

**Argyll and the Islands LEADER Local Action Group Meeting  
Committee Room 1, Council Officers, Kilmory, Lochgilphead  
Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at 10.30am**

**MINUTE OF MEETING**

<b>LAG Attendance</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Sector</b>
	Iain MacInness (Chair) (IMaI)	Cowal Area Network	non-public
	Alastair Fleming (AF)	Scottish Islands Federation	non-public
	Stuart Shaw (SS)	Scottish Natural Heritage	public
	Hannah Robinson (HR)	LLTNP	public
	Reeni Kennedy Boyle (RKB) (teleconference)	Fyne Futures	non-public
<b>LAG Apologies</b>	Lucy Sumsion (LS)	NFU Scotland	non-public
	Iain Johnston (IJ)	Kintyre Cultural Forum	non-public
	David Adams McGilp (Vice Chair) (DAM)	Visit Scotland	public
	Marina Curran Colthart (MCC)	Argyll & Bute Local Biodiversity Partnership	public
	Arlene Cullum (AC)	Argyll & Bute Council	public
	Colin McLean (CMcL)	HIE	public
<b>In Attendance</b>	Ishabel Bremner (IB)	Argyll & Bute Council (Accountable Body)	
	Lynn Rew (LR)	Strategic Co-ordinator	
	Mary Louise Howat (MLH)	Argyll & Bute Council (Accountable Body)	
	Annemarie Mclean (AMM)	Compliance Officer (minutes)	



## 1) Sederunt and Apologies

The Chair, Iain MacInnes, opened the meeting at 10:30am. He welcomed everyone in attendance and thanked the Argyll and Bute Council LEADER team for their hard work and time, in bringing the meeting together.

### 1.1 Sederunt

Attendance noted as above.

### 1.2 Apologies

Apologies noted as above.

## 2) LAG Requirements

### 2.1 Quorum

There were five members in attendance, two public sector and three non-public sector members.

The Chair declared the meeting quorate.

### 2.2 Declarations of Interest

Four standard projects were being put to the LAG for consideration, and no declarations of interests were made for any of these.

One Co-operation project was being brought to the LAG for a decision (09/P00050 Social Enterprise Hub in Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park). HR declared an interest in this project which resulted in the remaining decision making group being non-quorate. A decision was made to hold a teleconference at a future date for LAG members to discuss the project and make a decision. It was agreed that this would be arranged once a suitable date was found.

## 3) Minutes of Previous Meeting

### 3.1 **Minute of 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018, Manse Brae, Lochgilphead**

There was a request made by SS to add into the comments made about project 04/P00093. The request was to make ensure that the reasons for the LAG approval were the strong case the project made in terms of demonstrating the strong economic as well as social case for the path. This, along with requesting a 20% intervention rate, led to the positive LAG decision. This compares to the high cost, high intervention rate for the Fionnphort to Pottie Path project which was rejected at the previous LAG. The text agreed was as follows:

- *Asking for 20% funding from LEADER, the project has contracted a good funding package. In comparison, the Fionnphort to Pottie Path project which came to the last LAG would have delivered fewer economic and social benefits. That application was for 50% of costs for what the LAG felt was an expensive, high specification path.*



The minutes were changed to reflect this point.

Minutes were proposed by SS and seconded by AF.

### **3.2 Matters arising from previous meeting.**

None

## **4) Accountable Body Report**

### **4.1 Brexit**

IB summarised the Accountable report which was circulated to LAG members prior to the meeting. This covered Brexit. IB informed the LAG that the Council is actively lobbying for potential UK Government funding which may replace European Funding. Whilst there is very little detail on this funding, known as the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, it is anticipated that LEADER is one of the funds it is earmarked to replace.

### **4.2 LEADER Funding Post June 2019**

IB updated the group on the arrangements in place between the Accountable Bodies and the Scottish Government concerning committing expenditure. The situation remains as reported in the last minute: the Scottish Government has given LAGS until the end of June to commit funding to projects. After this time, funding which is not allocated to projects will be returned to a Scottish central pot for redistribution to Scottish LAGs. Many LAGs have indicated that they are close to being fully committed and have pipeline projects which would use funding if it were available.

### **4.3 Staff Capacity**

IB announced that AMM would be leaving the LEADER team to take up a post in the Council's Internal Audit team. The LAG congratulated AMM on her new post and thanked her for her hard work as part of the LEADER team.

On clarifying that the Compliance Officer post being vacated by would not be filled, in addition to the existing vacant development officer posts, LAG members asked the Accountable Body how the two remaining staff would cope and provided staff with the option of only accepting projects and work within the limits of their capacity, a gesture which was warmly welcomed by staff.

The LAG discussed possible suggestions to ease the pressure on staff such as using staff from other LAGs but no suitable solution was found during the course of the discussion.

## **5) Financial Report**

A financial report providing the LAG with an update of the current financial position was circulated to LAG members prior to the meeting. At present there is enough money in the total pot to cover pipeline projects and if necessary, money could be vired between Themes 1, 2 and 3 provided the Theme 3 allocation does not fall below the required minimum. A financial reconciliation would be presented at the June LAG which is the final LAG and at this stage, all pipeline projects which would be planning to go ahead would be known.



## 6) Consideration of Standard Applications

### 1 – 04/P00095 – Cove Burgh Hall – Cove Burgh Hall

No declarations of interest.

<b>LDS Theme</b>
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.
<b>Objective</b>
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.

<b>Scoring submitted prior to meeting</b>			
<b>Average Score</b>	<b>Number Scoring</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Low</b>
33	8	37	28

Applicants are looking for a Decision in Principle for the following reasons:

- Tendering has started and final costs will be available once tenders are returned; and
- Evidence of a formal offer of funding from Historic Environment Scotland once received will be uploaded to LARCS.

#### Comments

- Good LEADER project and appears to be a well organised applicant who demonstrates their ability to deliver the project in the application form;
- The project fits well with the LEADER strategy;
- This is the type of project the LAG would like to have seen more of;
- The project has demonstrated a clear case for LEADER support; and
- It evidences benefits for the community and will enable it to be sustainable and prosper.

#### All members agreed to issue a Decision in Principle subject to:

1. Applicant to providing evidence on LARCS demonstrating how the project costs as set out in the application are reasonable as per Section 13 of the LEADER – General Guidance for Applicants V5. For the purpose of this project, this means full evidence of the procurement exercise undertaken including any proposed value engineering exercise(s), and the uploading of all documents used in this process.
2. Evidence of a formal offer of funding from Historic Environment Scotland of an Historic Environment Repair Grant for the sum of £65,699.00 to be uploaded to LARCS.

**DECISION: Decision in Principle Subject to Conditions**



## 2 – 04/P00101- Bellevue Farm Cottages - Bellevue Farm Tours

No declarations of interest.

<b>LDS Theme</b>
Theme 3 – Small Business Support Including Farm Diversification.
<b>Objective</b>
Objective 1 – Provision of a start-up /growth grant.

<b>Scoring submitted prior to meeting</b>			
<b>Average Score</b>	<b>Number Scoring</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Low</b>
25	8	30	16

Applicants are looking for a Decision in Principle for the following reasons:

- The applicants have outstanding issues: planning permission and building warrant are outstanding;
- Loan has to be formalised and evidence uploaded onto LARCS.

### Comments

- The LAG queried the Return on Investment for this project as it seemed an expensive project compared to what it will deliver;
- LAG questioned if this type of activity already exists on Arran and discussed whether this type of activity is required;
- Partnership evidence was good and the project demonstrated good synergies with other LEADER funded projects such as Mogabout;
- The LAG liked the idea of a project which worked in partnership with other island initiatives to provide a broad range of activities and supporting the island community.
- applicants have outstanding issues: planning permission and building warrant are outstanding;
- Loan has to be formalised and evidence uploaded onto LARCS.

### All members agreed to issue a Decision in Principle subject to:

1. Evidence of a formal offer from Llyods Banking Group for a long term loan of £45,000 against eligible project costs of £105,960 for the purposes of carrying out the above project, uploaded onto LARCS.
2. Evidence of receipt of Full Planning Consent for the erection of an agricultural shed and the provision of public car parking within the boundary of the farm in accordance with your application reference number: 100147385-001, uploaded onto LARCS.

**DECISION: Decision in Principle Subject to Conditions**



### 3 – 04/P00102 – Appin Community Playpark

No declarations of interest.

<b>LDS Theme</b>
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.
<b>Objective</b>
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
31	8	31	22

Applicants are looking for a Decision in Principle for the following reasons:

- A match funding decision is awaited from Children in Need and The Royal Bank of Scotland; and
- Evidence of ownership of ground has to uploaded onto LARCS.

#### Comments

- The LAG expressed concerns about the community group's ability to insure the playpark and ensure the necessary annual inspections are carried out. These typically cost about £500. The playpark on Luing had to close due to not being able to cover these.
- The LAG thought it was a convincing application and could see how it would bring social benefits to the existing residents as well as encourage new families;
- They welcomed a project which focused on the areas young people; and
- It was felt that the application wasn't for a large amount of funding but with huge social benefits.

#### **All members agreed to issue a Decision in Principle subject to:**

1. Evidence of a formal award of funding from Children in Need for the sum of £10,000 to be uploaded onto LARCS;
2. Evidence of a formal award of funding from The Royal Bank of Scotland Foundation for the sum of £10,000 to be uploaded onto LARCS; and
3. Evidence of ownership of the ground on which the Playpark will be constructed uploaded onto LARCS.

**DECISION: Decision in Principle Subject to Conditions**



#### 4 – 04/P00104 – Clauchlands Farm – Dairy Diversification

No declarations of interest.

<b>LDS Theme</b>
Theme 3: Small business support including farm diversification.
<b>Objective</b>
Objective 2: Farm Diversification Support.

<b>Scoring submitted prior to meeting</b>			
<b>Average Score</b>	<b>Number Scoring</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Low</b>
27	7	35	29

Applicants are looking for a Decision in Principle for the following reasons:

- Match funding has still to be confirmed; and
- Planning Consent and Building Warrant have not yet been received by the applicant.

#### Comments

- Whilst the LAG felt that this wasn't a particularly innovative project, they felt that it a well thought out and relevant project for diversifying the dairy farm;
- The fact that the proposed activity was based on the results of an Options Appraisal which had been carried out was well received by the LAG;
- The LAG recognised the need for diversification of a dairy farm; and
- They felt that this type of accommodation is needed on Arran so it was a project which is responding to demand.

#### **All members agreed to issue a Decision in Principle subject to:**

1. Evidence of a formal offer from the Royal Bank of Scotland to extend your current farm loan by £58,928.58 or 50% of the total eligible project cost, for the purposes of carrying out the above project, uploaded onto LARCS
2. Evidence of receipt of Full Planning Consent for the erection of three holiday lodges with associated access and parking at Clauchlands Farm in accordance with planning application reference: 19/00019/PP, uploaded onto LARCS.
3. Evidence of receipt of Building Warrant for the ground drainage required in connection with the erection of three holiday cottages with associated access and parking, uploaded onto LARCS.

**DECISION: Decision in Principle Subject to Conditions**



## 7) Consideration of Co-operation Projects

The LAG had been approached to be partners in two Co-operation Project applications. These were not yet on LARCS or ready to be scored, however the Senior Development Officer raised these with the LAG to get a decision as to whether or not to proceed to engage in the continued development of these projects.

### 7.1 **Scottish Islands Passport**

The partners discussed the potential of this project as a co-operation project in which the LAG wanted to be involved. The LAG agreed to support the development of this project with Highland Council as the lead LAG. Once ready, the LAG agreed to score it by written procedure and if there was the opportunity to have a teleconference to discuss the scores then this would be arranged.

### 7.2 **Doors Open Project**

The LAG had the opportunity to view the proposal for this project which is still in development. The lead LAG is the Western Isles. One non-public sector LAG member (AF) declared an interest and would not be able to score the project if it comes forward as a full proposal.

As with the Scottish Islands Passport project, the LAG agreed to score it by written procedure and if there was the opportunity to have a teleconference to discuss the scores then this would be arranged.

**DECISION: Written procedure to be used for Co-operation projects which do not fit the LAG cycle with the preference to teleconference to discuss prior to decision**

## 8) LEADER PIPELINE PROJECTS

### 8.1 **Standard Projects**

The Strategic Co-ordinator provided the LAG with an update of projects which were in development – so called ‘pipeline’ projects. This was to provide the LAG with an idea of how much of the remaining LEADER funding would potentially be allocated to local projects, and also to provide them with an overview of what the team were working on.

The following projects are in the LARCS pipeline:

04/P00094 – Bannachra Holiday Homes

04/P00098 – St Conan’s Kirk – Tourism and Community Development Programme

04/P00106 – Rossal Farm Development

04/P00092 – Lodge on Lochgoil – Increasing Capacity

The LAG were informed that should all projects come forward to the next LAG there would be sufficient budget to cover them all.

### 8.2 **Co-operation Projects**

The Co-operation projects in the pipeline were previously covered under agenda item 7. There is sufficient budget to cover the co-operation projects in development.





## 9) Other LAG Decisions

### 9.1 **Proposal Final Application deadline – 26<sup>th</sup> April 2019**

LR discussed with the LAG options for the final LARCS deadline date. The discussion centred around how to ensure the applicant had the maximum opportunity to submit a compliant application to be scored by the LAG.

**DECISION: The proposed date (26/4/19) was agreed by the LAG.**

### 9.2 **An Talla Bail – Additional Funding (in principle decision)**

This project had an In-Principle decision at the December LAG, however it was becoming clear that the project would require additional funding. At the time of the LAG, the new financial profile of the project was not yet available. However, the LAG agreed that they would support the project to continue working on the revised financial profile which may require LAG approval depending on the value of the proposed changes.

**DECISION: In Principle decision to support increased costs**

## 10) Other LEADER Updates

### 10.1 **In Principle Decisions taken at 6 December 2018**

An update was provided on the status of the four projects which had received an In-Principle decision at the previous LAG meeting:

04/P00077 – An Talla Bail – Shaping the Heart of Iona – update previously provided at agenda item 9.2. The project was still finalising the evidence to demonstrate ownership of the land; final costing were still to be provided (awaiting the results of a tender process to establish costs).

04/P00093 – Port Charlotte to Bruichladdich Path – match funding confirmation was still outstanding. The tendering process had started and was being undertaken by the Council's procurement team.

04/P00090 – Loch Goil Pontoon – match funding for this project is now in place however, Marine Scotland permission is still outstanding.

04/P00096 – The Rockfield Centre – The project has to date been unable to provide the LEADER staff with the full procurement evidence. Having gone through a Public Sector Procurement process using Public Contracts Scotland, much of the evidence was there but key pieces of information were still being sought by the LEADER team.

### 10.2 **Previous Decisions In Principle Still Outstanding**

04/P00056 – Balliemeanoch Steading Cottages – the applicant for this project had unexpectedly passed away before the project started. His widow expressed an interest in taking over the role of lead applicant and continuing with the project however it remains unclear whether or not the widow will have the legal rights to the property and land. This

is on-going and in the meantime the widow has requested an extension to enable time for this to be resolved.

**11) AOCS and Date of Next Meeting**

There were no other AOCB items. The date of the next LAG meeting will be 20<sup>th</sup> June 2019. The venue has still to be confirmed.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and input to the meeting, and invited everyone to stay for lunch.

The meeting closed at 13:10pm.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

The Chair has approved the inclusion of reference to project 09/P00050 Social Enterprise Hub in Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park in paragraph 2.2 within in these minutes as this was omitted from the original LAG meeting minute approved in June.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_