

20/6/18
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**NORTHUMBERLAND COAST & LOWLANDS LEADER
LOCAL ACTION GROUP (LAG)
Annual General Meeting
Wednesday 23rd May, 2018**

Executive LAG Members:

Ross Lowrie - Chair
Alex Wallace - Vice Chair
Jean Orr
Simon Cox
Julien Lake
Iain Robson
Carron Craighead
Richard Waters
Ian Moyes
Louis Fell

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:

Ross Lowrie, Chair opened the Northumberland Coast & Lowlands LEADER Annual General Meeting 2018 at 17:30

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

Apologies received and recorded from Executive Members: Philip Angier, Ross Weddle, Robert Brotherton and Angus Collingwood-Cameron

Apology received and recorded from Accountable Body: Heather Smith

2. Chairperson's Address:

Ross Lowrie gave address, thanked LAG members for involvement and commitment over the last year and thanked Accountable Body for support and advice.

Ross emphasised the Coast & Lowlands LEADER Programme has been successful and is delivering its aims and objectives but that there is still more to do to ensure full commitment of funds and ensure the LAG is able to access additional monies.

SC - On behalf of LAG members thanked Ross and Alex for their continued work and support, also thanked Jean Orr and Richard Waters for their work on the evaluation visits.

Chairperson's address available from: christine.stevenson@northumberland.gov.uk

3. Programme Officers Report:

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 23rd May, 2018 LAG has issued GFAs totalling **£1,087,531.49 (66.82% of target spend)** with a balance of **£540,004.51** remaining to commit

Note - LAG approved and agreed Budget profile

CM - What is the current situation for project Shoreside Shepherd Huts?

IH - They have had a variation of spend issued for a smaller grant with same outputs as LAG approved application

4. Resignation of Current Officers:

IH - In line with the LAG Constitution nominations are required for the LAG Chair and LAG Vice Chair

Ross Lowrie, Chair of Northumberland Coast & Lowlands LAG formally resigned

Alex Wallace, Vice Chair of Northumberland Coast & Lowlands LAG formally resigned

5. Election of Officers:

IH - Nominations have been received for Ross Lowrie as Chair and Alex Wallace nominated as Vice Chair.

IH asked LAG members for any further nominations.

Jean Orr - proposed Ross Lowrie for Chair

Seconded by Alex Wallace



IH asked LAG members to vote - unanimous
 Ross Lowrie accepted nomination as Chair
 Ross Lowrie proposed Alex Wallace as Vice Chair
 Seconded by Simon Cox
 IH asked LAG members to vote - unanimous
 Alex Wallace accepted nomination as Vice Chair

Break for Buffet - Chair resumed LAG meeting at 18:20

6. D.O.I.

- item agenda 9a - Outfield Renovations - Ian Moyes - Non Pecuniary
- Item agenda 9c - Swarland Old Hall - Louis Fell - Pecuniary

7. Draft Minutes from 18th April, 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

Minutes recorded as a true record, dated and signed by Ross Lowrie, Chair

8. Matters Arising & Actions:

SC - Page 7 - word typed "aggravate" should have been "aggregate"

Actions from 18th April LAG meeting:

Page 3 - Draft response for comment by Monday 30th April - RL action completed but not as minuted.

Growth Programme underspend raised as an agenda item at NEFRAN meeting, provides an opportunity for LEADER, good discussion around value of LEADER. NEFRAN backing and support

Action from NEFRAN meeting is to hold a further meeting post May

DB - Raised at Rural Growth Network and ESIF Sub Committee

RL - Doesn't attend ESIF Sub Committee

Page 8 - IH following up with projects around acknowledgement of LEADER grant wards and Evaluation Group are also picking up on their visits

20/6/18
dw

IH - Press article in Ambler highlighting Operation Cop Shop (Iona Art Glass Ltd) mentioned LEADER funding

a. Running Costs & Animation (RC&A) Update:

DB - An agreement in principle for programme end to March 2019. RPA have promised an increase for RC&A from 18% to 22%, signed off new variation last week but still at 18%. A revaluation of the Euro/Sterling exchange rate was expected at 0.88, now at 0.834 which makes a significant impact. We need to look at figures again, trade off against RC&A. Accountable Body (AB) is looking at contingencies, good news but uncertainties as RPA working at their own speed

RL - Is the 0.834 revaluation per LAG?

DB - Yes, we have verbal confirmation

RL - Had a good Operational Group meeting with AB; asked AB to send out a budget update

DB - Yes will do

9. FAs for consideration by Executive:

a. 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 Full Application and Technical Appraisal Application

RL - Proposed LAG vote

- 8 Vote - Yes
- 0 Vote - No
- 0 Vote Abstain, Chair did not vote
- Ian Moyes gave Declaration of Interest

LAG Decision - Full Application Approved

Special Condition - Applicant to keep existing mower for 5 years

20/6/18
dw

b. The Masons Arms

DORA Ref:108162

LEADER Priority Theme 3 - Support for Rural Tourism

Total Project Cost - £197,170.20

LEADER Grant Request - £78,868.08

Summary - The aim of the project is to build an extension of The Masons Arms public house in Norham. The project will increase the number of bedrooms from four to eight and give space for a function room, refurbish and redesign the kitchen, provide a dedicated freezer/fridge room, linen room and office

LAG Discussions:

LAG members discussed and considered Full Application and Technical Appraisal Application

RL - Proposed LAG Vote

- 4 Vote - Yes
- 4 Vote - No
- 1 Vote Abstain
- Chair had deciding vote - voted Yes = 5 Yes

LAG Decision - Full Application Approved

c. Swarland Old Hall

DORA Ref:108229

LEADER Priority Theme 3 - Support for Rural Tourism

Total Project Cost - £93,318.20

LEADER Grant Request - £37,327.28

Summary - The project will see the establishment of 2 glamping pods next to the existing lodges on the farm. The pods will have to be finished to a high quality and include a kitchenette and ensuite facilities to work alongside the award winning lodges currently on offer by the business. This again will reduce the financial burden of the farming business by allowing Mrs Proctor to change her main source of income from the farm, to her accommodation business full time

LAG Discussions:

LAG members discussed and considered Full Application and Technical Appraisal Application

IH - Application has planning permission, TA is with RPA

RL - Once signed off by RPA circulate with FA and LAG can vote by Written Deposition

ACTION - CS to circulate FA and TA for LAG to vote by Written Deposition

20/6/18



d. Action Chase Glamping - Not discussed as waiting on Planning Permission

e. Alpha Strength & Fitness Ltd - Not discussed as waiting on Planning Permission

10. EOI Reserve List - Update:

IH - EOIs on reserve list in order received. If funding becomes available can progress.

LAG can prioritise

RL - LAG concluded unfair to applicants to prioritise

JL - Criteria needs to be transparent

RL - Chairs role is to protect LAG, may be challenges by applicants. LAG can't hear EOIs as the AB need to sign off TA's and can only do so if funds available, as LAG are currently overcommitted. LAG have value in knowing EOI reserve list but no capacity to prioritise

IR - If monies become available, how do LAG decide?

IH - LEADER projects have to be contracted by end March 2019

LF - Can LAG use criteria to prioritise?

DB - That's up to the LAG to decide

LF - Look at reserve list on basis of value for money?

AW - Some EOIs can't / won't be viable - amounts requested, timescales

IH - Can't say to applicants cannot apply, programme is open

LF - Do applicants know programme end date?

IH - Yes, all informed at start of process

RL - Challenge is now to use all LEADER staff capacity

DB - Ivan is still being challenged, still getting enquiries

RL - We need clear communications

DB - Growth Programme (GP) closes 31st May

IH - Countryside Productivity Scheme (CPS) a specific small scheme closed at present. Have talked to ARCH and DB sits on their committee

JL - Process of about four months from EOI?

IH - Process is in Applicant Handbook, which every applicant receives

JL - Is there a mechanism to encourage applicants to withdraw?

LF - If LAG have available funds, it is an open call

DB - Have to operate all the same

CC - Looking at the reserve list nine applicants have not submitted an EOI, takes the list down

20/6/18



RL - For any new enquiries help to signpost to other funding streams. As the AB can't sign off TA's would be nice to prioritise. Likes the idea of an open/closed call, investigate.

11. A.O.B:

IH - As of 25th May, 2018 new General Data Protection Regulations GDPR comes into force. LAG made aware of a new privacy statement on how they handle/dispose of information as they are operating as volunteers on behalf of Northumberland County Council

JL - What will need to be destroyed?

RL - Not volunteers on behalf of NCC, volunteers as LAG members on behalf of LEADER, clarify with RPA

ACTION - IH to ask RPA for clarification on data LAG members can hold and get clarification on individual data fro new GDPR

Chair, Ross Lowrie closed the Coast & Lowlands LEADER Annual General Meeting and LAG meeting at 19:45