



NORTHUMBERLAND UPLANDS LEADER

LOCAL ACTION GROUP (LAG)

Wednesday 9th May 2018

Parish Rooms, Rothbury

5.30pm - 8.30pm

Present: Terry Carroll, Mike Murray, Anthony Murray, Barbara Sexon, Louise Kirkwood, Tom Johnston, Nicola Bell, Ruth Dickinson (NNPA), David Baird (NCC), Gillian Cowell (Programme Officer), Louise McCreery (Admin Officer)

1. **Apologies:** Steve Jopling, Alan Sharp, Andrew Poad, Alistair Cochrane, Barbara Sexon, Jeremy Phillipson

TC opened the meeting and introduced Alistair Adam Hernandez, who is attending as an observer

2. **Declaration of Interest**

MM declared an interest in Ant Robinson Mobile Sheep Handling, and agreed to leave during the discussion

3. **Draft LAG Minutes from meeting on 12 April 2018**

TC advised he has contact Andrew Miller about the Mountain Rescue application. They agreed an new EOI would be submitted to clarify the finances and the relationship between the two local rescue organisations.

GC advised that the LAG that Haltwhistle Film Project are planning to appeal the rejection decision from the last meeting.

GC advised she has not been able to set up a meeting with Ian Atkinson. It was agreed that GC should contact the applicant with a final deadline for a meeting. If there is still no contact the offer of funding will be withdrawn.

Minutes agreed as a true and accurate record.

4. **Matters Arising & Actions**

Kielder Observatory Launch

TC and GC attended the opening of the new Kielder Observatory building. The new facilities are impressive and the organisation is looking to install a new telescope on

the Canary Islands so that visitors can be shown a live feed is local weather conditions are too cloudy.

Autumn Event

TC advised that he spoken to Cllr Peter Jackson about the event at the Kielder launch and would like to invite him as a key speaker. GC has contacted his PA to find some available dates. AM suggested Cllr Richard Wearmouth as possible alternative if needed.

GC and LM visited Kirkharle. They have an indoor marquee facility which would be large enough to accomodate the conference and a 'market stall' type area for projects to promote their businesses.

The LAG discussed the objectives of the event and agreed that it needs to cover some of the difficulties as well as the successes of the programme. It needs to be a showcase for the 'bottom up' funding approach and make a clear pitch for continued funding.

5. **Programme Officer's Update**

GC went through the programme officer's report. By the end of the previous meeting the LAG had an overcommitment at EOI stage of approx £21,000. If all the projects to be considered at this meeting are approved in full this will become an overcommitment of £54,000 which is acceptable considering the current attrition rate. There are currently no concerns about any approved projects

Update on Projects in Development

Ingram Venison - in appraisal

Bays Leap Dairy - FA in appraisal

Ciunam - FA received - appraisal on hold as planning has been withheld until a bat survey has been carried out

Redesdale Equestrian - FA in appraisal

Hay Farm Heavies - submission deadline given until end of May 2018

GoGilsland - FA received - waiting for confirmation of match funding

Elsdon Village Hall - FA received - waiting for additional procurement info

Henderson Zero Tillage - FA due June 2018

JRG Johnson Zero Tillage - FA due June 2018

Shieling Meats - FA due June 2018

Jack's Fast Track Gym - FA due May 2018

Nightfold Retreat - FA due May 2018

Churnsike Lodge - FA due June 2018

Gateway into the Community - FA due July 2018

I Howson Hen House Upgrade - FA due July 2018

Reserve List

The LAG reviewed the current reserve list and agreed to bring forward the Fibreglass Plant Pot project.

6. Review and Decide on Outline Applications

Ant Robinson - Mobile Sheep Handling

The applicant is a contract shepherd who also has his own flock. He owns sheep in different parcels of land which can make penning difficult. He is looking for funding for mobile pens which will make processes more efficient and also increase animal welfare. He would also use the equipment for contracting out tagging and weighing services.

The applicant would like to expand his flock to the point where his daughter could join the business but this is dependant upon access to more land.

Looking to create 0 FTE jobs

The applicant is requesting a grant of £2,800 (40% of costs)

The LAG were supportive of the project but felt more ambition should be shown in the full application with regard to the contracting work and potential for employment

The strategic fit score was agreed

Vote - unanimous approval

Bakery and Sausage Room Extension

Green and Son butchers was established 130 years ago. It is a traditional family butchers which also supplies local pubs and hotels. The applicant currently employs 5 FTE and 2 part time butchers plus a driver.

Longframlington has recently had an expansion of population and there is a boom in local tourism so the applicant has enjoyed an increase in both retail and wholesale trade. They are looking for funding to expand the business by building and extension which will house storage facilities as well as a bakery for pies etc and a facility for sausage making.

A full planning application hasn't been submitted yet but they have had a favourable reaction to their pre planning application. The applicant is not concerned about displacement as they are looking at a different market from the local artisan bakery and cafe

Looking to create 2 FTE jobs

The applicant is requesting a grant of £18,080 (40% of costs)

Vote -

6 approve

1 abstain

The strategic fit score was agreed

Upper Coquet Wildflower Seeds

The applicant started farming 25 years ago and entered the Countryside Stewardship scheme. They underestimated at the time how difficult it was to local seeds for the hay meadows. Ultimately they bought an adapted machine to sweep seeds from existing meadows and collected seed from nearby farms. The enterprise has grown from there into a large part of the business. They provide seeds for organisations such as the National Trust and Natural England as well as businesses in the Lake District and Scottish Borders.

Due to the growth of the business the applicant is looking to build a separate building to store and develop the seeds without it impacting on the other sides of the businesses. This could also help to diversify from mixed seeds into separate types.

The business has no competitors in the North East. There is a similar business in Cumbria but it doesn't produce on the same scale

Looking to create 1 FTE job

The applicant is requesting a grant of £12,680 (40% of costs)

The LAG discussed the project and were supportive of the ideas behind it. It was felt that the applicant should expand on the classroom and learning aspects of the project in the full application

Vote - unanimous approval

The strategic fit score was agreed

7. Full Applications

Extreme Equine Agility Course

The aim of the project proposed for LEADER funding is to purchase a second hand JCB and install an eco composting toilet at the business premise. The JCB will be used to prepare changeable horse agility courses which can be remodelled as required to suit individual programmes and training courses thereby expanding the range and offer to clients of the applicant business. The eco composting toilet will be sited in fields furthest away from current facilities potentially enabling a wider range of clients to take part in activities and improving premises facilities in general

Looking to create 1 FTE job

The applicant is requesting a grant of £12,111.20 (80% of costs)

The LAG agreed with the appraisal recommendation to allocate the project to priority four rather than priority two

Vote - unanimous approval

Arcusin Bale Packer

The aim of the project is to purchase a small bale packaging machine to automate and mechanise the process of transporting small bales of hay / straw to add product value and increase the sustainability of a small upland farm partnership.

Grant is sought to purchase an Arcusin Multipack C14 small bale packer which will increase business capacity through automation and allow the business to expand on farm production and contract services, also to improve business performance and sustainability of the agricultural holding.

Looking to create 0.43 FTE jobs

The applicant is requesting a grant of £26,420 (40% of costs)

Vote - unanimous approval

West Moneylaws Workshop

The aim of the project is to build a joinery workshop to enable an existing joinery business to manufacture joinery and bespoke items on site.

Grant is sought to purchase specialised joinery plant and capital works to create the workshop that will enable production allowing the business to increase turnover and 3 new jobs to be created.

Looking to create 3 FTE jobs

The applicant is requesting a grant of £79,685 (40% of costs)

Vote - unanimous approval

8. AOB

A tour of projects in the Northern area was proposed - possibly before a LAG meeting to be held in Wooler. GC will look at likely projects and update the LAG

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Thursday 7th June. Venue to be Otterburn