
23/04/2018



**NORTHUMBERLAND COAST & LOWLANDS LEADER
LOCAL ACTION GROUP (LAG)
Wednesday 18th April, 2018**

Executive LAG Members:

Ross Lowrie - Chair
Alex Wallace - Vice Chair
Jean Orr
Simon Cox
Robert Brotherton
Julien Lake
Iain Robson
Ross Weddle
Carron Craighead
Guy Renner-Thompson
Richard Waters

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:

Ross Lowrie, Chair opened the Northumberland Coast & Lowlands LEADER LAG at 18:05

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

Apologies received and recorded from Executive Members: Louis Fell, Angus Collingwood-Cameron, Philip Angier and Ian Moyes
Apology received and recorded from LAG Member: Carol Moyes
Apology received and recorded from Accountable Body: Heather Smith



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2. D.O.I's Recorded:

- item agenda 7b - Community Transport Bellview - Guy Renner Thompson - Non Pecuniary

3. Draft Minutes from 21st March, 2018:

Page 1 - Accepted

Page 2 - Accepted

Page 3 - Accepted

Page 4 - Accepted

Page 5 - Accepted

Page 6 - Accepted

Page 7 - Accepted

Page 8 - Accepted

Page 9 - Accepted

Page 10 - Accepted

Page 11 - Accepted

Page 12 - Accepted

Minutes recorded as a True Record. dated and signed by Ross Lowrie, Chair

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

Actions from 21st March LAG meeting:

Page 3 - CS to circulate Defra Paper to LAG Members - Completed

Pages 4 & 5 - IH informed LAG members that FA approved Adderstone Main has sent a letter requesting additional information re - reduced funding and FA approved Cattle Handling Hub has also sent a letter regarding money capped for suppliers. To discuss with Chair and feedback to both applicants

RL - Has there been any response from application 1085 Ltd FAs decision?


IH - None

Chair's Update:

Future Agricultural Policy draws in LEADER. Attended meeting with NEFRAN and Defra at The Sill, excellent facility. A good opportunity to promote LEADER, there seems surprise of the current LEADER situation and very receptive of both LAG Chair's pitch.

Robert and I met with Ann Marie Trevelyan MP who is receptive to LEADER and Rural Funding. A Rural Prosperity Fund is to be developed, also keen to support

- Get support from the Communications and Evaluations Group work, useful to highlight to AMT (MP)



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- On a National level - key to advance

Emailed LAG Chairs around the country as working together will support and strengthen message

I will draft a Consultation Paper and submit the formal response on behalf of LEADER, share with LAG members for added comments

ACTION: Draft response for comment by Monday 30th April, 2018

5. Programme Officers Report to include Project Expenditure to Date:

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

Asked that LAG agree to consider project applications on the basis of these figures as of 18th April, 2018 LAG has issued GFAs totalling **£1,074,951.65 (66% of target spend)** with a balance of **£552,584.35** remaining to commit

Note - LAG approved and agreed Budget profile

CC - Do EOIs get informed that they are on a reserve list?

IH - Yes, new EOIs informed they are on a reserve list and are at risk

AW - Are they informed of the time scales, an additional hurdle for projects

SC - As a group we are agreeing strategy, what is LAGs approach, sort by quantity/quality and what is the threshold, can we present to Defra for underspend?

RL - How will LAG define, range of options: LAG decision, yes in terms of Defra, 2 routes as we are not currently at 90% committed, the longer answer is influencing. LAG commitment is on contract, not spend

DB - LAG are inline with other groups, there are quite a few LAGs near 90% and pressuring Defra for underspend. Some LAGs have actually overcommitted as Defra had alluded that LAGs need to maximise commitment.

Defra has written a letter to the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) with a request to vire funds from the Growth Programme to LEADER as their resources have not been utilised, it will be a local not national decision

RL - I've seen no correspondence about this

Note - IH to draft a summary of the letter requesting funds from the Growth Programme, forward to RL

ACTION - RL to contact D. Jackson coping in A. Braithwait re - new money

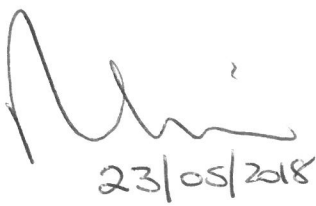
6. FAs for consideration by Executive:

a. Longhoughton Community & Sport Centre

DORA Ref: 108588

LEADER Priority Theme 4 - Support for Rural Services

Total Project Cost - £15,724.80



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LEADER Grant Request - £12,579.84

Summary - The project looks to replace the existing domestic kitchen with commercial standard catering facilities. This would enable the venue to increase the numbers of users and make the facility more sustainable widening the income

LAG Discussions:

LAG members discussed and considered Full Application and Technical Appraisal Application

RL - Proposed LAG vote

LAG Decision:

- 9 Votes - Yes
- 1 Vote - No
- 0 Vote - Abstain, Chair did not vote

LAG Executive Decision – LAG approved Full Application

Process - Chair signed and dated Technical Appraisal Form

b.Outfield Renovations

DORA Ref:108154

LEADER Priority Theme 4 - Support for Rural Services

Total Project Cost - £12,571.20

LEADER Grant Request - £7,542.72

Summary - The aim is to replace the current model with a new machine and cut the outfield in around 3 hours presently we are 4/5 over two days in the week and this does not include time lost for breakdowns

LAG Discussions:

LAG members discussed and considered the Full Application and Technical Appraisal Application

RL - LAG can rely on the technical appraisal for terms of legality and the accountable body. If new machine is eligible LAG can vote by written deposition

NOTE - LAG to vote on EOI Application by written deposition

7. Reserve EOIs received by Executive:


a.Thornton Farm Cottages

DORA Ref:109722

LEADER Priority Theme 3 - Support for Rural Tourism

Total Project Cost - £106,350.00

LEADER Grant Request - £42,540.00



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Summary - The project will convert a an unused cottage on the farm into a fully accessible two bedroomed holiday cottage and a purpose-built laundry room expanding the holiday cottage side of the business.

LAG members considered and discussed the Expression of Interest and the Technical Appraisal Application

RL - Proposed LAG vote

LAG Decision:

- 0 Votes - Yes
- 9 Vote - No
- 1 Vote - Abstain, Chair did not vote

LAG Executive Decision – EOI Application - Rejected

Process - Chair signed and dated Technical Appraisal Form

LAG Noted:

- FTE creation above guidelines

b. Community Transport Bellview

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 purchase a new wheelchair accessible minibus that will be used as part of a community transport service run out of Belford.

LAG members considered and discussed the Expression of Interest and the Technical Appraisal Application

RL - Proposed LAG vote

LAG Decision:

- 5 Vote - Yes
- 1 Vote - No
- 3 Vote - Abstain, Chair did not vote
- Guy Renner Thompson gave Declaration of Interest

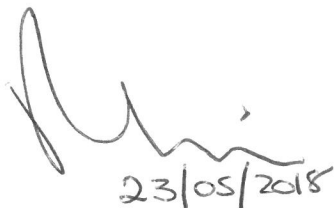
LAG Executive Decision – EOI Application - Approved to Full Application

Strategic Fit - 2

Process - Chair signed and dated Technical Appraisal Form

LAG Conditions:

- Like for like, questions additionality
- Sustainability of Business Plan



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c.Northumberland Country Zoo Education Centre for Displays

DORA Ref:109469

LEADER Priority Theme 3 - Support for Rural Tourism

Total Project Cost - £80,000.00

LEADER Grant Request - £32,000.00

Summary - The project will build an educational centre at a local animal park. This will enable indoor educational talks and displays for visitors to take place and provide a classroom for visiting schools.

LAG members considered and discussed the Expression of Interest and the Technical Appraisal Application.

RL proposed LAG vote:

LAG Decision:

- 7 Vote - Yes
- 1 Vote - No
- 2 Vote - Abstain, Chair did not vote

LAG Executive Decision – EOI Application - Approved to Full Application

Strategic Fit - 2

Process - Chair signed and dated Technical Appraisal Form

LAG Conditions:

- Detail FTEs
- Clarification on costs
- Planning Permission/s required

8. Communications Working Group - Update:

RB - Updated LAG members on press release published in the Northumberland Gazette, Thursday 15th April.

At the recent meeting with Ross and Ann Marie Trevelyan MP she has agreed to attend an evaluation project visit later in the year and will add a quote for the press release

IR - Raising LEADER profile, can LAG put a condition on each FA?

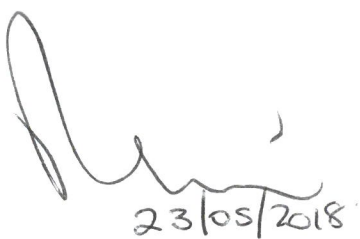
IH - There is applicant publicity guidance for each approved FA

DP - The RPA understands that not all press is published and editors can take out logos

CC - Attended an event by G F White and LEADER was mentioned a lot

RB - Intends to organise a meeting to discuss the ongoing strategy on behalf of the Comms Group

GRT - Northumberland County Council (NCC) has just rebranded, can add LEADER projects



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IH - We have a dedicated Coast & Lowlands presence on NCC website where we promote the LEADER Programme: www.northumberland.gov.uk/lowlands

ACTION - IH to contact approved FAs to remind them of the promotional guidance from the RPA

9. Evaluation Working Group - Update:

SC - Informed LAG members that:

14 projects closed and satisfactorily evaluated = £406k value. (+1)

7 projects newly closed / evaluations required = £222k value. (-1)

1 project (Carnaby's Brownieside Cafe) partially drawn = £17k released to date. (n/c)

12 projects newly contracted / nil payment to date. (+2)

34 projects fully approved, of these 22 projects have had claims partially / fully paid = **£646K**

TOTAL (60% GFA).

Most recent evaluation: Organic Egg Laying Unit with Ross and I, was a satisfactory visit.

Next evaluations: Operation Cop Shop and Robotic Flail will be completed by the end of April

SC - Thanked all members attending the evaluations for their support

10. A.O.B:

RL - LAG to hold their Annual General Meeting (AGM) in May

SC - What is the date for the AGM in May?

CS - Wednesday 23rd May, venue tbc

IH - If LAG want to hold an AGM both Chair and Vice Chair up for nomination so better to hold event later in the year

RL - Refer to the LAGs Constitution re-nominations

RL - Is there an estimate of FAs for May's meeting?

IH - There are four FAs currently ready for technical appraisal

RL - How do LAG prioritise?

IH - Review pipeline, LAG can suggest projects it would like to see come forward

RL - On the basis first available, first seen by LAG?

RL - Concerned by doing any EOI prioritising, LAG open to challenge. LAG can review pipeline

JL - LAG able to look at certain criteria, or time table

RL - Strategic fit

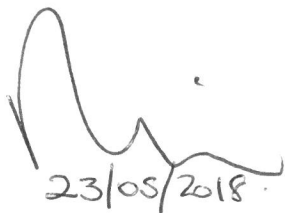
RB - Can LAG go to open call?

DB - C&L are an open call programme

RL - Strong legal risk

AW - Re- viewing pipeline, LAG look at objective criteria

IH - Not just judging on FTE creation, but on desirability



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SC - This is a lot of information to be taken in, can LAG review at next meeting?

DB - LAG needs to consider attrition rate FAs may drop out and new projects may be required

JL - That will create accountable body work issues

RL - All agree where we want to get too, question is how we get there?

IH - New message

RL - Spending time and resources

DB - Growth programme closes in May, divert more applicants to LEADER

ACTION - IH/CS send out LAG Chair/Vice Chair nomination papers for the A

Chair, Ross Lowrie closed the Coast & Lowlands LEADER LAG meeting at 20:22