

## MINUTES

### Local Action Group – Communities Group Meeting

Wednesday 1 March 2017, 10am

Held at: The Usual Place, Dumfries

Present	Heather Brash	(HB)	Clair McFarlan	(CM)
	Norman Burns	(NB)	Joan Neilson	(JN)
	Harry Harbottle	(HH)	Rob Wells	(RW)
	McNabb Laurie	(ML)	Jennifer Wilson	(JW)
Staff	Nicola Hill	(NH)	Simone Tyrie	(ST)
	Jessie Mason	(JM)		
Apologies	Ed Forrest	(EF)	Mairi Telford Jammeh	(MTJ)

#### 1. Welcome & Apologies

Chair, Heather Brash welcomed everybody to the meeting, noting there were no new LAG members.

Apologies were noted from Ed Forrest and Mairi Telford Jammeh.

HB introduced and welcomed JM.

**Declarations of Interest:** There were no declarations of interest

#### 2. Minutes of previous Meeting held on 17 November 2016

2.1 HB asked for confirmation of Minutes from last meeting were a true and accurate record. HH highlighted the fact that a comment on page 3 should be expanded to include the full comment on Article 31. This was noted. Minute was approved subject to change. Proposed by ML, seconded by RW, email approval received from MTJ.

2.2 No Business was discussed at the November meeting.

The Castle Loch Footpath Diversion project had some issues when they received their tenders, the costs were higher than expected however they were able to add the extra match funding required to cover the costs. The LAG agreed via email to the LEADER intervention rate being changed from 50% to 41.04% and the LEADER grant remaining at £9,000.

#### 3. Consideration of Application

**All project decisions are based on Scottish Government issued Guidance version 4.0**

##### C051 The Bridge to Employment

NH introduced the project, the total project cost is £126,771.00, and the applicant is requesting a LEADER grant of £63,271.00 (49.90967966%)

The Bridge to Employment aims to establish an alternative post-school progression route for young people in the Stewartry Area of Dumfries and Galloway with Additional Support Needs (mainly young people under the age of 25 with Autism Spectrum Disorder – ASD) into Further Education, Training or Employment. The target group are ‘more able’ young people with additional support needs who have already gained national qualifications but require additional support to take the next step to work or further education to fulfil their potential. Training in supporting and working with people with ASD will be provided to businesses, employers and Further Education Institutions who become involved

The Applicant has attempted to address all of the feedback that was communicated to them after the draft submission.

Match Funding has been secured in full.

Discussion took place - MTJ had provided electronic feedback which HB fed into the discussion. MTJ observed how well the project was organised and meets the criteria along with filling the gap on autism. CM and ML endorsed that it was embedded into other services. HB questioned if the activity should be done by Education? It was agreed that it wasn't a statutory responsibility. HB was pleased that support was confirmed by employers. RB liked that it was very well focussed. HH felt it was a very good project.

Following the discussion the group then scored the project.

### Scoring

1. Does the project embody originality, embrace experimentation or demonstrate innovation?	3
2. Does the project applicant demonstrate adequate knowledge, experience and enthusiasm to deliver?	4
3. Does the project demonstrate clear linkages to other related local activities or strategies?	3
4. Does the project demonstrate evidence of community, market or business need/demand?	3
5. Does the project demonstrate value for money?	3
6. Does the project clearly demonstrate additionality?	3
7. Does the project adequately recognise and address participation barriers or risks?	3
8. Does the project clearly tackle at least one of the LDS themes: a. Economy   b. Land, Coast and Marine Environments   c. Sustainable Settlements	3
9. Does the project clearly demonstrate what will be achieved by the project – Outcomes/Indicators/Target Groups?	3
10. Are you happy that this project fits comfortably with the LEADER LDS?	yes
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>28</b>

Application group score:28/36

Number of Members APPROVING: 6

Number of Members NOT APPROVING: 0

The decision was taken to **APPROVE** this project.

Recommendation from the LAG was to build in a monitoring element.

### C118 – Saving Scotland’s Red Squirrels – Developing Community Action

NH introduced the project, the total project cost is £210,711.00, and the applicant is requesting a LEADER grant of £105,356.00 (49.99976271%).

This project focuses upon one of the most charismatic and well-loved mammals – the Red Squirrel. Once widespread, red squirrels have undergone a catastrophic decline, primarily due to competition from the non-native, invasive American grey squirrel. The innovative Saving Scotland’s Red Squirrels partnership has established through a trial period that it is possible to halt the decline of red squirrels via co-ordinated grey squirrel control. Saving Scotland’s Red Squirrels – Developing Community Action” will develop a more sustainable way to secure the future of red squirrels over the long-term in Dumfries and Galloway,

moving away from reliance on paid staff towards creating communities that are supported, motivated and capable of acting together to project red squirrels in their local area.

The applicant has attempted to address the feedback received at draft stage. Match funding for the project has been secured in full.

Discussion took place - RW observed that there was a lot of knowledge shown and built into the proposal. CM agreed, but questioned innovation, however, she liked the project and wanted to see it go ahead. HH would like to see evidence that shows whether the numbers have increased or declined at the end of the project.

ML stated that Galloway Glens had received an application for the conservation of Squirrels. He advised that there is a holding line in the North, with many greys being culled and a difference is being made. He also stated that the local Glenkens group have built up good networks which can and should be contacted and utilised and the existing Red Squirrel groups have good relationships with local estates and these should also be engaged with.

ML also raised the connection with the Red Squirrels and the Galloway Glens Landscape Partnership. GGLP had been asked to provide a letter of support, this was on behalf of the Board of the GGLP and the project itself was not going to be a recipient of GGLP funding. The Group accepted that this was not a conflict of interest.

JN commented that it was a lot of money, due to the number of volunteers that would be involved, but also noted if the application does not receive funding, it will still go ahead and be funded by themselves.

Following the discussion the group then scored the project.

### Scoring

1 Does the project embody originality, embrace experimentation or demonstrate innovation?	3
2 Does the project applicant demonstrate adequate knowledge, experience and enthusiasm to deliver?	3
3 Does the project demonstrate clear linkages to other related local activities or strategies?	3
4 Does the project demonstrate evidence of community, market or business need/demand?	3
5 Does the project demonstrate value for money?	3
6 Does the project clearly demonstrate additionality?	3
7 Does the project adequately recognise and address participation barriers or risks?	3
8 Does the project clearly tackle at least one of the LDS themes: Economy   b. Land, Coast and Marine Environments   c. Sustainable Settlements	3
9 Does the project clearly demonstrate what will be achieved by the project – Outcomes/Indicators/Target Groups?	3
10 Are you happy that this project fits comfortably with the LEADER LDS?	yes
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>27</b>

Application group score:27/36  
Number of Members APPROVING: 6  
Number of Members NOT APPROVING: 0

The decision was taken to **APPROVE** this project.

There was a recommendation from the LAG to:

- 1 Monitor the situation with regard to the differences in population levels achieved by project.
- 2 Establish links with existing groups.
- 3 Publicise the activity to a wider area than that stated in the application.

### **C152 – Connecting in Communities Project**

NH Introduced the project, the total project cost is £299,083.00 and the applicant is requesting a LEADER grant of £149,541.00 (49.99983282%).

Working across 3 Glenkens villages, this project will support volunteers to take a lead in designing, delivering and evaluating a programme of activity designed to improve both their own lives and those of their fellow community members.

The applicant has attempted to address the feedback received at draft stage. They also expect a decision from Big Lottery by the end of March 2017.

Discussion took place - CM thought the project was very expensive and that the success of the project depended on the staff involved, she did agree that it was trying to develop community spirit.

RW liked the project and asked if it carried on from a previous project "Connecting in Retirement". ML considered they had tried to evaluate what had worked and what had not, and that they had been very critical of themselves. He stated that although the principal of working together with communities sounds easy, it is not, and they are trying to introduce change and community engagement. He noted that it is good to break down barriers.

CM thought the project gives the basis of generating interest. JW felt that the project strengthened the focal point and getting more people more active - as long as they were able to get involved in things which interested them. All areas are different and there are ongoing challenges in small villages/groups. It is good that someone is taking on the major problem of loneliness. NB felt that it would reduce isolation.

HH felt some of the terminology used could be clearer.

Following the discussion the group then scored the project.

### Scoring

1	Does the project embody originality, embrace experimentation or demonstrate innovation?	3
2	Does the project applicant demonstrate adequate knowledge, experience and enthusiasm to deliver?	3
3	Does the project demonstrate clear linkages to other related local activities or strategies?	3
4	Does the project demonstrate evidence of community, market or business need/demand?	3
5	Does the project demonstrate value for money?	2
6	Does the project clearly demonstrate additionality?	3
7	Does the project adequately recognise and address participation barriers or risks?	3
8	Does the project clearly tackle at least one of the LDS themes: Economy   b. Land, Coast and Marine Environments   c. Sustainable Settlements	3
9	Does the project clearly demonstrate what will be achieved by the project – Outcomes/Indicators/Target Groups?	3
10	Are you happy that this project fits comfortably with the LEADER LDS?	yes
TOTAL SCORE		26

Application group score:26/36

Number of Members DEFERRING: 6

It was agreed that the application would be deferred until the match funding was confirmed, after which an electronic decision would be made.

If funding is secured then a recommendation should be made that there should be a critical analysis of the project.

### C158 The Whithorn Way

NH introduced the project, the total project cost is £151,599.65 and the applicant is requesting a LEADER grant of £73,199.65 (48.28484103%).

The aim is to promote and market the Whithorn Way, a long distance footpath along the ancient pilgrimage route to Whithorn, through aerial film and smartphone apps and by publishing a guidebook with community contributions. An off road path, Whithorn to St Ninian's Cave, will be created.

The applicant has attempted to address the feedback received at draft stage.

Match funding – Dumfries and Galloway Council £5,000 match funding has been secured. The applicant expects decisions on Jerusalem Trust (£15,000) and Heritage Lottery Fund (£58,400) by end of March 2017.

Discussion took place - CM thought this was a really good application bringing good connections to the area. RW felt it was a great innovative and unusual project and that it was a really good idea linking the paths.

JW wondered if they had connected to the UK City of Culture Bid for Paisley 2021, a connection would raise the profile.

ML thought it was a very good and professionally written application, including the faith point of view. Ties together other “ways and walks”. CM felt the religious aspect allowed them to access other funding. NB thought it is good to promote the health of the public by walking in beautiful scenery and countryside.

Following discussion, the group then scored the project.

### Scoring

1	Does the project embody originality, embrace experimentation or demonstrate innovation?	3
2	Does the project applicant demonstrate adequate knowledge, experience and enthusiasm to deliver?	4
3	Does the project demonstrate clear linkages to other related local activities or strategies?	3
4	Does the project demonstrate evidence of community, market or business need/demand?	3
5	Does the project demonstrate value for money?	3
6	Does the project clearly demonstrate additionality?	3
7	Does the project adequately recognise and address participation barriers or risks?	3
8	Does the project clearly tackle at least one of the LDS themes: Economy   b. Land, Coast and Marine Environments   c. Sustainable Settlements	3
9	Does the project clearly demonstrate what will be achieved by the project – Outcomes/Indicators/Target Groups?	3
10	Are you happy that this project fits comfortably with the LEADER LDS?	yes
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>		<b>28</b>

Application group score:28/36

Number of Members DEFERRING: 6

It was decided that the application would be deferred until match funding was confirmed, after which an electronic decision would be made.

There was a recommendation from the LAG to:

- 1 Consider how the path would be maintained in future
- 2 Connections should be made with the UK City of Culture Bid – Paisley 2021.

NH advised the group that if we committed all the funds from the meeting we would have approximately £1.2m left. On a ratio of £400k per meeting this would see all LEADER funding committed before the end of the programme.

## 4 AOCB

4.1 Update on Expressions of Interest – Nicola Hill advised that EOI’s have slowed down. Publicity will be increased along with activity to bring LEADER to the attention of the right audiences. She stated that there are a good number of applications still in the pipeline and the LEADER team will be looking to get them to table in the near future. The LEADER team are looking into appearing at roadshows and any other relative events. LAG members were asked to let the team know of anywhere they can take a stand.



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LAG members were asked to encourage any businesses and organisations that they may speak with and who are interested in funding to call the LEADER office and discuss possible projects. LEADER need to target the less experienced groups and break down barriers, let them know they will be supported at every stage.

4.2 Project Officer recruitment has been successful. 11 applications were received and 3 people interviewed, 2 people had pulled out due to personal reasons and securing employment. The post has been offered to Lewis Boddy and he has accepted. The paperwork will hopefully go through in the next 3-4 weeks. The next EOI deadline is 15 March, Nicola Hill stated it would be good to have Lewis in post so he can see and follow through the full process.

4.3 Foresight Group meeting – the group are keen to keep LEADER on the agenda. The South of Scotland development vehicle is still in embryonic stage. LEADER needs to be kept involved in those discussions to highlight the LEADER approach as a legacy. Sharon Glendinning is due to attend a meeting and will feed back to the SMG, this will be included in the next staff report.

Although LEADER has good, sound processes, it is important to emphasise that LEADER have, and are able to empower communities. LEADER are proactive and imaginative about the future vehicle.

## 5 Date of Next Meeting

7 June 2017 at Creebridge Hotel, Newton Stewart.

Meeting closed at 12.20pm

