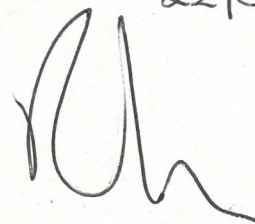


22/5/2019



**NORTHUMBERLAND COAST & LOWLANDS LEADER
LOCAL ACTION GROUP (LAG)
Tuesday 23rd April 2019**

Executive LAG Members:

Ross Lowrie - Chair
Jean Orr
Simon Cox
Ian Moyes
Robert Brotherton
Richard Waters
Angus Collingwood-Cameron

LAG Member:

Carole Moyes

LEADER Staff:

Ivan Hewitt – Northumberland Coast and Lowlands LEADER Programme Officer
Jane Mackenzie – Northumberland LEADER Admin Support

Advisory Group:

David Baird - External Funding Appraisal Manager, Northumberland County Council

1. Welcome to LAG Meeting & Apologies:

Ross Lowrie, Chair opened the Northumberland Coast & Lowlands LEADER meeting at 18:00

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

Apologies received and recorded from Executive LAG Members: Alex Wallace, Ross Weddle, Iain Robson, Philip Angier, Julien Lake, Louis Fell, Carron Craighead and Guy Renner-Thompson.

22/5/2019
RL

Apology received and recorded from Accountable Body: Heather Smith and Christine Stevenson

Apologies received and recorded from members: Nic Best and Brenda Fordy-Scott

2. D.O.I.

None recorded

3. Draft Minutes from 20th March, 2019:

Page 1 - Accepted

Page 2 - Accepted

Page 3 - Accepted

Page 4 - Accepted

Page 5 - Accepted

Page 6 - Accepted

Page 7 - Accepted

The minutes were agreed as a true record. Dated and signed by Ross Lowrie, Chair.

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

Actions from meeting 20th March:

CS to liaise with projects - Completed

Hauxley update - DB advised that the RPA do not discuss ongoing issues with anyone therefore no more information was available at this time. It was also noted that any recovered funds will not be recycled back into the LEADER pot.

Chair's Update:

RL - apologised for the change of date for the meeting as there had been confusion over the date / day.

RL had attended a NEFRAN meeting which he found to be a very frustrating experience. Items discussed were:

1. North of Tyne Devolution - This is ongoing and the elections for the mayor will be taking place on 02 May 2019.

Rural Business Growth Fund - Still ongoing and nothing to report.

2. Borderlands - This is a collaboration of councils which sit on the England / Scotland border of which Northumberland is one. Alnwick Garden has been ring fenced as a potential project.

3. Shared Prosperity Fund - This is channelled funding through the LEPs. RL would be happy if community led and rural support appeared in the same sentence in terms of this funding stream.

22/5/2019
RL

Looking to the future RL is to meet with Council Leader Peter Jackson with the aim of pushing LEADER support going forward by NCC.
RL has to complete the RDPE survey by 25 April.

5. Programme Officers Report:

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

Coast and Lowlands is on track to commit its allocation in full with one application for consideration tonight.

Both recent approvals Morwick Dairy and Holy Island Gin are progressing.

Development of The Nursery at Whitehouse Farm application is expected to come to the May LAG meeting

Including the underspend, £6,000 would be left over if the projects are agreed tonight.

If agreed the aim is to push through The Nursery at Whitehouse Farm, Barn on the Bay and Ellington Juniors to utilise any possible underspend or recycled money.

There was a lengthy discussion around how new projects should be selected for funding due to the small amount of money left to commit.

SC - Wondered if there would be a process of selecting projects rather than a 'first past the post' methodology and members agreed that something would have to be put in place and agreed upon.

In terms of the national underspend - there could be a possible redistribution in late May and if the remaining projects that are currently in appraisal could possibly be put forward?

More discussions took place for clarification and RL asked for members to vote for hearing and making a decision on Preston House B&B and dealing with the underspend and to make decisions on the other projects coming forward:

RL - LAG Vote:

5 Vote - Yes

0 Vote - No

2 Vote - Abstain, Chair did not vote

Note - LAG agreed to consider Preston House B&B

a.RC&A Update:

Removed - nothing to updated

b.LAG meeting plans May to December 2019

Members discussed the need to meet as often as monthly going forward since there was not going to be the number of projects for consideration.

22/5/2019
Nch

It was decided that the October and December meetings would go ahead but there will be no meeting in August.

Action: IH - will communicate the dates of meetings to LAG members to keep everyone up to date.

6. RPA & LEADER Update:

DB - Has heard that the RDPE Programme is under committed but the RDPE Growth Programme underspend is **not** being distributed to LEADER.

With regards to the attestation report there could be a possible visit in September.

This is an audit type visit to examine the LEADER files and check processes.

7. FAs for confirmation by Executive:

a. Morwick Farm (Farm Productivity) £5,148.40

b. Holy Island Gin Distillery (Micro Enterprise) £41,389.68

Both applications had been considered through Written Deposition and approved prior to the LAG meeting, Written Deposition votes were confirmed and both projects were approved.

8. FAs for consideration by Executive:

a. Preston House B&B


DORA Ref: 113018

LEADER Priority Theme 4 - Support for Rural Tourism

Total Project Cost - £109,912.00

LEADER Grant Request - £36,810.00

Summary - This project will take us from a 2 bed B&B to a 7 bed B&B but also offering an evening dinner service. We wish to retain the B&B feel but be able to offer our customers a complete evening service so that they can relax and not have to drive to get food. We aim to target year-round tourists with a focus on high-end clientele, with high occupancy through the winter months by championing a gastronomic experience alongside the standard B&B offering. This project will also involve the creation of a kitchen capable of being used commercially for the provision of the evening food and breakfasts as our family kitchen is not big enough. This is stage 2 of our project, stage 1 being the first 2 bedrooms which have been operating for the past season and has given us a good insight into demand and market. We also have the ability to undertake a further 3 bedrooms as stage 3, but we wish to do this in managed stages that are affordable to our longer-term business plan

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LAG Discussions:

The LAG considered and discussed the Full Application and Technical Appraisal Application
RL asked LAG members to vote:

6 Vote - Yes

0 Vote - No

1 Vote - Abstain, Chair did not vote

LAG Decision - Full Application - Approved

Note: The LAG project budget is now fully committed.

9. Communications Working Group - Update:

RB - Requested a catch up meeting after this one for the communications group.
SC and RL have been looking at projects to consider as case studies and several have been considered.

CM - Noticed that Carroll's Heritage Potatoes has no logos on its website.

Action: JM to check and contact project and report back

RB - Gave an update on communications to date and on preparations for the LAG event in June.

7 projects agreed as showcases for the LEADER programme in Coast and Lowlands

- Carroll's Heritage Potatoes
- Northern Edge Coffee
- Northumbria Country Zoo
- Alnwick Rugby Football Club
- Cresswell Village Hall
- Turnbolls of Alnwick
- Silvermoor Swingers

ALL - Discussion of Awards to projects

SC - Looked at Enterprise category and from his selection it was decided that **Northern Edge Coffee** would be selected.

RB - Looked at Food and Provenance category and from his selection it was decided that **Rigg and Furrow** would be selected.

For the Community category it was decided that **Cresswell Village Hall** would be selected.

RL - Looked at the Spirit of Leader award and felt that **Morwick Dairy** met that criteria from his selection of projects.

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With the event coming ever closer discussions are to be had around potential speakers and this will be discussed later.

10. Evaluation Working Group - Update:

SC - Provided his report and confirmed that:

- £1.27m worth of claims have been paid
- 34 out of 58 projects have been fully evaluated
- Shoreside Shepherd Huts - Evaluated by RL and SC
- Swarland Old Hall - Evaluated by SC and JO
- Adderstone Mains - Evaluated by SC and JO

To be evaluated:

- Red Lion Alnmouth (Commercial Kitchen)
- Expansion of Celtic Crafts
- Warkworth Cricket Club (Outfield Renovations)

Next meeting: Wednesday 22 May 2019 - venue Cresswell Village Hall

Action: IH to chase this up as confirmation.

Ross Lowrie, Chair closed the Northumberland Coast & Lowlands LEADER LAG meeting at 7.15pm.