

Argyll and the Islands LEADER Local Action Group Meeting
HIE Boardroom, HIE Offices, Lochgilphead
Thursday 07th December 2017 10.30 AM

MINUTE OF MEETING

LAG Attendance	Name	Organisation	Sector
	Iain MacInness (Chair)	Cowal Area Network	private
	David Adams McGilp (Vice Chair)	Visit Scotland	public
	Colin McLean	HIE	public
	Alistair McLaren	Third Sector Interface	private
	Iain Johnston	Kintyre Cultural Forum	private
	Lucy Sumsion	NFU Scotland	private
(video conference)	Arlene Cullum	Argyll & Bute Council	public
	Hannah Robinson	LLTNP	public
	Alastair Fleming	Scottish Islands Federation	non-public
LAG Apologies	Marina Curran Colthart	Argyll & Bute Local Biodiversity Partnership	public
	Alison McGrory	NHS	public
	Stuart Shaw	Scottish Natural Heritage	public
	Reeni Kennedy Boyle	Fyne Futures	private
	Stewart MacLennan	MacLennan Motors	non-public
In Attendance	Ishabel Bremner	Argyll & Bute Council (Accountable Body)	
(video conference)	Colin Fulcher	Strategic Co-ordinator	
	Mary Louise Howat	Argyll & Bute Council (Accountable Body)	
	Mary Simpson	Argyll & Bute Council (Accountable Body)	
	Kirsty Moyes	Development Officer	
	Kwasi Addo	Development Officer	
(video conference)	Annemarie McLean	Compliance Officer (minutes)	



1) Sederunt and Apologies

1.1 Sederunt

Iain MacInnes welcomed all to the meeting and explained how crucial it was at a decision making meeting to obtain a quorum.

1.2 Apologies

Attendance and apologies were noted as above.

2) Declarations of Interest

Declarations of Interest are noted at each application. Registers of Interest Forms will be emailed to LAG member for completing and returning.

2.1 Quorum

9 LAG Members participated with 8 LAG members in attendance and 1 participating by video conference, 5 non-public members and 4 public members, the meeting was quorate.

3) Minutes of previous meetings (21st September 2017)

Actions

Carried forward from previous meeting, DAM to draft letter from Chair, re barriers to applying and claiming and the impact on applicants and reputational risk. This will be circulate to members in due course.

Decision

Minutes were proposed by Colin McLean
Minutes were seconded by Iain Johnstone
Minutes were signed by Iain MacInness

4) Matters arising

4.1 Update of projects

Dalriada Project

CF provided update to members, this is still in the very early development stage. Further update will be provided at next meeting.

Sustrans – Caledonia Way

CF provided update to members, Highland LAG are taking the lead, and the application is still being developed. Further update will be provided at next meeting.

04/P00030 Shellfield Farm

CF reminded members that a Decision In Principle, subject to confirmation of own match funding and building warrant being obtained, had been issued for this application after the last meeting. KA advised that the applicants now have drawn down the loan funds and match funding is now in place but they are still awaiting a decision regarding the building warrant. The applicant have asked if they could have an extension to the Decision in Principle timescale.

All members agreed to grant an extension to 31st January 2018 as the delay is outwith the applicant's control.

04/P00058 Jura Community Business Ltd

CF reminded members that a Decision in Principle, subject to confirmation of match funding being in place, had been issued for this application after the last LAG. He confirmed that the applicants had drawn down the bridging loan and a full approval letter had been issued. The project is now up and running.

04/P00060 Scottish Canals - Gleaner Oil site

CF reminded members that this application had been reviewed but not considered. KM provided update that she had feedback to the applicant the information requested by the LAG members, as detailed in the minutes of 21st September 2017. The application is still being developed and the applicant has asked if the LAG could consider the application before the next timetabled meeting on 15th March 2018, on the basis that they are in danger of losing their match funding.

All members agreed that if necessary they could hold a separate meeting for this application, possibly at the end of January, as they have a duty to allow the applicant the time to gather the information they had been asked for. It was agreed that due to short notice and travel restrictions during the winter period, this meeting may be held via tele or video conference.

Action – LEADER staff to keep members up to date and notify them when the application is submitted.

4.2 Change Requests

CF advised that there were 2 change requests for members to consider, members agreed that these could be circulated by email for consideration. **All members agreed**

5) Progress Reports

5.1 Co-ordinator's Report

5.1.2 Financial Report

CF introduced this report, a copy of which had been emailed to members with the agenda. CF asked members to note that Theme 3 - Enterprise budget is nearly exhausted and that the Farm Diversification element had monies remaining. He explained that although quite a few Expressions of Interest had been received for Farm Diversification, most of the applicants had already diversified into something other than farming meaning that they were taken forward as Enterprise element of Theme 3.

5.1.3 Budget Considerations

CF reminded members that they could request an amendment to the budgets should they wish. There was a general discussion about the budgets.

Decision – No changes at the moment but this item would remain as a standing agenda item.

ALL MEMBERS AGREED

5.1.4 Programme Timetable

CF had circulated the proposed timetable to members for consideration and members were asked to put these dates in their diaries. The timetable will be reviewed as the year progresses. There was a general discussion regarding meetings and quorate concerns and travel arrangements.

Decision- All physical meetings will take place in Lochgilphead and video/tele conferencing facilities will be made available at two satellite venues – Oban and Helensburgh, for members who cannot physically attend.

ALL MEMBERS AGREED

5.1.5 LEADER staff update

IB advised the LAG that CF and KM were both moving into new posts within the Council and thanked both staff members for their hard work to get the Programme where it is now and wished them well for the future. The LAG Chair and Vice Chair thanked both members of staff for the great deal of support they had given both to them and all LAG members.

IB advised the LAG that Mary Louise Howat, Line Manager of the Strategic Co-ordinator would cover the duties of the roles until the recruitment process was carried out. There was a general discussion regarding new ways of working with the team being reduced from 5 staff to 3 and what the recruitment options were given the timetables and guidance given by Scottish Government.

Decision – both the Strategic Co-ordinator and Development Officer Posts have to be advertised, with feedback given to LAG members on the responses.

ALL MEMBERS AGREED



5.2 Accountable Body Report

5.2.1 Accountable Body Meetings Update

IB provided update. The Scottish Government have advised following;

- All projects have to be **finished** by December 2020.
- All projects have to be **approved/signed off** by March 2019.
- All claims to SG need to be completed by March 2021.
- Co-operation budget: 10% target set by the Cabinet Secretary for budget headings not a regulatory target such as the 25% for admin/animation.

If LAGs want to vire money between budgets, including Co-operation, they have to provide a clear rationale and demonstrate how the LAG would still meet its objectives, in the Change Request. Any requests will be assessed on an individual basis.

IB provided update that a key issue still outstanding from SLA working group is dispute resolution and apportionment of error, currently there is no procedure in place. Accountable Bodies have asked that audit issues raised by EU and Audit Scotland be communicated to all to ensure that they are aware of potential issues.

An update was provided regarding LARCs, the Scottish Government aim to have all the outstanding issues resolved by end of 2017. This was followed by a general discussion of the issues.

IB advised that the Annual Confirmation Certificate had been submitted.

6 Consideration of Applications

1 – 04/P00050 – Cairndow Community Childcare Ltd – Cairndow Family and Childcare Centre

AC and LS declared High level of interest, AC's video conference connection was ended. 7 members were present for the discussion, 4 private – Imacl, AMcL, IJ , AF and 3 public- DAM, HR, CMcL, discussion was quorate.

LDS Theme
Theme 2: Enhancing the services and facilities in the Argyll and the Islands area to attract individuals, families, visitors and investors to grow and maintain economically viable communities
Objective
Objective 1: To support community-based initiatives to improve and or retain access to services for those living within rural areas and to encourage people to come and live in these communities

Scoring submitted prior to meeting			
Average Score	Number Scoring	High	Low
26	8	37	23

Applicants seeking a decision in principle, subject to the provision of the tenders and justification of the preferred tenderer.

Comments

Concerns had been raised about displacement and loss of revenue for the Village Hall but a letter of support has now been supplied by the Village Hall.

There was a lack of clarity regarding the access road for this project. Members wanted to clarify if the stretch road that is referred to in the improvement works is the same stretch of road that is included in different application previously approved by the LAG. The details in the application were causing confusion as it appeared that these works were forming match funding, albeit of an in kind nature for 2 projects.

Response from Project Officer was that there was no double funding and that the same funder was covering all of these costs themselves as they are for shared infrastructure. As these costs are regarded as Ineligible for LEADER funding they are not detailed on LARCs. Members accepted the explanation provided.

Concerns were raised that the comparative figure for investment is £35000 to £45000 for the some larger scale developments in Glasgow and that the costs associated with this project come in at £50000 it was felt they were high and that this development could not be considered a catalyst for growth with only 24 places being available.

Concerns were raised that under 5 provision is already available nearby in Strachur and Inverary yet there was no mention of potential displacement.

Concerns that there was no evidence to show that the running costs of the development could be met. These were estimated at £100,000 pa assuming 24 places equalled £4000 per child. Members were concerned that the investment in the area could not last as the applicant cannot identify funding sources.

Concerns that the £50,000 of revenue funding made available by Big Lottery were very small.

Members had concerns about the population expansion in the area as the work force currently in within the area is very transient.

Members were concerned that the project did not represent value for money and the ongoing viability was in doubt. For the project to be sustainable it needs income which may come from the new houses but wouldn't be enough.

Key issue is that with only 24 places available it limits the potential expansion of the area.

Members decided to hold a vote.

Vote

1 for 6 against – application rejected.

Reasons for rejection – the concerns over value for money and inability to evidence the sustainability have not been addressed.

REJECTED

LS was brought back into the room and AC was called back into the meeting. 9 members were present 5 private and 4 public, meeting was quorate.

2 – 04/P00054 – Iain C MacDonald - Skipinnis Wigwams

No declarations of interest.

LDS Theme
Theme 3: Farm Diversification and Small Business Support
Objective
Farm Diversification

Scoring submitted prior to meeting			
Average Score	Number Scoring	High	Low
32	10	37	22

Comments

Modest project- clearly identified market growth opportunity, its's a low level of risk, no technical issues.

Good evidence of need for that type of accommodation.

APPROVED ALL MEMBERS



3 – 04/P00065– Mogabout Arran Safari - Coastal Tours

No declarations of interest.

LDS Theme
Theme 3: Farm Diversification and Small Business Support
Objective
Small business support

Scoring submitted prior to meeting			
Average Score	Number Scoring	High	Low
26	10	35	15

Comments

Demand outstrips availability;
Positive engagement with community groups.

ALL MEMBERS APPROVED

3 – 20/P00040– Central Scotland Green Network Trust – John Muir Way – Marketing & Business Engagement

No declarations of interest.

LDS Theme
n/a – Co-operation Project
Objective
Objective 1: To support capacity building, research and development to identify and implement development opportunities.

Scoring submitted prior to meeting			
Average Score	Number Scoring	High	Low
32	10	37	22

Comments

The investment would be good value for money;
It's a rare example of a long distance route project that directly engages with business;
Bridges the gap between infrastructure and consumer interest;
There is the issue that increased use of the footpaths will have on land owners and farmers, yet there is no mention of maintenance of paths;
Aim of project is marketing and promoting the route as the current delivery is well below expectation, this project aims to address this;
The low level of investment this LAG has been asked for will give good/high returns.

ALL MEMBERS APPROVED



6) **AOCB & Date of Next Meeting**

Members had a general discussion regarding the change requests submitted and agreed that these be put to the Chair/Vice Chair to consider. **All members agreed**

The next meeting will be held on 15th March 2018, in Council offices, Kilmory.

I MacInnes thanked everyone for their attendance and input to the meeting and closed the meeting.

Signed _____ date _____