

18/04/2018
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**NORTHUMBERLAND COAST & LOWLANDS LEADER
LOCAL ACTION GROUP (LAG)
Wednesday 21st March, 2018**

Executive LAG Members:

Ross Lowrie - Chair
Jean Orr
Simon Cox
Robert Brotherton
Ian Moyes
Louis Fell
Philip Angier
Guy Renner-Thompson
Richard Waters

LAG Member:

Carol 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 LAG 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 Weddle, Carron Craighead, Iain Robson, Julien Lake and Alex Wallace

Apology received and recorded from Accountable Body: Heather Smith



2. D.O.I's Recorded:

- item agenda 7d - The Barn on the Bay - Robert Brotherton - Personal

3. Draft Minutes from 21st February, 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

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 February's LAG meeting:

Page 3 - IH to check if survey "Brexit the Implications for Northumberland and Rural Northumberland" from Newcastle University is available for LAG members

RL - Completed Survey Round 1, happy to complete Round 2. Looking for views on rural matters

Chair's Update:

RL - LAG need to manage budget re-full commitment/full spend. There is no guarantee to fund new EOIs, more FAs, better to be clear.

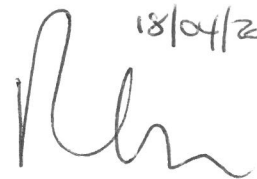
Future arrangements Post-Brexit:

Defra introducing a consultation paper with section on rural. Chair will draft a response on rural issues

Attended a consultation event in Hexham, good points about LEADER, also attending NEFRAN meeting where Defra Officials are invited.

Ross and Robert Brotherton have organised a meeting with Anne Marie Trevelyan (MP) to discuss sustainable rural communities, will raise point that around half a million pounds of volunteer time is committed from LAG members over a four to five year programme.

A lot going on influencing post Brexit world. Would encourage LAG members to promote LEADER.

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DB - Lots of other opportunities - Borderlands, a partnership with local authorities and Scottish border areas, £300 million rumoured over possibly 5 years. Focus not known yet but has high level government backing, pushing for Northumberland to have its share. There is also the North of Tyne Devolution Deal waiting to be signed off and Shared Prosperity Fund on horizon.

PA - Thanked LAG Chair for his advocacy for LEADER in Northumberland

ACTION - CS to circulate Defra Paper to LAG

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 21st March 2018 LAG has issued GFAs totalling **£1,065,487.37** with a balance of **£562,048.63** remaining to commit

Note - LAG approved and agreed Budget profile

LF - Are EOIs definitely coming forward as FAs?

IH - All applicants are given a deadline date for FA submission

LF - Do we need tighter deadlines?

RL - Challenge for LAG, do we continue to bring EOIs forward?

DB - If EOIs on tonight's agenda are approved LAG would be 20% over commitment and if LAG consider more EOIs in April will take LAG over agreed comfortable risk threshold, LAG may then have to reject FAs

RL - Turn tap off for new EOIs, ones in pipeline should be heard

LF - Keep pipeline fluid

SC - Agrees with LF, explaining situation as LAG go on and some may drop out.

Defra will make decision to reallocate funds

DB - Operating EOI reserve list, the accountable body can't sign off any new EOIs until LAG advise on how they propose to manage reserve list.

As there is £1.4 million on reserve list already. LAG need to start thinking how it will manage list. Issue with managing deadlines, managing programme


Note - LAG cannot stop applicants applying but should not encourage more to come in. Message is still open, work hard on list of FAs. Those EOIs through appraisal stage, LAG should see

RB - How set in stone is this?

DB - RPA are extending programme end date to March 2019. Projects committed have more time to complete, proposal is to allow extra 9 months for projects to spend and claim until December 2019

IH - Projects have extension to spend

RL - What happens if queries or support is needed?

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DB - If RC&A (Running Costs & Animation) increases from 18% to 22% the accountable body is looking at staff extensions

RL - LAG decision not accountable bodies?

IH - Last date to contract is 29th March 2019, last date projects can claim is December 2019. Currently the RC&A is 18% which RPA is proposing to increase to 22% of current overall spend. Currently the LAG will not be getting any extra allocation

DB - Accountable Body already funding staff and other resources for current final quarter

SC - Good news as allows some projects more time

RL - What is confirmed?

DB - Regarding RC&A up to 22% had email but no GFA (Grant Funding Agreement)

Note - Add to agenda, AB can't progress further EOIs where there is no confirmed budget.

6. FAs for consideration by Executive:

a. Adderstone Mains High Welfare Pig & Sheep Enterprise

DORA Ref:105251

LEADER Priority Theme 1 - Support for Farm Productivity

Total Project Cost - £84,586.11

LEADER Grant Request - £33,834.44

Project Summary - The aim of the project is to introduce a new sheep flock and a new pig "bed and breakfast" enterprise to an existing arable farm to help with its sustainability in future years.

LAG Discussions:

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

LAG Decision:

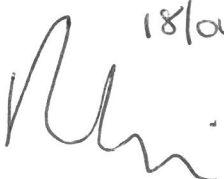
RL - Proposed LAG vote to approve FA as is:

LAG Decision:

- 3 Votes - Yes
- 4 Vote - No
- 1 Vote - Abstain, Chair did not vote

RL - Asked LAG for any other proposals to progress application

LF - Proposed LAG approve application but remove Sheep Draft and Weigh Equipment

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RL - Proposed LAG vote to approve FA without Sheep Draft and Weight Equipment

LAG Decision:

- 7 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

LAG Noted:

- Land not secured for sheep
- Not confident of delivery

b. Creation of Cattle Handling Hub

DORA Ref:108585

LEADER Priority Theme 1 - Support for Farm Productivity

Total Project Cost - £34,730.59

LEADER Grant Request - £13,892.24

Summary - The aim of the project is to create a cattle handling hub on an existing mixed farm in Northumberland.

LAG Discussions:

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

RL proposed LAG vote:

LAG Decision:

8 Vote - Yes

0 Vote - No

0 Vote - Abstain, Chair did not vote.

LAG Executive Decision – LAG approved Full Application
Process - Chair signed and dated Technical Appraisal Form

c. 1085 Ltd


DORA Ref:107881

LEADER Priority Theme 2 - Support for Micro Enterprise

Total Project Cost - £59,546.68

LEADER Grant Request - £23,818.67

Summary - Having identified an opportunity, applicant purchased a small copper granulation plant and has started testing the water - processing waste cable into

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copper granules on a small scale. Copper is then sold on the open market. He has actively been looking for suppliers of scrap cable both trades people (electricians and plumbers) and local scrap merchants and now has some local businesses collecting cable on their behalf.

LAG Discussions:

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

RL proposed LAG vote:

LAG Decision:

3 Vote - Yes

4 Vote - No

1 Vote - Abstain, Chair did not vote.

LAG Executive Decision – LAG Rejected Full Application

Process - Chair signed and dated Technical Appraisal Form

5. Presentations of EOIs received by LAG Executive:

a.Deyn's Deli

DORA Ref:109510

LEADER Priority Theme 2 - Support for Micro Enterprise

Total Project Cost - £65,000.00

LEADER Grant Request - £26,000.00

Summary - This project will support the purchase of ice cream machinery enabling the applicant to start manufacturing its own local ice cream for sale to local people and tourists.

LAG members welcomed Elizabeth Middlemiss and Eddy McGregor on behalf of Deyn's Deli who gave a short presentation of the project, applicants left meeting. LAG members then considered and discussed the Expression of Interest and the Technical Appraisal Application.

RL proposed LAG vote:

LAG Decision:

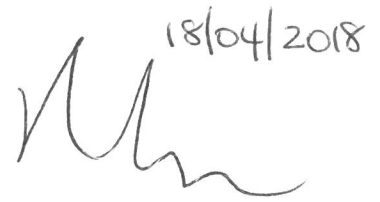
0 Vote - Yes

8 Vote - No

0 Vote - Abstain, Chair did not vote.

LAG Executive Decision – EOI Rejected

Process - Chair signed and dated Technical Appraisal Form

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LAG Rationale:

- Unsound Business proposal
- Question of FTE Creation - how funded

b. Post Driver

DORA Ref:109458

LEADER Priority Theme 2 - Support for Micro Enterprise

Total Project Cost - £13,500.00

LEADER Grant Request - £5,400.00

Summary - The project will help the purchase of a new machine - a post driver - that will help to develop an existing fencing contractor business in Berwick upon Tweed.

LAG members welcomed Alan Curry on behalf of Post Driver who gave a short presentation of the project, applicant left meeting.

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

RL proposed LAG vote:

LAG Decision:

- 8 Votes - Yes
- 0 Votes - No
- 0 Votes - Abstain, Chair did not vote

LAG Executive Decision – Expression of Interest Approved to Full Application

Strategic Fit - Scored 4

Process - Chair signed and dated Technical Appraisal Form

c. Expansion of Celtic Crafts

DORA Ref:109385

LEADER Priority Theme 2 - Support for Micro Enterprise

Total Project Cost - £65,850.00

LEADER Grant Request - £26,340.00

Project Summary - The project will extend the existing business premises (a jewellery and craft shop plus fudge and ice cream shop) on Holy Island to create space for a new ice cream making facility and craft jewellery workshop. LEADER grant will also assist the purchase of machinery and equipment to support this new activity.

LAG members welcomed Charlotte Mundy on behalf of Expansion of Celtic Craft who gave a short presentation of the project, applicant left meeting.

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

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RL proposed LAG vote:

LAG Decision:

- 8 Votes - Yes
- 0 Votes - No
- 0 Votes - Abstain, Chair did not vote

LAG Executive Decision – Expression of Interest Approved to Full Application

Strategic Fit - Scored 3

Process - Chair signed and dated Technical Appraisal Form

LAG Conditions:

- Clarify additionality to local businesses
- Displacement question

d. The Barn on the Bay

DORA Ref: 109321

LEADER Priority Theme 3 - Support for Rural Tourism

Total Project Cost - £103,000.00

LEADER Grant Request - £41,200.00

Project Summary - The applicant is a family farm who have diversified into a holiday cottage, camping, bell tents and barn accommodation. Last year they started to host weddings. This project will develop the wedding business further by converting a barn that can be used for large receptions, constructing a toilet block, upgrading electrical connections and landscaping and purchasing and installing camping pods. LAG members welcomed Phil Hornsey and Alison Bell on behalf of The Barn on the Bay who gave a short presentation of the project, applicants left meeting. LAG members then considered and discussed the Expression of Interest and the Technical Appraisal Application.

RL proposed LAG vote:

LAG Decision:

- 7 Votes - Yes
- 0 Votes - No
- 0 Votes - Abstain, Chair did not vote
- Robert Brotherton - Declaration of Interest

LAG Executive Decision – Expression of Interest Approved to Full Application

Strategic Fit - Scored 3

Process - Chair signed and dated Technical Appraisal Form

LAG Conditions:

- Planning Permissions - aspects of business

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- FTEs - what's new?

8. Communications Working Group - Update

RB - Working on press release for Easter with article to promote LEADER and mention projects. Asking for quote from Anne Marie Trevelyan (MP)

GRT - Happy to assist if needed

9. Evaluation Working Group - Update

SC - Informed LAG members that :

13 projects closed and satisfactorily evaluated = £365k value.

8 projects newly closed / evaluations required = £264k value.

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

10 projects newly contracted / nil payment to date.

32 projects fully approved, of these 22 projects have had claims partially / fully paid = £646K TOTAL (61% GFA).

Most recent evaluations: Alnwick Markets 23rd Feb (Jean / Carron); Nursery at Whitehouse Farm 12th Mar (Simon / Jean).

Next evaluations: Organic Egg Laying Unit 27th Mar (Simon / Ross L)

SC - Richard Waters will be joining group for future evaluations

RL - Communication and Evaluation work is fantastic, by end of programme would be excellent to have evaluated all projects

10. A.O.B:

None

Chair, Ross Lowrie closed the Coast & Lowlands LEADER LAG meeting at 20:23