score	Project Total	LEADER Intervention	Award requested
Findhorn Church Enhanced Access - 13/P00049	REJECT	7 private 2 public	68%	£317,131.00	69.72727359%	£221,126.80

6. Connecting Communities 13/P00052

There were no declarations of interest noted.

AK informed members of the PAC score and recommendations for the project.

There was consensus that the application was overall lacking information and evidence particularly around the absence of evidence linking the need or demand for improved rural transport, return of investment and legacy.

There was concern in relation to the fact that funding would be needed to operate the service but there was no information presented in relation to how this would be managed. With no confirmation in relation to match funding this would present a timing issue with the project.

The LAG which was confirmed as quorate unanimously agreed the score of 48% and unanimously REJECTED the project.

Project	LAG Decision	Quorum	LAG Score	Project Total	LEADER Intervention	Award requested
Connecting Communities -13/P00052	REJECT	7 private 2 public	48%	£195,538.20	70%	£136,876.70

7. AB56 Futures 13/P00043

Jacqui Taylor noted an interest in the project and was not included in any discussion.

AK informed members of the PAC score and discussion in relation to the project.

MG updated members that it had been identified at the PAC that some staffing costs were considered backfill and would be ineligible for LEADER funding.

The original project total was £225,480.00 with a reward request of £157,836.00, intervention rate 70%.

MG said that the applicant had been advised of this and had removed the ineligible costs from the application. The application now reflects the revised eligible costs.

The revised project costs are now, project total £216,918.70 with a reward request of £149,274.70, intervention rate 68.81596653%.

Members agreed that it was a worthwhile project that would help address and support the issues of vulnerable families accessing childcare, training and job opportunities. It was recognised that there was a good fit with the Moray Economic Strategy.

There were some concerns in relation to funds being used to refurbish a local authority building, however it was noted that this was a small element of the project.

There was discussion around the lease of the building and if paying for this was included in the application. MG/CM to check this and confirm.

It was noted that information was still required in relation to lease, building warrant and that the invitation to tender process would need to be conducted.

The LAG which was confirmed as quorate unanimously agreed the score of 82% and unanimously APPROVED the project with conditions.

- Signed Lease
- Building warrant
- Invitation to tender process conducted

Project	LAG Decision	Quorum	LAG Score	Project Total	LEADER Intervention	Award requested
AB56 Futures - 13/P00043	APPROVE with conditions	7 private 1 public	82%	£216,918.70	68.81596653%	£149,274.70

8. Moray Enterprising Third Sector Collaborative 13/P00041

Fabio Villani noted an interest in the project and left the meeting.

AK informed members of the PAC score and recommendation on the reworked application.

Members agreed that the application was stronger and were content that all initial points previously raised had been addressed and were supportive of the overall concept of the project.

Members noted the applicant's intention to apply for further funding to sustain delivery of the project following completion and it was felt this project would be good evidence to support and access future funding.

Members recognised it was a large project covering Moray and substantial in terms of value. Some reservations were raised on how the project would be kept on track and progress monitored against the outcomes for delivery of on the ground support for communities to participate in local labour markets. There was general consensus that regular reporting on progress of the project would be useful.

The applicant had showed good evidence of having engaged and involved appropriate stakeholder partnership across sectors, to ensure effective support and project delivery which demonstrates best practice.

The LAG which was confirmed as quorate unanimously agreed the score of 81% and unanimously APPROVED the project with no conditions.

Project	LAG Decision	Quorum	LAG Score	Project Total	LEADER Intervention	Award requested
Moray Enterprising Third Sector Collaborative - 13/P00041	APPROVE	6 private 2 public	81%	£214,369.47	100%	£214,369.47

9. From Field to Firkin (Windswept – Co-operation Project) 13/P00056

No declarations of interest were noted.

AK informed members of the PAC score and recommendation on the application. This is a co-operation project and the applicant is seeking 100% award from LAEDER.

There was consensus that this was an interesting transnational co-operation project between Moray LAG and GAL Burdinale-Mehaigne. The project will aim to explore the feasibility of creating a new short supply chain for Moray based microbreweries and local grain farmers.

The project has a clear fit with objectives 2, 5 and 6 against the Local Development Strategy and provided good evidence in engaging with delivery partners to ensure delivery of the project.

The LAG which was confirmed as quorate unanimously agreed the score of 78% and unanimously APPROVED the project with no conditions.

Project	LAG Decision	Quorum	LAG Score	Project Total	LEADER Intervention	Award requested
From Field to Firkin (Windswept Co-operation - 13/P00056)	APPROVE	7 private 2 public	78%	£53,641.16	100%	£53,641.16

10. Hillhead Farm Experience Breaks 13/P00042

No declarations of interest were noted.

AK informed the LAG of the PAC score. With the tourism objective already being oversubscribed the recommendation from the PAC was for the LAG to discuss and decide on the project and strategic fit, following the assessment of all project applications and budget allocation at today's meeting.

There was discussion that it was a good project to stimulate tourism in the east side of Moray.

The LAG liked the project however after considering all projects presented at the LAG meeting, the Moray budget is fully allocated.

There was discussion around the possibility of securing additional funding from Scottish Government. CM advised that he would look into this further.

The LAG were content to DEFER the application and consider it further if additional funding could be secured from Scottish Government.

Action: CM to liaise with Scottish Government in relation to process.

There was discussion in relation to the over allocation of budget and if this was an option. FV said that this needed further discussion with Scottish Government and consideration given to how it would work for the Accountable Body.

Action: FV to discuss at next Accountable Body meeting in April/May 2019

Projects assessed by written procedure

MG updated the LAG that the following co-operation projects were forwarded to the LAG by email and assessed by written procedure.

- Portable Farm Shop 13/P00050- Approve with conditions (confirmation of planning and building consent) – Score 72%
- Foraging Fortnight (Co-operation project, non-lead) 09/P00051 – Approve – Score 89%

Monitoring and Evaluation (MG)

BJ said that it would be worthwhile revisiting the work being undertaken nationally in relation to monitoring and evaluation.

It was also suggested that the Sub-group meet in about a month's time with the whole LEADER team to discuss what is required going forward.

Action: MG to follow up on the national work in relation to monitoring and evaluation and to arrange a date for the sub-group to meet in the next month.

Future LAG meetings

5th June at 10am was agreed as the next meeting for the LAG. Future venues was discussed and it was agreed to source an alternative location to engage with completed projects.

Action: CM to look into possible venue options with a project visit.

FLAG Update

A FLAG update was circulated to all members.

FV said that Moray Council were in the process of recruiting a new part-time FLAG Development Officer.

AOCB

MG informed members that the Energising Communities event would be held on 3rd May 2019. Any LAG members who would like to be involved and assist on the day should contact Michelle direct.

Meeting Closed

AK thanked all for attending and closed the meeting

Checked by AK and BJ 26 April 2019