



**NORTHUMBERLAND COAST & LOWLANDS LEADER
LOCAL ACTION GROUP (LAG)
Wednesday 15th March 2017**

Executive LAG Members:

Ross Lowrie – Chair
Alex Wallace – Vice Chair
Ross Weddle
Jean Orr
Simon Cox
Chris Rushton
Steve Peart
Robert Brotherton
Philip Angier
Iain Robson

LAG Members:

Iain Moyes
Carole Moyes
Carron Craighead
Louis Fell
Brenda Fordy Scott

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 meeting at 18:00

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

CS - Apologies received and recorded from Executive Members: Julian Lake and Angus Collingwood-Cameron

Apologies received and recorded from LAG Member: Nic Best

Apology received and recorded from Accountable Body: Heather Smith

1. D.O.I.

Philip Angier - Agenda item 7b. Amble Dementia Friendly Arts Centre - Personal

Louis Fell - Agenda item 6a. H. Clark and Sons - Personal

Louis fell - Agenda item 7c. Alnwick Tennis Club - Pecuniary

2. Draft LAG Minutes from 15th February, 2017:

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 from Coast & Lowlands LAG meeting of 15th February 2017 agreed as a true record. Dated and signed by Ross Lowrie, Chair

3. Matters Arising & Actions to include Chairs Update:

IH/CS - Agenda item 8 - update on Website Shared LAG Access - Ongoing

CS - Agenda item 8 - circulated LAG Training dates and information

CS - Agenda item 8 - arranged initial Evaluation Working Group meeting

RL - Agenda item 8 - LAG agreed Chair's delegation

Chair's Update:

RL - Chair and Programme Officer (IH) met with applicant for Scotts of Alnmouth to

19/04/17


discuss issue of double counting of proposed job outputs, discussed and clarification provided by applicant. Going forward, as same applicant is linked to the FA approved for Shoreside Shepherd Huts, maybe an issue

LAG Training - Session 1 was well received by all, useful to go through.

Informed LAG members that along with LAG Staff he attended the funeral of Cllr. Milburn Douglas who was a valued LAG Executive member through LEADER 2007 - 2013, Transition 2014 and into 2014 - 2020 Programme, he will be very much missed. We now have an issue as no County Council representation on the LAG DB - Potential issue with an appointment before the local elections?

RL - Informed LAG members of the resignation of Julia Plinston, LAG Executive who represented CAN (Community Action Northumberland).

Note - Will raise under A.O.B. issue of representation from resignations of Steve Lowe - Northumberland Wildlife Trust and Julia Plinston - CAN; as LAG have reduced LAG Executive and Wider LAG

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

IH - Projects are continuing to come forward with Outline and Full Applications in development. Currently there are 3 OAs and 2 FAs ready for April's meeting. Programme budget is on track and the LAG can continue to commit and spend

RL - Consideration for redistribution spending?

IH - No, does not take into account any redistribution

RL - I am a member of the LEADER Chairs Google group where there has been some early discussions starting

DB - If there is redistribution, will be too LAGs who are spending their commitment

IR - 2016/17 LAG had little spend, is IH confident projects will deliver?

IH - No issues, as mentioned by Chair earlier Shoreside Shepherd Huts is a risk

DB - Issues will be in 2018/19 - looks like we can roll over this year. The RPA will soon start to look at LAG spends, need to be careful of variations

NOTE - LAG approved and agreed Budget Profile

6. Consideration of Full Applications received by Executive:

a. H Clark and Sons

DORA Ref: 103942

LEADER Priority Theme 1 - Support to increase farm productivity

Total Project Cost - £12,092.38

LEADER Grant Request - £4,836.95

19/04/17


Summary - The applicant at Paxton Dene Farm (NE65 8TQ) will in an effort to increase business turnover and sustainability implement precision farming techniques of variable rate drilling and fertiliser spreading across the farmed area. This will eliminate overlapping and thus save on fertiliser, seed and fuel costs. In order to do this, the applicant seeks to purchase with grant assistance:

- EZ-Pilot System, Display + VRA System

Scored 47 out of 68. The Appraiser states the project is eligible and recommends approval subject to special conditions

RL – Chair welcomed Andrew Johnson on behalf of H Clark and Sons who gave a short presentation

LAG Questions:

JO - Is this to improve your yield?

AJ - By mapping fields and soil testing will vary rates and help yields. Takes less time and saves waste.

CC - Satellite navigation, is this extra equipment?

AJ - Plugs into tractor, require equipment on all. The technology is already in place - linked up

CR - Job created?

AJ - Securing person already, linking up with other farmers

CR - Will there be a definite job created?

AJ - Yes, with funding

SP - Any evidence of new contracts to date?

AJ - Since applying for funding I have secured another farm and have mapped other fields. Interest in system from other neighbours

RB - Increase in seeding area, how much?

AJ - Saving and increase in yields over large areas, will benefit farmers

PA - Research, as IT keeps changing, how long before it changes again?

AJ - It's been over 5 years from start, seems to have settled down with apps

PA - 4-5 years pay back?

AJ - Within first few years

RL – Informed applicants that the LAG celebrates success of projects. Thanked applicant for their presentation

Applicant left LAG meeting

LAG Discussion:

RW - New system GPS launching, 5 year deal is OK

JO - Feels a good system for LAG to support

AW - The increase in yield has to be a positive outcome

LF - If we get many of the same project, look to signpost to other funds



RW - C&L LAG funded Wind Turbines in the last LEADER Programme

CR - Same application, would LAG say different?

IH - Might be eligible, but not desirable

RL - LAG have six priorities to fund

IR - For clarification - is this a new job to fund or an existing one?

CR - Applicant said "securing"

IH - Looking to create a new job

CC - Will it be a seasonal job?

RB - Applicant is asking for a small amount of money, will enable him to expand and assist other farms and farmers

RL - Proposed for LAG Executive to vote

LAG Decision:

9 Vote - Yes, 0 Vote - No, Chair did not vote

LAG Executive Decision – Full Application Approved

Process – Chair signed and dated FA Appraisal Form

b. Operation Cop Shop (Iona Art Glass Ltd)

DORA Ref: 104550

LEADER Priority Theme Priority 2 - Micro Enterprise (Support for small businesses)

Total Project Cost - £30,662.00

LEADER Grant Request - £12,264.80

Summary - The project is to expand and develop the business by converting the Old Police Station in Amble into a stained glass studio and to train 2 new apprentices.

The main aim is to ensure Northumberland can continue to have one of the country's premier stained glass studios based here to provide both local and national stained glass conservation services

Scored 51 out of 68 with the Technical Appraiser recommending the LAG to approve as recommended by the appraiser subject to special condition(s)

LAG Discussions:

LF - Building is owned outright as LAG may be funding work to the building there should be a lease in place

IH - The GFA will be issued to the business

LF - Should be a legal agreement between Chris Chesney as the individual property owner and Iona Art Glass Ltd as the applicant business

RL - Value of LAG discussions

LF - Question - value of need for grant?

IH - Without LEADER funding project would take longer and outputs and outcomes would be delayed or smaller

CC - Was impressed with applicant at OA presentation, very enthusiastic

AW - Good practise to have money in the bank as need to pay staff. Applicant wants to employ apprentices and keep on in the business. Good for LAG to support

LF - Technical issue?

RL - Valid concern

SC - From initial OA, thought a good application. Specialised, quality flagship business for Northumberland. At £5,500 per apprenticeship is good value for money. Needs reserves of funds to cover training and wider business

JO - Agrees with SC, feels LAG should support

RL - Proposed for LAG Executive to vote

LAG Decision:

9 Vote - Yes, 0 Vote - No - Chair did not vote

LAG Executive Decision – Full Application Approved

Process – Chair signed and dated FA Appraisal Form

LAG Note - Special Condition - the beneficiary is required to supply a copy of a lease/agreement regarding use of the Old Police Station between the Property Owner (Chris Chesney) and Iona Art Glass Ltd

Note - Philip Angier, LAG Executive left meeting

7.Consideration of Outline Applications Received by Executive:

a.Adderstone Mains

DORA Ref: 105251

LEADER Priority Theme Priority 1b - Support to Increase Farm Productivity (Animal Health and Welfare)

Total Project Cost - £269,800.00

LEADER Grant Request - £33,920.00

Summary - The project is to establish and develop a high welfare pig and sheep enterprise on the applicant's arable farm. Plans will introduce a new sheep flock and a new pig "bed and breakfast" enterprise (where 3 batches of 1,000 pigs each year are fattened up for pig farmers). Grant is requested towards equipment costs including mobile sheep handling equipment, mobile pig penning, automated feed and drink machinery and LED lighting

Scored 14 out of 24. Technical Appraiser recommends approval

RL – Chair welcomed Richard Pearson on behalf of Adderstone Mains who gave a short presentation

LAG Questions:

LF - What is pig system?

RP - Pigs come in a 7 weeks old for fattening until 22 weeks

CC - As an arable farmer knows there's a lot of investment in sheep fencing

RP - Yes, agrees a lot of investment

CR - If you don't get grant would you loose Energy System, not 0.4 FTE of job?

RP - Yes

SC - A lot of expenditure is not eligible for LEADER, what stage are you at with the bank loan? You expect to increase income, how much extra turnover?

RP - 5 year contract. Sheep cost about £60, sell for £80

LF - Are the sheep handling pens mobile or fixed?

RP - Mobile

SP - Is there any additional capacity?

RP - Future proof to allow for a second shed

RL – Informed applicants that the LAG celebrates success of projects. Thanked applicant for his presentation

Applicant left LAG meeting

LAG Discussions:

LF - A lot of things are not eligible, can see £48,000 of costs not eligible

IH - Asked RPA specific questions. The Technical Appraisal has left them in but needs clarification. Suggest take out ineligible items

LF - Two items not eligible, sheep element is eligible. feels applicant has not done enough research. Worried about sheep business, not converting arable

IR - Using someone else's land

CC - Sheep will range around

IR - How did he get a scheme last year?

CR - Concerned about value for money, not 1.4 jobs created - is this value for money?

LF - Grant would be lower

IR - Pigs don't take a lot of looking after, sheep business would need to generate income and job

RL - Also concerns with value for money, job creation and eligibility

IH - Overall project is eligible, can ask to look at costs and value for money

SC - Can OA be remodelled

19/04/17


RL - Proposed for LAG Executive to vote on:

a - Approve progressing OA as is

OR

b. Revised OA which demonstrates clear value for money, access to land, and ineligible items stripped out

DB - Still waiting on the RPA for eligibility

LAG Decision on vote b.

6 Vote - Yes, 0 Vote - No, 2 Vote to Abstain - Chair did not vote

LAG Executive Decision – Outline Application Approved

Process – Chair signed and dated OA Appraisal Form

LAG Note - Ineligible items removed from expenditure and evidence of grazing agreements to be provided at FA

b. Amble Dementia Friendly Arts Centre

DORA Ref: 105202

LEADER Priority Theme Priority 4 - Rural Services

Total Project Cost - £184,800.00

LEADER Grant Request - £134,904.00

Summary - The project will carry out structural, design and refurbishment works to a building in Amble including a new roof, rebuilding and strengthening internal walls, replacement windows and doors, plumbing, heating and rewiring. The renovated building will then become a dementia friendly arts centre hosting the Curiosity Café for people with early onset dementia, specialist art classes, four studios for rental to local creative businesses, community events and dementia holidays

Scored 14 out of 24. Technical Appraiser recommends reject

RL – Chair welcomed Francis Anderson and Paula Turner on behalf of Amble Dementia Friendly Arts Centre who gave a short presentation


LAG Questions:

JO - How often will the centre be open?

PA - Open all week as need for this support

JO - How will you generate income to aid sustainability?

FA - Detailed in our Business Plan, range of activities, commercial and community based, studio rentals, support the running of the centre with specialised classes,

19/04/17


dementia friendly events and tourism. We intend to keep applying for grants while they are available

CM - Where is centre located in Amble?

FA - In a good area

AW - Can you get the lease extended?

FA - Yes

AW - Are Amble Development Trust (ADT) helping with plan?

FA - ADT have written us into their economic plan, more a strategic partner

SC - What are your turnover predictions?

FA - Turnover based on forecast turnover of £58,900.00 in 2017/18, rising to £112,910. in 2018/19 and £172,685.00 in 2019/20. Have done research and based on comparator business pricing (Dementia Tourism)

SC - Why did Tudor Trust and Ballinger Trust say no to your applications?

FA - Don't disclose reasons but said was a good project but with many applications funds were not available

SP - Have you had any interest in the rental studios?

FA - Yes, two enquiries already

RL - Informed applicants that the LAG celebrates success of projects. Thanked applicants for their presentation

Applicants left LAG meeting

LAG Discussions:

JO - Feels it's a business that will diversify for dementia

IH - Referrals from NHS

LF - Over reliant on grants for income, a big project do they have the capacity to deliver? Noted the Technical Appraiser recommended reject

AW - All aware of dementia, important place for integration. Feels is an innovative project

SC - High amount of grant, has issues about sustainability. Building benefits not an asset. Dependant on grants and goodwill

CC - Amble is a "dementia friendly" town, run a dementia cafe

CR - Agrees with AW. Jobs increased to 6.5, would like to see FA but requires clarification

RB - Who are partners?

IR - Is the £50,000 in kind or match?

IH - Secured match funding

RL - Proposed for LAG Executive to vote

19/04/17


LAG Decision:

5 Vote - Yes, 3 Vote - No - Chair did not vote

LAG Executive Decision – Outline Application Approved

Process – Chair signed and dated OA Appraisal Form

Note - RL highlighted the Technical Appraisal conditions and LAG requirement for FA to show the process for job recruitment and evidence value for money and sustainability of project

c. Alnwick Tennis Club

DORA Ref: 104948

LEADER Priority Theme Priority 4 - Rural Services

Total Project Cost - £118,510.00

LEADER Grant Request - £71,142.30

Summary - An existing tennis club in Alnwick (run by a CIC, with no employees) wishes to invest funds to improve facilities for club members and the general public. Scored 12 out of 24. Technical Appraiser recommends approval to FA subject to conditions

RL – Chair welcomed Louis Fell (LAG Member) and Grant Watson on behalf of Alnwick Tennis Club who gave a short presentation

LAG Questions:

IR - Mirroring the national picture

GW - Starting to increase, currently play for 7 months. With new courts and floodlights would increase to 12 months

LF - Figures are more achievable with new courts

RW - Other sources of funding?

LF - Sport England is difficult, Alnwick is seen as prosperous rural area and need in Alnwick is not seen as similar to for example Newcastle, funding goes to urban areas. SITA is oversubscribed, now looking at small grant funding. Will look to ask the Duke of Northumberland as a last resort

CR - To use the new courts do you have to be a member?


LF - Pay to play, on certain days free of charge. Different rates

CR - Standard rates?

LF - £20 Senior, £50 Adult

AW - Have you approached Lawn Tennis Association (LTA)?

LF - LTA only offer a loan

19/04/17


RL – Informed applicants that the LAG celebrates success of projects. Thanked applicants for their presentation
Applicants left LAG meeting

LAG Discussion:

IR - Huge intervention rate, let applicant ask Duke of Northumberland for money
AW - Potential to raise £10,000 with members, maybe raising expectations. Areas in Alnwick that would get funding
RB - Good facility in Swarland
SC - No direct jobs, only 52 members at present, don't think LEADER is the correct grant
CM - Brand new school in Alnwick, will they have courts?
RL - Proposed for LAG Executive to vote

LAG Decision:

0 Vote - Yes, 8 Vote - No - Chair did not vote
LAG Executive Decision – Outline Application Rejected
Process – Chair signed and dated OA Appraisal Form

8. A.O.B:

- a. LAG Training - RL updated under Chair's Update
- b. LAG Working Groups - IH updated under Programme Officer Report
- c. Website Members Area - CS/IH informed LAG members that working with NCC's IT department to implement LAG Members Shared Area

DB - Conscious of OAs in pipeline and ready for LAG to consider getting bumped to next meeting

RL - After the resignations of Steve Lowe (NWLT) and Julia Plinston (CAN) and the loss of Cllr. Milburn Douglas the LAG will need to review its membership for both the Executive and Wider LAG for sector and public representation

ACTION: IH/CS to pursue LAG Shared Members Area

Date & Time of the next C&L LAG Meeting:

The next Coast & Lowlands LAG meeting will be held at on Wednesday 19th April at Shilbottle Community Centre from 18:00 – 20:00

19/04/17

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'N' followed by a vertical line and a small dot.

Ross Lowrie, Chair closed the Coast & Lowlands LAG meeting at 20:25