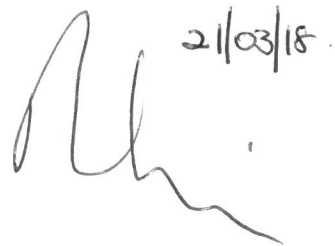


21/03/18




**NORTHUMBERLAND COAST & LOWLANDS LEADER
LOCAL ACTION GROUP (LAG)
Wednesday 21st February, 2018**

Executive LAG Members:

Ross Lowrie - Chair
Alex Wallace - Vice Chair
Jean Orr
Simon Cox
Robert Brotherton
Julien lake
Angus Collingwood-Cameron
Ian Moyes

LAG Member:

Carol Moyes

LEADER Staff:

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

Advisory Group:

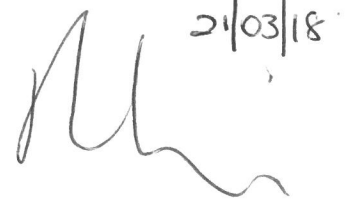
David Baird - External Funding Appraisal Manage, Northumberland County Council

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, Louis Fell, Guy Renner-Thompson, Carron Craighead, Richard Waters and Iain Robson
Apology received and recorded from Accountable Body: Heather Smith

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2. D.O.I's Recorded:

- item agenda 7c Expression of Interest The Nut Roaster - Robert Brotherton - Personal
- item agenda 7d Expression of Interest - Commercial Kitchen Refurbishment - Ian Moyes - Personal

3. Draft Minutes from 17th & 24th January, 2018:

Minutes from 17th January:

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 Alex Wallace, Vice Chair

Minutes from 24th January:

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


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

Actions from 17th January's LAG meeting:

Page 2 - CS to minute meeting as usual, type up draft minutes for review/redact decision by LAG at February's meeting - Completed

Page 3 - CS to circulate R.O.I. to LAG members and AB staff for update - Completed

Page 8 - CS to continue to organise evaluation visits - Ongoing

21/03/18.


Action from 24th January's LAG meeting:

IH - Elite Fitness Gym & Health Club - LAG agreed decision by Written Deposition - Completed

Chair's Update:

RL - Chair and Vice Chair attended Operational Group Meeting at County Hall with David Baird and LEADER staff. Discussions regarding the 2018 Annual General Meeting (AGM) to highlight LEADER role to decision makers re- funding. Coast & Lowlands LAG to showcase successes

ACTION: IH to check if survey Brexit the Implications for Northumberland and Rural Northumberland from Newcastle University is available for LAG members

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 February's 2018 LAG has issued GFAs totalling **£1,010,029.43** with a balance of **£617,506.57** remaining to commit.

ACC - Are the underspend monies fed back into figures?

IH - Yes be fed back in but are not incorporated into tonight's figures

DB - Will be recycled back

AW - Euro to Sterling conversion, will this make a difference?

IH - Discussions ongoing with RPA

Note - LAG approved and agreed Budget profile

6. FAs for consideration by Executive:

a. Precision Beef Farming

DORA Ref:106488

LEADER Priority Theme 1 - Support for Farm Productivity

Total Project Cost - £138,644.84

LEADER Grant Request - £55,457.94

Project Summary - The project is to establish a Precision Beef Research facility which will complement the existing commercial beef enterprise and reinvigorate on-farm specialist research in Northumberland for both academic and commercial clients. This will run alongside investments in a new suckler cow building to accommodate 140 suckler cows and calves and other associated developments requiring an investment of £1.2million.

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Nh

LAG Discussions:

- RL - How can LAG approve at full grant amount?
- IH - LAG can make decision based on innovation of project
- RL - Are there other similar in Northumberland?
- IH - Not known
- DB - Value of Jobs?
- IH - 2:52 FTEs. Appraiser scored to approve
- SC - Does the applicant understand that LAG can fund lower?
- IH - Yes applicant LAG can award less, but project offers LAG value for money
- DB - Grey area, pushed eligibility of equipment. Kit is non-standard in patch. Difficult if audited, could challenge
- RL - Root to challenge through audit?
- JL - Can LAG only consider Full Application?
- ACC - Issue with time scales, other funds available i.e. Countryside Productivity
- AW - LAG look at what's in front of us, this is a £1 million plus project
- RL - Purpose to keep LAG honest, look at rationale
- AW - Project is unique in Northumberland
- SC - Agrees with AWs comments. Commercial and Academic
- DB - Demonstrating equipment is not standard. The technical appraisal does not ask question
- RL - LAG has burden to find if is innovative. Read out emailed comments from LF (LAG Executive member)
- RB - Project is supported by AHDB (Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board)
- IH - Letters of support from Newcastle University
- ACC - Specific bits of equipment are non eligible, they are standard
- SC - At what stage did this become an issue?
- H - At EOI applicant was made aware that some items would be ineligible
- RL - LAG make decision now, then manage the decision
- JL - Applicant aware of the ineligibility, then brought more equipment in
- DB - Under the old applicant handbook kit was ineligible, now in new handbook kit that is non-standard can be eligible
- ACC - LAG can approve but have to justify
- RL - If standard kit that can't be deemed unstandard LAG members don't have expertise to determine if standard/unstandard
- SC - Will it be a surprise to applicant after so many months?
- IH - Not a surprise, applicant is aware
- RB - Applicant can come back to LAG with a variation request

NH 21/03/18

RL - LAG can vote to:

- a - LAG Reject
- b - LAG approve appraiser recommended grant amount
- c - LAG approve at full grant as "Innovation"

LAG discussed and agreed to vote on appraiser recommended amount

RL proposed LAG vote:

LAG Decision:

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

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

5. Presentations of EOIs received by LAG Executive:

a. Murton Whitehouse Farm - Applicant has withdrawn EOI

b. Indoor Riding Centre

DORA Ref:109276

LEADER Priority Theme 2 - Support for Farm Diversification

Total Project Cost - £175,000.00

LEADER Grant Request - £70,000.00

Summary - Construction of a purpose built indoor riding arena to extend the offer of an existing riding stables.

LAG members welcomed Alastair and Clare Nixon on behalf of Indoor Riding Centre 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

LAG Executive Decision – Expression of Interest Approved to Full Application
Strategic Fit - Scored 2

LAG Advice:

- Intervention rate on FTE at £30,000

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- Concerns on level of competition

Process - Chair signed and dated Technical Appraisal Form

c. The Nut Roaster

DORA Ref:109292

LEADER Priority Theme 2 - Support for Micro Enterprise

Total Project Cost - £11,000.00

LEADER Grant Request - £6,600.00

Project Summary - To fund the purchase of a larger capacity nut roaster and an additional grinder to increase the potential output for the business to meet market demand.

LAG members welcomed Robert Handyside on behalf of The Nut Roaster 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:

- 6 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

LAG Advice:

- Applicant to provide required approvals and certifications to confirm Health & Safety compliance and ability to operate a business from home

d. Commercial Kitchen Refurbishment

DORA Ref: 109297

LEADER Priority Theme 3 - Support for Rural Tourism

Total Project Cost - £42,539.98

LEADER Grant Request - £17,015.99

Project Summary - The project will refurbish an existing domestic kitchen within a public house in Alnmouth.

LAG members welcomed Jane and Kevin McHugh on behalf of Commercial Kitchen Refurbishment 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.

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RL proposed LAG vote:

LAG Decision:

- 6 Votes - Yes
- 0 Votes - No
- 0 Votes - Abstain, Chair did not vote
- Ian Moyes - Declared an Interest

LAG Executive Decision – Expression of Interest Approved to Full Application

Strategic Fit - Scored 2

LAG Advisory:

- Applicant to consider project realism of timescale and deliverability within the LEADER Programme
- Provided analysis of local competition and displacement impact
- Ensure equipment is new and additional not just replacement

Process - Chair signed and dated Technical Appraisal Form

e. Alpha Strength & Fitness Ltd

DORA Ref: 109362

LEADER Priority Theme 2 - Support for Micro Enterprise

Total Project Cost - £66,639.60

LEADER Grant Request - £26,655.84

Project Summary - The project will be establish a new Gym in Amble. Grant is requested to renovate a leased building and to provide gym equipment. LAG members welcomed Dan Allsopp on behalf of Alpha Strength & Fitness Ltd 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:

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

LAG Executive Decision – Expression of Interest Approved to Full Application

Strategic Fit - Scored 3

Special Conditions:

- Look at planning permission/s
- Clarity on FTEs
- Clarity on business case

Process - Chair signed and dated Technical Appraisal Form

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e. Alnwick Arch Climbing Centre

DORA Ref: 109335

LEADER Priority Theme 3 - Support for Rural Tourism

Total Project Cost - £95,500.00

LEADER Grant Request - £38,200.00

Project Summary - The project will construct a bouldering facility in an existing industrial unit in Alnwick. This will be used by climbers, schools, groups and visitors. LAG members welcomed Ben Brotherton on behalf of Alnwick Arch Climbing Centre 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:

- 7 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

8. Communications Working Group - Not discussed

9. Evaluation Working Group - Not discussed

10. A.O.B: - Not discussed

Ross Lowrie, Chair closed the Coast & Lowlands LEADER LAG meeting at 20:30