

## MINUTES

### LEADER Local Action Group – SMG Group Meeting

Wednesday 11 January 2017, 2pm

Held at: Gracefield Arts Centre, Dumfries

#### Present

<b>Peter Ross (PR)</b>	Alastair McNeill (AMcN)
David Rennie (DR)	Claire Thirlwall (CT)
Cathy Agnew (CA)	Barry Dunne (BD)
Karen Ward Boyd (KWB)	Gillian Khosla (GK)

#### Staff

Nicola Hill (NH)	Simone Tyrie (ST)
Jessie Mason (JM)	

#### Apologies

Craig Peacock (CP)	Caroline Graham-Brown (CGB)
Heather Brash (HB)	

#### Actions from this meeting:

Agenda Point:	Action:	Responsible:
Previous matters arising	PR fed back that report from Rural Parliament is included in the annual report which was provided in October.	<b>PR</b>
Business	PR to arrange a meeting with Ewan Green re the future post LEADER in D&G.	<b>PR</b>
	BD will circulate list of contacts from SRDP.	<b>BD</b>

## Welcome

PR welcomed members to the first meeting of the New Year.

## Minutes of Last Meeting

AMcN proposed the minutes and KWB seconded. Minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting held on 12 October 2016.

## Matters Arising

PR fed back that the report from the Rural Parliament was included in the annual report which was provided in October.

There has been no feedback or circulations from the previous Rural Parliament. NH has received an email regarding the next conference date, which is to be 20 September.

Dates for future meetings have been circulated.

Recruitment of Programme Support Officer was successful and Jessie Mason took up post on 9 January 2017.

## Chairs Comments

Talks continue with Fergus Ewing on the future post-LEADER. A tactical report is to be ratified at next meeting. The good news is that the programme will run its full course and we can look forward to a further 8 or 9 rounds of applications.

The European Network for Rural Development (ENRD) Cork 2 declaration can be accessed following this link [http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/events/rural-development-2016\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/events/rural-development-2016_en) We need to keep Rural Development on the agenda going forward, GK agreed.

Discussion followed and centred on the last SMG and Foresight meeting, it was felt that the LAG needs to be ready to react in future when information becomes available. It was suggested that research into what the LEADER programme has achieved in Dumfries and Galloway and what the wider community value is should be undertaken. There was discussion that the information the LEADER team had gathered in previous LEADER programmes could be used. It was agreed that it is important to get LEADER's value taken into account and show what the legacy of LEADER is.

## Business

Scottish Government was carrying out an Enterprise and Skills Review which focussed initially on SE, HIE, SDS and SFC. A Phase 1 Report had been published which proposed a number of actions including the establishment of a new South of Scotland Vehicle. These actions would be developed during Phase 2 of the Review. Details were still scarce but DR had a copy of the draft Project Initiation Document (PID) for the proposed new Vehicle which scoped out areas of work. A discussion took place regarding the involvement the LAG could have in this work and the benefit to LEADER of involvement.

NH and ST will be attending the Coordinators meeting on 25 January and will raise the subject if it is appropriate. The Chairs meeting is in February and this may also be a platform for raising awareness by PR.

PR attended the ELARD Conference in Estonia where it was suggested that LEADER rural areas should be thinking of linkages with urban areas. DR stated that statistics showed the D&G economy is declining quicker than other areas, making it harder to show positive effect of LEADER. A discussion took place.

NH informed the SMG that the LEADER team does not have the capacity at present to take on other tasks, if research is to be carried out to feed into the South of Scotland model for the future it will need to be done over the next few months with a clear understanding of what is required.

GK stated that there is a wealth of LEADER information in Dumfries and Galloway and the LAG just need to look at what is achievable within the timescales and aim for that. LEADER's legacy should be to show value.

NH confirmed that Communities Project Officer role is to be advertised on <https://www.myjobscotland.gov.uk/councils/dumfries-galloway-council/jobs> She asked that members circulate it to their networks. The advertisement has been signed off and should be on the site by the end of this week with interviews hopefully in early February.

The Foresight Group would like more interaction with the Council, PR stated that he would arrange a meeting with Ewan Green.

#### **Action Point PR**

DR stated that the Scottish Affairs Committee is visiting Dumfries next week to hear evidence from on Sustainable Employment – details are on the website <http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/scottish-affairs-committee/news-parliament-2015/sustainable-employment-scotland-dumfries-evidence-16-17/>. They will also hear evidence from Scottish Borders and Dumfries & Galloway Chambers of Commerce, both Local Authorities and Scottish Enterprise.

#### **Budget**

ST explained the Budget breakdown to the group and asked for any questions. DR had a few questions mainly related to Rural Enterprise and Farm diversification which GK answered.

GK confirmed that the Rural Enterprise group had been discussing the types of projects they can support and now have a much clearer idea. Ellen Grant (EG) has undertaken some marketing, more will be undertaken this year. It was suggested that EG may wish to consider talking to the organisers of the livestock markets and maybe use their brochures to reach farmers and their wives.

NH confirmed that following the departure of David Gardiner a replacement from the DGC Business and Enterprise team will hopefully be in place by March.

NH stated that a digital marketing push will be carried out for the next applications deadline, advising of meetings, events. Nicola Hill stated she would ask what is working for other LAG areas at the coordinators meeting on the 25th. KWB suggested that she raise it at the Dumfries and Galloway Unlimited meeting and try and to encourage applications from the Arts and Crafts industry.

DR asked if we had considered the Chamber of Commerce as a way into businesses and stated that Lee Mead may be able to help.

**BD will circulate list of contacts from SRDP.**

#### **Action point – BD**

AMcN stated that the FLAG are also refining their criteria. Rowan Lloyd was invited to attend an Inshore Fisheries Group (IFG) meeting along with cocklers to give a presentation, there was a lot of discussion but nothing concrete was agreed.

NH gave an update regarding the Cooperation Projects waiting to start the application process. The Biosphere which involves both D&G and Ayrshire LAGs; the reintroduction of the Golden Eagle which involves 5 LEADER areas and a trans-national project, coming through CEIS along with another couple of partners. NH to keep the SMG updated on the progress of these applications at next meeting.

#### **Strategic Projects**

##### *Day of the Region*

The steering group is currently working on a draft application which was hoped to be submitted for the March round however more solid information is required around the transnational and interregional partners so the project will probably come to the June meeting.

##### *Capacity for Change C4C*

The steering group is due to meet later this month, the group are looking at delivering the project over a longer period now that the end of the programme has been confirmed. There has been some interest from the Council for the new ward workers to be involved in some collaborative working. It is still important however to include research which will give LEADER the legacy the LAG want. CT wondered if NHS could be included in this, this will be looked into.

##### *Youth Project*

This project idea has been put on hold as NH is on the working group for the D&G **Youth Participation & Democracy Strategy** which will hopefully be published in June, and recommendations made by 2018; the Year of Young People, and hopefully this will inform the project going forward.



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### *Artists Project*

A steering group meeting is due to take place on 12 January. PR will be attending on behalf of NH who cannot attend and he will report back. To continue with the project as brought forward by Elles Bulder the LAG will have to engage an Academic Partner, as the Netherlands designed their brief in this way. UWS have been possibly identified and Eva Milroy and NH are meeting with them to discuss the option of them being involved. KWB observed that a strategic project should be right for the LAG, and should deliver what the LAG require.

DR enquired if LEADER are looking for any other strategic or Cooperation projects and suggested <http://www.crawickmultiverse.co.uk/> be considered. KWB asked if this could possibly be considered with a Cultural Tourism slant, alongside the Iron Age Roundhouse House at Wigtown. DR suggested it would address issues within the LDS and thought there was merit in considering it. NH reiterated the capacity issue in the team but was happy to for someone else to take the lead. CA suggested discussing it at the next meeting of DGU.

### **AOCB**

There were no items to be considered under AOCB.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

12 April 2017 at 10am – venue to be confirmed.

Meeting closed at 4.10pm.

