

MINUTES

LEADER Local Action Group – SMG Group Meeting

Wednesday 12th October 2016, 10am

Held at: Gracefield Arts Centre, Dumfries

Present: **Peter Ross (Chair) (PR)** Cathy Agnew (CA)
 Heather Brash (HB) David Rennie (DR)
 Caroline Graham-Brown (CGB) Gillian Khosla (GK)
 Alastair McNeill (AMcN) Barry Dunne (BD)
 Claire Thirlwall (CT) Karen Ward Boyd (KWB)

Staff: Nicola Hill (NH)
 Simone Tyrie (ST)

Apologies: Colin Smyth (CS) Craig Peacock (CP)

Actions from this meeting:

| Agenda Point: | Action: | Responsible: |
|---------------|--|--------------|
| AOCB | Re-advertising Programme Support Officer post | NH |
| | LEADER Chairs to cover attendance at decision making meetings to ensure quorate decisions taken at all times | PR/HB/GK |

Welcome

PR welcomes members

Minutes of Last Meeting

AMcN proposes minutes, GK seconds. Minutes are accepted.

Matters Arising

BREXIT Sub Group – PR confirmed a Sub Group of LAG members had met to discuss the implications for the LEADER programme following the EU Referendum result. The group made up of PR, DR and GK met on 25th August 2016 and discussed the letter received from Cabinet Secretary Fergus Ewing. Letter confirmed funds committed prior to Autumn Statement would be honoured. Sub Group members agreed the LEADER team should endeavour to commit as much funding as possible prior to Autumn Statement (A/S) (date unknown at that point). Autumn Statement date confirmed at 23rd November and December decision making meetings rescheduled to 17th November to ensure funds committed prior to A/S. Subsequent communication from UK government confirms all funds committed prior to the UK leaving the EU will be honoured. The group agreed that LAG Strategic projects should not be rushed and will now be considered at the March 2017 meeting. The LAG currently awaits written confirmation of statement made by Fergus Ewing at Scottish Rural Parliament event in Brechin 6th October 2016. Cabinet Secretary assured all funding would be secure until 2019.

Mentoring Sub Group – NH advised that this has not been actioned given the current uncertainty around the programme. This will be carried forward into the beginning of next year and progressed once a clearer path forward is apparent.

Chair's Comments

PR gave an update on the LAG's attendance at the Scottish Rural Parliament event in Brechin 6th-8th October 2016. PR was joined by HB and Eva Milroy (EM) of the Rural Enterprise Group along with Derek Hextall (DH) and Ellen Grant (EG) LEADER project Officers for Communities and Rural Enterprise. SMG members discussed the merits of attending the event and it was agreed that it provided valuable networking opportunities for both staff and LAG members. PR, HB and EM will provide written reports on their experience and these will be circulated to the wider LAG for information.

Action point – PR/HB/EM

CA left the meeting

Strategic Projects

SMG members discussed the 4 strategic projects currently in development:

Day of the Region (DoR) – The delivery of DoR 2016 was discussed and NH confirmed the steering group has met to begin discussions around 'what next' for DoR. NH confirmed the team are currently in discussions with Ivan Annibal of Rose Regeneration regarding incorporating Social Return on Investment (SROI) tools into DoR. DH, NH and Lesley Ross (LR) will meet with Ivan on 22nd November 2016. LR will continue to gather evaluation information from participating communities to inform a future funding application. CT confirmed she will put NH in touch with colleagues in NHS regarding Social Capital. SMG members discussed the opportunity to engage local businesses in the delivery of future DoR celebrations – NH confirmed this was already being discussed by the steering group. The steering group will develop a funding application for consideration by the Communities Group at their meeting in March 2017.

Capacity for Change (C4C) – NH advised that a steering group has been established to develop the C4C project for the new programme period. The steering group has met with Sarah Skerratt (SS) and her colleague Elliot Meador (EM) (SRUC) via video link to progress discussions around a future collaboration. Subsequent communication from Scottish

Government colleagues has confirmed that we will be required to undertake a full procurement process to allow SRUC to bid for the work involved in the C4C project. Discussions with SS and EM on C4C will need to cease and the steering group will be responsible for the development of the project and tender document required to progress this project idea.

Youth Participation Project – NH confirmed that development of this project has been hampered by the EU Referendum result. Previous plans to deliver a cooperation project with Finnish colleagues has had to be shelved until guidance is received from Scottish Government. In the meantime NH has been approached to sit on a working group taking forward the development of a Youth Democracy & Participation Strategy for the region. SMG members agreed this project idea should be informed by the subsequent strategy and therefore NH will attend working group meetings and report to SMG members in due course. This project idea will be revisited once the Strategy is in place and a clear path forward is established.

Artists Project – NH advised that the steering group for this project has met and will meet with Elles Bulder of the Netherlands on 19th October 2016 to discuss the project further. SMG members discussed the project idea and suggested Spring Fling, DG Unltd and The Stove should be involved in the development of any future project to ensure coherence across the sector. The steering group will report back to SMG following meeting with Elles Bulder and further discussion has taken place.

NH suggested that all Strategic Projects should clearly demonstrate outputs on the ground for communities but should also help to inform the future direction for rural development – post LEADER.

Meeting dates

SMG members discussed confirmation of future meeting dates. NH to circulate dates for 2017 & 2018. DR suggested clarity over the agenda items for SMG meetings was required. NH advised SMG members need to inform the Agenda and drive the direction of discussion at SMG meetings.

Action Point - NH

AOCB

Programme Support Officer – NH advised recruitment for this post has been unsuccessful to date. NH requested confirmation from SMG members that they are happy for the post to be re-advertised. SMG members confirmed this course of action. NH to re-advertise post as a 12 month contract with potential to extend.

Action Point - NH

LAG membership – NH confirmed Chick McKenna and Heather Hall have both resigned from the Communities Group. PR confirmed following a discussion at the recent Chairs Group meeting LEADER Chairs PR, HB and GK will cover attendance at decision making meetings to ensure decisions are quorate.

Date of Next Meeting

11th January 2017 – venue to be confirmed.