

Approved Minute
LAG Meeting – 14 September 2020
Zoom Meeting

Present	Alastair Kennedy (Chair), Erica Beck, Aileen Buchanan, Jana Hutt, Fiona Robb, Gavin Clark, Alex Walker, Fabio Villani,
Apologies	Bea Jefferson, Laura Sutherland, Drew McFarlane-Slack, Tim Gordon-Roberts, Davina MacLennan, Reni Millburn
In attendance	Chris Muir (LEADER Development Officer), Michelle Gillibrand (LEADER Development Officer-note taker)
Private/Public Split	6 Private, 2 Public
Details	Action
<p>Welcome & Introductions</p> <p>AK welcomed everyone to the first full LAG meeting on Zoom and explained how the meeting would run.</p> <p>Apologies were noted and it was agreed that the meeting was quorate and the public/private balance was observed.</p>	
<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>No declarations of interests were noted.</p> <p>AW did wish it to be noted that he is a director of Ekopia who rents office space to Moray Carshare. Members did not perceive this as being a conflict of interest.</p>	
<p>Minutes of LAG meeting 1 October 2019</p> <p>CM explained to the meeting that although these minutes had already been approved it was felt that they contained sensitive organisational information on some projects which would not be appropriate to put in the public domain. The changes outlined in Paper 1 were approved. Proposed by FR and seconded by AB</p> <p>Minutes of LAG meeting 9 December 2019</p> <p>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 the minutes was moved by AB and seconded by FR</p>	
<p>Project Updates</p> <p>Project status via Risk Register (Paper 3)</p> <p>CM and MG spoke to the paper tabled on projects that potentially were are risk due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. The risk to projects has diminished for the majority of projects due to new ways of working established, restrictions being eased and the extension of the LEADER programme to March 2021. However, two projects, namely AB56 Futures and Low Carbon Expansion for Car and Bike Sharing in Moray are still facing challenges to delivery of their LEADER projects. This would be discussed later in the meeting.</p> <p>Overall project activity and the submission of final claims will be completed for most projects by the end of December 2020. A small number of projects may submit their final claims end of January/early February which is still manageable to process before the end of the programme.</p> <p>EB enquired if the online videos of the Orkney foraging events were still available. CM said it is hoped the videos would be hosted on a suitable organisations website after the LEADER programme ended. In the meantime, he would forward the current link to members.</p>	CM

Previous decisions by written procedure

MG reminded members that the request to award additional funding up to £17,400 (exclusive of VAT) to the Hillhead Farm Experience Breaks Project was agreed by written procedure. The details were as follows:

Hillhead Farm Experience Breaks, 13/P00042, Change Request: CR03 Funding of Tarring of Site Entrance

Date Requested: 1st April 2020

Date Escalated to LAG: 15th May 2020

Date Completed: 22nd May 2020

As per the Moray LEADER local processes this Change Request was escalated to the Moray LAG for decision by written procedure. Seven private members in total responded to approve the request for further funding due to the higher specification of roadworks required as per the planning permission conditions, 18/01082/APP. Additional funding will therefore be provided up to £17,400 (exclusive of VAT). Due to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic the project and financial end dates and delivery milestones due dates will also be extended

LAG members: Alex Walker, Jana Hutt, Rikki(Erica) Beck, Franziska Smith, Fabio Villani, Bea Jefferson, Aileen Buchanan

No Declarations of Interest were declared

Private to Public Split – 7:0

The increase in LEADER Grant would be £17,400.00 (total cost of works)

This will increase the Approved Moray LEADER Grant contribution towards the project from £96,062.00 (60.00031230% intervention rate) to £113,462.00 (63.92135322% intervention rate)

AB56 Futures (Paper 4)

CM spoke to the tabled paper which outlined the challenges the AB56 Futures project are currently facing. The applicant has made good progress in the delivery of their project against their outcomes and objectives with the new AB56 Futures service making significant impact in supporting vulnerable families in the local area, but has encountered some challenges. A query has been sent to the Scottish Government to request guidance on how best to support the applicant. The LAG noted the current situation. CM to provide an update to the LAG following the response from SG.

CM

Low Carbon Expansion for Car and Bike Sharing in Moray (Papers 5 & 6)

Moray Carshare have submitted a change request, to reduce their project activity and match funding contribution which includes the removal of the car-sharing and bike-sharing services in Elgin. The COVID-19 pandemic restrictions have had a significant effect on Moray Carshare’s ability to deliver the project as approved at application and therefore wish to make changes to their LEADER project as detailed below:

Project title	Approved Cost	Match Funding	LEADER Grant	Intervention Rate
13/P00022 -	£176,452.23	£52,949.36	£123,502.87	69.99224096%
Low-carbon	Requested	Requested	Requested	Requested
expansion of car &	change:	change:	change:	change:
bike sharing in Moray	£112,933.78	£33,888.90	£79,044.88	69.99223793%

FV confirmed that it seemed to be a sensible option due to the circumstances and that there would be no risk to the AB. CM confirmed that HITRANS confirmed they would keep their match funding the same so the reduction in match funding would be from the applicant's contribution to the project. All 8 LAG members agreed to the reduction of activity, targets/outcomes and match funding.

CM

<p>LDS change request (Paper 7) Due to the agreed extension of the LEADER Programme 2014-2020 nationally to 31st March 2021, changes have to be made to the Business Plan and the Operational Admin & Animation Budget Spend Forecast and expenditure. The proposed changes were highlighted as tracked changes in the Business Plan.</p> <p>GC asked for clarification if the FLAG information within ANNEX 1: Highland & Moray FLAG Operational Plan needed to change. CM agreed to check this. Subject to any further changes in relation to the FLAG the tabled changes were approved by all 8 LAG members. The Business Plan and revised budget will be forwarded to the Scottish Government via a LDS Change Request on LARCs.</p>	<p>CM</p>
<p>Accountable Body update: (Paper 8) FV spoke to the tabled paper which covered the following: General – There was still an outstanding query with the Scottish Government on what risks sit with the Accountable Body should final claims of projects be less than 10% of the approved grant. This will be followed up with the new Scottish Government LEADER Team Lead, Shiree Donnelly. Programme Closure – FV was seeking confirmation from the LAG its intentions regarding its own role beyond the end of the current programme, and to identify any support required from either the Moray LEADER Team or the Accountable Body in preparing for the Programme closure. Community Led Local Development (CLLD) – FV suggested a small group of LAG members to come together with support from tsiMORAY to discuss the future of CLLD in Moray.</p> <p>The LAG had previously noted their interest in being involved in the extension of a possible ‘LEADER’ programme and that AK and FV would make contact with MSP Richard Lochhead to discuss the opportunities for future CLLD in Moray. It was also felt it was important to explore resources to retain the current staffing structure in order not to lose expertise and skills for future possible CLLD programmes. It was also noted that it was hoped that the current evaluations taking place of LDS’s across the country will support the CLLD approach.</p> <p>FV confirmed at the moment monies are not available nationally to extend the current resources beyond March 2021. FV suggested it may also be prudent to make contact with the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy, Fergus Ewing. FV however also confirmed tsiMORAY would be exploring the possibilities to retain the staff resources ready for a future programme.</p> <p>It was agreed that FV and AK would meet in the first instance with the intention of a follow-up meeting with interested LAG members and Richard Lochhead.</p>	<p>AK/FV</p>
<p>Finance update (Paper 9, Appendix A, and Appendix B) CM spoke to the finance papers which had been prepared DM. This provided information in relation to the budget spend forecast for Admin & Animation costs to March 2021 and would be part of the LDS Change Request along with the Business Plan as explained above. Also, provided was a paper on project budget.</p> <p>As it stands the projected allocation for admin and animation budget is still within the 25% limit of the estimated project spend.</p> <p>AW requested that information is provided on the financial split across the six strategic objectives at the next LAG meeting.</p> <p>The updated budget spend forecast was approved by all 8 LAG members</p>	<p>DM/CM/MG</p>

<p>Monitoring and evaluation update (Paper 10) MG spoke to the tabled paper on monitoring and evaluation and confirmed the selected contractor to conduct the evaluation and review was EKOS Ltd. An Inception Meeting was arranged on 2nd September which went well and was attended by JH, FV and MG.</p>	<p>MG</p>
<p>Communications SLSG LEADER Infographic (Paper 11) - AK spoke to the tabled paper which was produced by the SLSG on a request from the LEADER CLLD Sub Group. It was felt this was a very useful graphic showing the impact of LEADER and could be used as a good resource in the discussion of the future of CLLD End of programme videos and report - CM introduced the Orkney LEADER videos and suggested a similar exercise along with a final Moray LEADER Programme report could be a good method of showing the legacy of the work done within this programme. Overall this suggestion was supported as long as the videos were balanced between how the Moray model made a difference in the delivery of the programme and showcasing projects. It was agreed to go ahead with the videos and final report with a budget up to £12,000.00 including VAT. It was suggested that £9,000.00 be allocated to the videos and £3,000.00 to the final programme report. CM to liaise with the M&E Sub Group in the first instance on the format and projects to showcase.</p>	<p>CM/MG</p>
<p>Internal Audit MG confirmed that the response to the Invitation to Quote for the Internal Audit was currently being scored. The Internal Audit will be conducted between 15th October to 26th October.</p>	<p>DM</p>
<p>LAG Register of declarations of interest CM advised that some LAG members were still to return their completed declarations of interest forms for 2020, which need to be updated before the internal audit. CM to send reminders to the appropriate members.</p>	<p>CM</p>
<p>FLAG update (Paper 12) The FLAG update was welcomed and noted</p>	
<p>Date of the next meeting and other competent business It was agreed that a Doodle Poll should be sent to LAG members to establish the best date for the next meeting taking in consideration the dates of meetings with EKOS Ltd and other national meetings</p>	<p>CM</p>