Argyll and the Islands LEADER Local Action Group Meeting
Corran Halls, Oban
Thursday 10TH November 2016 at 10.00 AM – 2:00PM

MINUTE OF MEETING

LAG Attendance

Iain MacInness (Chair)	Cowal Area Network (non-public)
Reeni Kennedy Boyle	Fyne Futures (non-public)
Marina Curran Colthart	Argyll & Bute Local Biodiversity Partnership (public)
Gordon Gray Stephens	Community Woodlands Assoc. (non-public)
David Adams McGilp	Visit Scotland (public)

LAG Apologies

Stuart Shaw	Scottish Natural Heritage (public)
Lucy Sumsion	NFU Scotland (non-public)
Arlene Cullum	Argyll & Bute Council (public)
Hannah Robinson	LLTNP (public)
Alastair Fleming	Scottish Islands federation (non-public)
Alison McGrory	NHS (public)
John Urquhart	HADAT (non-public)
Iain Johnston	Kintyre Cultural Forum (non-public)
Colin McLean	HIE (public)
Glenn Heritage	Third Sector Interface (non-public)
Jim Nichols	Arran Council for Voluntary Services (non-public)
Stewart MacLennan	MacLennan Motors (non-public)

In Attendance

Colin Fulcher	Strategic Co-ordinator
Ishabel Bremner	Argyll & Bute Council (Accountable Body)
Kirsty Moyes	Development Officer
Kwasi Addo	Development Officer
Annemarie McLean	Compliance Officer (minutes)

1) **Welcome and Introductions , Sederunt / Apologies**

1.1 <u>Welcome</u>

I MacInnes welcomed all to the November meeting and opened the meeting at 10:05.

He thanked the LEADER team on behalf of the LAG for the extra work they have had to do over the past 3 months because of the lack of information from Europe to the Scottish Government. This and the tight timescales have placed increased pressure on the team while working with the applicants.
He thanked the LAG members for their support, time and patience over the last 6 months on the new LAG Programme and the issues around the new LARCS IT system, which will be discussed during the meeting.

1.2 <u>Sederunt and Apologies</u>

Attendance and apologies were noted as above.

CF thanked everyone for their attendance and explained how crucial it was at a decision making meeting to obtain a quorum. As 5 LAG members were in attendance, 3 of whom were non-public members and 2 public members, the meeting was quorate.

2) **Declarations of Interest**

3 people had declared an interest in 4 of the applications. CF stated that these projects could not be discussed during this meeting as the requirement for a quorate decision was to have 5 members present. It was agreed that these applications would be held at a separate meeting. The applications affected by this were:

4.2	04/P00007	Argyll and the Isles CHArts Place Partnership Plan
4.4	04/P00015	Feasibility study into the establishment of a Shared forester resource in Argyll and Bute
4.5	04/P00019	Dunoon Town Centre Community Engagement Programme
4.6	04/P00020	Rothesay Cultural and Heritage Engagement Programme

CF reminded LAG members that a risk register was available as in the previous programme, and encouraged LAG members to contact him before the LAG meetings if they considered themselves to have an interest in any of the applications brought forward.

3) **Minutes of previous meetings (27th October 2016)**

Action

No points were raised

Decision

Minutes were proposed by Reeni Kennedy Boyle
Minutes were seconded by Gordon Gray Stephens
Minutes were signed by Iain MacInnes

4) **Consideration of Applications**

4.1 – 04/P00002 – Visit Arran - Arran Destination Card

No declarations of interest.

Scoring submitted prior to meeting			
Average Score	Number Scoring	High	Low
34	10	41	30

Comments
The applicant has an impressive track record in delivering this type of project:
LEADER is about creating a climate for growth and this project provides a destination solution, makes it easier for consumers;
Low risk project with a small value of money;
Concern that this voucher scheme is not available for on line purchases;
Good idea that if successful could be replicated in other destinations within the LAG area;
Slightly unclear costs relating to cards in the application.

- LAG members would like the organisation to produce a project evaluation report upon completion of the project, for shared learning, that may be made available to other organisations within the LAG area.
- The applicant has to provide clarification regarding the 2 types of card costs detailed.

The answers to these questions have to be circulated to the LAG members present at this meeting. If the answers are satisfactory the project will be approved.

Conditional Approval

4.2 – 04/P00007 - Argyll and Bute Council - Argyll and the Isles CHArts Place Partnership Plan

As noted in Agenda item 3, this project was not discussed during this meeting.

4.3 – 04/P00008 – Campbeltown Community Business - The Centenary Project - Sharing Our Heritage

No declarations of interest.

Scoring submitted prior to meeting			
Average Score	Number Scoring	High	Low
34	10	38	27

Comments
The group have been very extremely successful in attracting funding;
This project seems reasonable as it builds on what has already been spent;
This will make it more appealing to both visitors and local user;

Approved

4.4 – 04/P00015 - Argyll Small Woods Cooperative - Feasibility study into the establishment of a Shared forester resource in Argyll and Bute

As noted in Agenda item 3, this project was not discussed during this meeting.

4.5 – 04/P00019 - Argyll and Bute Council - Dunoon Town Centre Community Engagement Programme

As noted in Agenda item 3, this project was not discussed during this meeting.

4.6 – 04/P00020 - Argyll and Bute Council - Rothesay Cultural and Heritage Engagement Programme

As noted in Agenda item 3, this project was not discussed during this meeting.

4.7 – 04/P00021 – Tiree Community Business Ltd- Gott Bay Moorings

No declarations of interest

Scoring submitted prior to meeting			
Average Score	Number Scoring	High	Low
35	9	41	30

Comments
Good idea – Community Ownership;
Marine leisure;
Sound principles;
Opens up the island to leisure craft and increases economic activity.
Approved

4.8 - 04/P00026 – Marketing Mull and Iona- Mull and Iona Marketing Organisational development

No declarations of interest.

Scoring submitted prior to meeting			
Average Score	Number Scoring	High	Low
33	10	38	22

Comments
Creates local capacity, encourages local collaboration;
Destination development;
Modest intervention with the potential to deliver great results.

Approved

4.9 – 04/P00036 – Taynuilt Sports Council SCIO - Taynuilt Sports Council - Access Improvement Works

No declarations of interest.

Scoring submitted prior to meeting			
Average Score	Number Scoring	High	Low
31	10	40	23

Comments
Applicants have long and impressive track record of delivering projects;
This would put the final touches onto facilities that have been built up over a number of years;
Well used facilities;
Improves the welcoming aspect of existing facilities.

Approved

CF provided reminder of budgets available for Enterprise and Farm Diversification. LAG members asked that for future meetings, applications to be discussed, be grouped into these categories.

There was a general discussion regarding how capital expenditure is treated within the Programme.

4.10 – 04/P00009 – J K & C Bone – Glenkiln Riding Centre

No declaration of interest.

Scoring submitted prior to meeting			
Average Score	Number Scoring	High	Low
36	11	43	26

Comments
Good project, well supported by the local community groups;
Very inclusive, the equality of the users has been well thought out;
Ticks all the boxes for collaborative working;
Sustainable and resilient on an Island economy.

Approved

4.11 – 04/P00010 – Argyll Food Producers - Developing and Growing the Argyll Food Economy

David Adams McGilp declared low level of interest as Visit Scotland have issued a letter of support for this, but confirmed that they are not providing funding for this project.

Scoring submitted prior to meeting			
Average Score	Number Scoring	High	Low
34	10	42	26

Comments
Good fit with the LDS;
Network users group has a long track record of collaborative working;
Promotes the destination globally;
Promotes low level carbon food;
Ambitious about growth of membership but this can be a good thing – good project.

Approved

4.12 – 04/P00025 – Scottish Canals – Delivery of Crinan Canal Active Travel & Tourist Towpath

No declarations of interest.

Scoring submitted prior to meeting			
Average Score	Number Scoring	High	Low
37	10	43	29

Comments

Works on other paths have been received in the local area;
Encourages leisure traffic and tourists to spend longer in the local area;
Area is well used – in principle find it expensive;
This is the missing link and completes the route – is additional;
During the Crinan Canal Charrette process, local users identified this as a need for the local area;
Maintenance would only apply to the area of path being funded and it has been stated in the application that the applicant will build this into their maintenance schedule for the next 25 years.

Approved

4.13 – 04/P00038 – T & H Glenn – Saddell Nurseries

No declarations of interest

Scoring submitted prior to meeting			
Average Score	Number Scoring	High	Low
26	11	36	18

Comments

Potential displacement with Glenbar nurseries which is approx. 20 miles away. This is mentioned in the application;
Another potential displacement, not mentioned in the application is a nearby local community garden;
The application was not strong enough to support this diversification idea;
Idea has merit but doesn't appear to have linked well into surrounding organisations;
They haven't explored the Get UP and Grow approach. The model that they are using requires a lot of time and may not be successful within the lifetime of the project;
Project Plan doesn't seem robust enough – there is a fundamental lack of evidence to support market demand in the area;
Applicant should perhaps consider exploring other areas of possible diversification;
Main concerns are that displacement of other local similar business does not seem to have been addressed, there does not appear to be any evidence to support a market need in the area nor evidence to support any engagement with surrounding local organisations.

Rejected

5) AOCB / Date and location of next meeting

5.1 Accountable Body Meeting 8th November

I Bremner attended the above meeting and gave an overview to the LAG. Audit Scotland and Scottish Government Internal Audit gave a presentation, a copy of which will be circulated to LAG members. Some of the areas discussed included outlining their role, the sharing of information, transparency of reporting and what this means for the Council as Accountable Body.

5.2 EU Exit Update

On 2nd November the Scottish Government announced that EU funding contracts for structural funds, fisheries and farming projects that are agreed before the UK proposes to leave the EU will be paid in full. This message given at the Accountable Bodies meeting was that it business as usual. Formal clarification of this has yet to be issued to the LAGs and the Accountable Bodies, it is expected that this will be issued after the Autumn Statement. This will be circulated to LAG members when available.

LAG members agreed that this gives more confidence regarding the future of this current Programme.

5.3 LARCS issues

Issues have been raised, at all levels, regarding access to and the functionality of the LARCS system. The Scottish Government are going to set up usability testing groups initially for Accountable Bodies and are discussing the possibility of these for Project Co-ordinators, Finance/Audit etc. Information will be shared as it becomes available. Updated guidance should be available on LARCS by December.

5.4 Applications/Scoring Process

R Kennedy – Boyle started a general discussion regarding these processes. LAG members were of the opinion that the definition/questions regarding "Exit Strategies for Projects" were not clear enough and that this is causing confusion regarding the Scoring process. Concerns were raised that both the Cashflow statements and Project Plans forms could be more robust. CF reminded members that the scoring system currently being used was issued by the Scottish Government and that if members felt this wasn't suitable it could be amended.

5.5 LARCS/LAG members' workload

CF thanked the LAG members for the time and effort that has been put into this meeting. There was a general discussion on how this could be streamlined for future meetings.

No decision was made regarding making any changes to the process just now.

5.6 Monitoring and Evaluation

CF asked the LAG what information they would like to have regarding monitoring and evaluation, reminding them that this is carried out on the Themes and Objectives specifically mentioned in our Local Development Strategy (LDS). There was a general discussion regarding this, which included gaps analysis and the benefits of holding a Strategic LAG.

CF stated that now that Projects had been approved, he would provide a report for LAG members showing the monies committed to each of the elements of the Programme.

LAG members decided that a Strategic LAG would be beneficial to review and monitoring the LDS.

5.7 Next meetings

There was a general discussion regarding the date and venue of the next LAG meeting, which will be held to discuss the 4 projects that could not be discussed today. It was decided that the meeting will be held on 5th December in HIE Offices Lochgilphead from 10 am to approximately 12.30pm. This will be subject to a quorate attendance being confirmed.

CF will draft a possible timeline for future deadlines and meetings. This will reflect the feedback from applicants, LAG members and staff regarding LARCS and the time taken at each stage of the process, and will be circulated to members.

I MacInness thanked everyone for their attendance and input to the meeting and closed the meeting at 2.45pm.

Signed _____ date _____