



Kirkbank House, English Street, DUMFRIES
Dumfries and Galloway, DG1 2HS
Tel: 01387 260028 Web: www.dgleader.co.uk

MINUTES

Local Action Group – Rural Enterprise Group Meeting

Wednesday 13 September 2017, 14.00

Held at The Usual Place, Lovers Walk, Dumfries

Present	Gill Khosla (GK) (I) Tony Fitzpatrick (TF) (I) Sharon Glendinning (SG) (I)	Lesley Jackson (LJ) (P) Eva Milroy (EM) (I) Paula Ward (PW) (P)
Leader Staff	Ellen Grant (EG) Nicola Hill (NH)	Jessie Mason (JM)
Apologies	Carol-Ann Brown (CAB) Teresa Dougall (TD)	Gill Dykes (GD) Judith Johnson (JJ)

Meeting commenced at 13:55

1 Welcome and Apologies

1.1 Chair, Gill Khosla opened the meeting and welcomed all members, with particular thanks to Tony Fitzpatrick attending his first meeting, returning member Paula Ward and Lesley Jackson who was attending her final meeting.

1.2 **Declarations of Interest:** there were none noted.

2 Minutes of previous Meeting held on Wednesday 14 June 2017

LJ noted that although she was recorded as seconder she was not at the meeting. JM looked back at her handwritten notes and fed back to members that seconder was actually Teresa Dougall. Amendment was recorded. The minutes were then proposed by EM and seconded by GK.

The Chair reiterated that the meeting that item 4.2 from the previous meeting gave EG a mandate to look further into developing a Farm Diversification strategic project that could be brought forward by the LAG. She will look to set up a sub-group to meet and discuss. It was also noted that members of the sub-group should not all be from the Rural Enterprise Group as they would have to declare an interest in the project and could not score applications which were taken forward to the Group.

3 Consideration of Applications

EG advised members that all project decisions are based on Scottish Government issued Guidance version 4.0

3.1 R081 – Defining Galloway Beef

The total project cost is £70,340 and the applicant is applying for £35,170 which represents 50% intervention. All match funding is evidenced and the project is technically eligible to be considered for support.

EG gave a brief synopsis of the application - the Galloway Cattle Society is a membership based cattle society for one of the oldest and purest of Scotland's native cattle breeds. A scoping study was recently commissioned to provide direction for promotion and marketing of beef from Galloway cattle.



Kirkbank House, English Street, DUMFRIES
 Dumfries and Galloway, DG1 2HS
 Tel: 01387 260028 Web: www.dgleader.co.uk

This was necessary due to long-standing customer confusion between beef from Galloway cattle (premium quality product) and beef from cattle originating in Galloway (variable quality), with both marketed as 'Galloway Beef'. This consumer confusion over the term Galloway Beef is a problem specific to Dumfries & Galloway and the surrounding areas, the geographic confusion specifically negatively impacts farmers of Galloway cattle within Dumfries & Galloway – this is what they wished to address. The Good Food Nation and The Future of Scottish Agriculture are an extremely good fit with their long term goals.

The study identified recommended actions, some of which are already under way (brand development). The next step is to develop a robust quality assurance scheme to enable supply chain confidence.

It is particularly important to them to maximise the retained value of the regional cattle breed within the region to support rural businesses and communities, and to educate and raise awareness of the importance of native sustainable breeds in light of potential constitutional changes which will disproportionately impact the agriculture and food sectors.

Project Aims

- Develop and launch a Quality Assurance and traceability scheme for 'Pure Galloway' Beef, including Guidelines for Best Practice.
- Secure supply chain partners for improved consumer access to product.
- Develop an education toolkit for primary schools to dovetail with curriculum for excellence on native breeds.
- Support young farmers/new entrants learning journey delegations attending 3 international events.

The Group discussed the proposal. There were a number of thoughts on the proposal with some members questioning why they were not embracing accreditations already in place. It was thought they were trying to secure something along the lines of the protected geographical status and the group questioned whether there was another fund more suitable, however EG advised the group that LEADER was recommended to them by an officer within the SRDP team. A large part of the project is the learning journeys; however members would like to see more information around these. The group were in agreement that this project was very unique and would be beneficial to our region. They were positive regarding the project's benefits to young people, in particular young farmers – this fits well with the LEADER LDS and ties in with Scotland's Year of Young People 2018. Members also felt positive about the educational side to the project and all were glad to see the applicant had encompassed different elements in the application. TF questioned why this application has come at this time. EG advised that the society board had had a change of members lately and the group agreed this new influence may have motivated the society to add value to the current activities. Members also questioned whether Brexit may have influenced the group to look for new opportunities because of the unstable farming environment. LAG members felt the breed had a good brand at present and could see further benefit with LEADER support.

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: a. Economy b. Land, Coast and Marine Environments c. Sustainable Settlements	4
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 within the LEADER Local Development Strategy (LDS)?	Yes
TOTAL SCORE		28

Number of Members **APPROVING**: 4

Number of Members **NOT APPROVING**: 0

Number of Members **DEFERRING**: 1

The decision was taken to **APPROVE** the application with suggestions for connections/contacts.

- Julian Pace, Scottish Enterprise – Learner Journeys
- Scottish Association of Young Farmers

LAG members recommended that the Society explore further geographical accreditation schemes.

LAG members would like to add 'specific conditions of grant' which are as follows:

- Criteria for choosing participants
- Framework of learning journeys
- Further clarification on how benefits of learning journeys will be disseminated to those not participating

Members would like this information to be provided prior to the advertisement of the Learning Journeys.

3.2 R084 Crafty Galloway

The total project cost is £100,000 and the applicant is applying for £50,000 which represents 50% intervention. All match funding is evidenced and the project is technically eligible to be considered for support.

'Crafty Galloway' - Introduction

Dumfries & Galloway has some of the finest ingredients in the world. Salt Marsh Lamb, Loch Ryan Oysters and Marbury Smoked Salmon to name a few. Some of the UK's best chef's swear by some of the regions produce. To help promote the region and their distillery, they would like to create a 'Crafty Galloway' Menu. This will feature and promote the best of Galloway across meats, seafood, dairy, vegetables,

preserves and other categories. The menu will serve smaller plates of seasonal recipes utilising local ingredients. Alongside this they also want to promote Dumfries & Galloway as an inviting and beautiful part of Scotland; stunning coastlines, breathtaking lochs and hillsides and all filled with an enviably wide array of plants and rare wildlife to enjoy. By combining the best of Galloway across both food and tourism they hope to draw more people to the area to experience the best of it.

The Group discussed the application with mixed feelings. Some members questioned if there was enough detail and felt they would like further detail regarding operation and logistics of project. Other members questioned if the organisation had the capacity to undertake such activities and were unsure around the risks. PW, however, who has knowledge of a similar operation "Born in the Borders" was happy that it had sufficient content and felt very positive around the ambition of the business. She also felt that LEADER should be more risk averse and support projects of this nature. It will likely grow through experience. It was felt that a stripped down experience can still be a great experience, giving a sense of authenticity and it may capture the imagination of international travellers with the opportunity of growing and engaging participants on a different level of tourism. However, some members did question the experience of the organisation within the tourism sector. LJ felt this was not just a simple business expansion and it was explained well in their application, although they might benefit from some tour experience. The business is sited in a high risk area; therefore having a business that will create jobs and bring in visitors would be hugely beneficial to the area and local community.

PW was keen to explore what their aspirations are and how can Visit Scotland support them and she felt very committed to the idea.

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?	2
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 within the LEADER Local Development Strategy (LDS)?	Yes
TOTAL SCORE		26



Kirkbank House, English Street, DUMFRIES
Dumfries and Galloway, DG1 2HS
Tel: 01387 260028 Web: www.dgleader.co.uk

Number of Members **APPROVING**: 4
Number of Members **NOT APPROVING**: 0
Number of Members **DEFERRING**: 1

The decision was taken to **APPROVE** the application with suggestions for connections/contacts.

Suggested connections – Paula Ward Visit Scotland and John Henderson from Born in the Borders.

3.3 R088 Dormont Distillery

The total project cost is £100,000 and the applicant is applying for £50,000 which represents 50% intervention. All match funding is evidenced but the planning permission is pending decision, the project is still technically eligible for consideration, however, should LAG members be of a mind to support the project a deferral decision would have to be taken pending planning permission being approved.

Dormont Distillery aims to be the first Lowland distillery in Scotland to distil, age and bottle rum from scratch. The distillery also aims to be the only rum distillery in the world to use Scottish oak to mature rum. The rum expressions will include a white aged rum for cocktails and mixing, rum liqueurs made from Scottish fruit, and a variety of cask aged rums.

The micro distillery will be set up in a renovated stone farm steading building on Dormont Estate, increasing the diversity of income to the family owned business, and bringing new and skilled employment to rural Dumfries and Galloway. Jobs created at the distillery will pay above the regional average, and be particularly suitable for young people, addressing regional issues of low wages and youth employment opportunities.

The business aims to print a carbon footprint value on our bottle labels – the first to do so in the spirits industry – and commit to reducing our footprint as the business matures. Our products will be naturally gluten free and vegan friendly.

Eventually the distillery aims to be part of a regional 'distillery trail' encompassing other distilleries in Dumfries and Galloway, helping promote the region and put it on the map as a destination for quality distilled spirits. In turn, this will help support and grow the region's overall tourist potential.

The business will entirely self-fund the renovation of the farm building, ready for use, however LEADER funding is sought to assist in funding the purchase, installation and commissioning of the necessary distilling and ancillary equipment, as well as our initial stock of materials.

The Group discussed the application and some members asked for clarification. EG reminded the group that start-up projects are eligible under LEADER. It was felt the applicant organisation has a good mix of personnel to deliver the project with both experience and innovative influences. Members felt the application had much improved since draft and praised the applicant for addressing their feedback. Members were confident this project was innovative for the region and had a great USP, especially as there is not a proliferation of rum in the market and the vision to age in the rum in Scottish oak. Members did, however, feel they would like to see more information regarding the marketing plan as this would strongly affect the success of the business. EG advised the applicant is currently working with Business Gateway around marketing and branding. Members felt they have a good start with a niche spirit, but need to have more definition to the product.

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?	2
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 within the LEADER Local Development Strategy (LDS)?	Yes
TOTAL SCORE		26

Number of Members **APPROVING**: 0

Number of Members **NOT APPROVING**: 0

Number of Members **DEFERRING**: 5

The decision was taken to **DEFER** the application until they had their planning permission in place.

SG left the meeting at 3.10pm

5 AOCB

- The Group were asked to note that the project Rural Swim, assessed at a previous meeting on 17th November 2016 had since been approved on January 10th by electronic decision. The project had been deferred pending their planning permission being approved.
- Esk Valley Events was considered on June 14th and the decision had been taken to defer the project to this meeting, however the applicant asked permission to defer to a later date; LAG members agreed to this.

Update on Expressions of Interest



Kirkbank House, English Street, DUMFRIES
Dumfries and Galloway, DG1 2HS
Tel: 01387 260028 Web: www.dgleader.co.uk

The group discussed new Expressions of Interest and were happy with the mix of projects coming forward – although agreed there lacked farm diversification projects. EG will feedback to each potential applicant.

16:30 GK brought the meeting to a close and thanked members for their attendance.

Date of next meeting

Next meeting is **13th December** to be held at the Usual Place, Dumfries.

DRAFT