

24/10/2018
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**NORTHUMBERLAND COAST & LOWLANDS LEADER
LOCAL ACTION GROUP (LAG)
Wednesday 19th September, 2018**

Executive LAG Members:

Alex Wallace - Vice Chair
Simon Cox
Iain Robson
Richard Waters
Ian Moyes
Robert Brotherton
Carron Craighead

LAG Member:

Carole Moyes

LEADER Staff:

Ivan Hewitt – Northumberland Coast and Lowlands Programme Officer
Christine Stevenson – LEADER Administration

Advisory Group:

David Baird - External Funding Appraisal Manager, Northumberland County Council

1.Welcome to LAG Meeting & Apologies:

Alex Wallace, Vice Chair opened the Northumberland Coast & Lowlands LEADER meeting at 18:00

CS/IH – Confirmed that meeting was quorate by Voting Members attending and by Theme

Apologies received and recorded from Executive Members: Ross Lowrie, Angus Collingwood-Cameron, Ross Weddle, Jean Orr and Julien Lake

Apology received and recorded from Accountable Body: Heather Smith


2. D.O.I.

None

3. Draft Minutes from 15th August, 2018:

Page 1 - Accepted

Page 2 - Accepted

Page 3 - Accepted

Page 4 - Accepted

Page 5 - Accepted

Page 6 - Accepted

Page 7 - Accepted

Minutes recorded as a true record, dated and signed by Alex Wallace, Vice Chair

4. Matters Arising & Actions to include Chair's Update:

No actions from 15th August's LAG meeting

DB - The meeting with Janice Rose and LAG Chairs has been rearranged

SC - LAG approved project known as Zero Tillage, they have now changed their equipment to a Strip Tillage machine, can this project be referred to as Strip Tillage in all future information

AW - Reporting update from Ross Lowrie, Chair - "Attended the NCC Post-Brexit workshop last Monday, a good workshop and well attended. Spent time with Peter Jackson, Tony Gates (NNPA Chief Exec), and many others. A really interesting discussion with Dorothy Fairburn of CLA, and feels we can both see a future where farm productivity isn't part of LEADER. Overall a great reception for LEADER, and lovely to hear others making the points on our behalf!

Project visit at Carroll's Heritage Potatoes with Robert Brotherton and Anne-Marie Trevelyan (MP). Great chance to push our messages and we had a really positive visit. AMT asked me for evidence to support her in arguing for LEADER and has a network of 40 rural MP's who'll fight for rural support. I think she's just about ready to fight our corner and is well connected to Michael Gove, whose Defra department oversees LEADER. RB can give more details in his communications update. We have some wrap up work to do.

Future - some work to do to wrap up budget discussions with NCC, also meeting Janice Rose of NCC to set vision for LEADER in the future, we're still pushing hard. Thanks all for superb LEADER efforts and apologies for not being there, I'm off to Copenhagen to talk climate change".

5. RPA & LEADER Update:



DB - The RPA Atterstion Visit went well on the day. With the revised reallocation HS has revised budgets for LAG Chairs

RC&A (Running Costs & Animation) is closely tied with project budget, looking to maximise money allocated for projects and keep LEADER staff going. Accountable Body will monitor spend on a quarterly basis, but this will get tighter going forward Had feedback from RPA that LAG is doing well, doing better than some LAG's. RPA has asked if we want to extend current project contracting ability past March 2019

AW - Looking at budgets quarterly, how can the LAG consider EOIs without a definite budget allocation?

DB - Some FAs in development might not progress, some may claim less and LAG can overcommit

AW - When can LAG start to look at EOIs?

DB - Accountable Body have to manage impact of RC&A and project budgets as closely tied, understanding implications to projects and staffing.

6. Programme Officers Report to include RC&A Update:

IH - Gave Programme Officers report and informed LAG of current project budget commitments.

Asked that LAG agree to consider project application on the basis of figures as of 19th September 2018 that the LAG has issued GFAs totalling **£1,459,932.08 (89.70% of target spend)** with a balance of **£167,603.92** remaining to commit against original allocation

Note - LAG approved and agreed project budget profile

IH - Currently have seven FA's in development, as a group you need to look at EOI Reserve List

IR - Is there a process to decide which to bring forward?

IH - All EOI applicants have been contacted, a few have dropped out. Scored remaining EOI applications, LAG still to decide on criteria. LAG can consider to overcommit

SC - Have we got a short list of EOIs?

IH - Thirteen EOIs scored

AW - Read out statement from RL regarding EOI Reserve List

DB - From Accountable Body perspective, LEADER staff contracts have been extended to December 2019

AW - LAG needs definitive budget by next meeting (October)

SC - By October's meeting LAG will only have 5 months until March 2019

DB - Still a 2 stage process, restricted as to what projects can be accelerated within timescales.



SC - From a workload perspective, easy to accelerate

RB - Would suggest we have a pre-meeting paper

SC - Can we see in advance?

AW - For info - the North of Tyne Devolution deal signed this October. Borderlands in Chancellor's Autumn Speech, LEADER LAGs looked at as a vehicle

DB - Mindful to what happens next, meeting with JR and LAG Chairs may discuss

RB - Is there still a 30/70 split?

DB - No

IH - LAG have over achieved on job creation

AW - LAG gave IH / DB Delegated Authority to revise a short EOI Reserve List

ACTION - IH to circulate revised EOI Reserve List

7. Community Transport Bell View

DORA Ref:109718

LEADER Priority Theme 4 - Support for Rural Services

Total Project Cost - £51,181.00

LEADER Grant Request - £40,944.80

Summary - The project will fund the purchase of a new purpose built fully accessible minibus to continue, increase and improve Bell View's community transport provision across the most rural and isolated parts of North Northumberland. Meeting the identified future needs of the charity, its trading subsidiaries and beneficiaries.

LAG Discussions:

LAG members discussed and considered Full Application and Technical Appraisal Application

AW - Proposed LAG vote:

- 4 Vote - Yes
- 0 Vote - No
- 2 Vote - Abstain, Vice Chair did not vote

LAG Decision:

Full Application Approved, Technical Appraisal dated and signed by Vice Chair, Alex Wallace

LAG Advice:

- Would like a LEADER Logo sticker on vehicle
- Self financing vehicle replacement strategy

8. Communications Working Group:

RB - Wrote up article in Northumberland Gazette, dated 13th September 2018 showcasing LAG project Animating Alnwick Markets and the benefits of LEADER funding into rural communities

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Has asked various LAG members to contact projects and gather information and quotes that he can feed back into the Gazette, this will emphasise the benefits of LEADER funding

The visit to Carroll's Heritage Potatoes with RL and AMT (MP) went well and showed the strengths of LEADER

Question is, where does LEADER fit? AMT has links to promote LEADER in support of future CLLD (Community Led Local Development) projects, might see some type of rural development pot in future. Will draft a press release to promote visit

RL wants a meeting in November at County Hall to discuss LEADER

IH - At last meeting LAG members talked about hosting an event with Councillors

RB - I will contact Centre for Rural Economy for a guest speaker

DB - NULAG are hosting their event 17 October, could clash with another event

AW - Thanked RB for his time. As previously noted North of Tyne Devolution deal will be signed off in October, Borderlands late Autumn

DB - Borderlands question, LEADER approach may not happen

IR - Any Borderlands programme will be large infrastructure projects

AW - Unique perspective as it involves two governments with different views

RB - Feeling we could see something from Defra in the middle

IH - Good to promote LEADER model, local knowledge. No more LEADER after Brexit, sensible for Defra to keep LAG expertise.

CC - I've had an email invitation regarding the NULAG event

ACTION - IH / CS to develop potential event proposals with a view to organising future C&L event(s)

9. Evaluation Working Group:

SC - 21 projects closed and satisfactorily evaluated = £648k value.

6 projects newly closed / evaluations required = £109k value

3 projects (Carnaby's Cafe, Smales Secure Storage, Cattle Handling Hub) part drawn / £43k released to date

17 projects newly contracted / nil payment to date

47 projects fully approved, of these 30 projects have had claims partially / fully paid = £801K TOTAL (55% GFA)

Evaluations visits ongoing - CS to organise

10. A.O.B:

None **Alex Wallace, Vice Chair closed the Coast & Lowlands LEADER LAG meeting at 19:10**