

MINUTES

LEADER Local Action Group – Strategic Management Group Meeting

Monday 20 May 2019, 10.00am

Held at:	The Usual Place, Academy Street, Dumfries DG1 1BZ	
Present	Peter Ross (PR) Cathy Agnew (CA) David Rennie (DR) Barry Dunne (BD)	Caroline Graham Brown (CGB) Alastair McNeill (AMcN)
Staff	Nicola Hill (NH) Simone Tyrie (ST)	Jessie Mason (JM)
Apologies	Harry Harbottle (HH) Andrew Wood (AW)	Archie Dryburgh (AD)

Meeting started at 10.00am

Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting and thanked members for attending.

Apologies

The apologies were read out and are listed above.

Minutes

The Chair asked if the minutes of the January meeting were a true and accurate record and asked for a proposer and seconder. CA proposed and CGB seconded. Unfortunately, the April meeting was cancelled as it was not quorate.

The Chair asked if there were any matters arising. None.

Quorum

The LEADER team are experiencing difficulties in ensuring the LAG are quorate for each meeting, 5 Members plus Chair. The LAG still has a responsibility to oversee the delivery of the programme and need to be quorate to make the necessary decisions and projects and programme delivery. We also have to respect a private 51% and public 49% split of members, which is more challenging with the SMG meeting as we only have 8 members.

It was suggested to alleviate quorum difficulties that the SMG and LEADER groups are amalgamated. The FLAG would remain separate. It was felt by members that it would be a pragmatic decision and supported them coming together.



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This will be discussed at the 12 June LEADER Group meeting. It was suggested that if they were in agreement that the dates of the LEADER Group be adopted as there are already visits programmed with projects for the rest of the year.

12 June – Catstrand, Care in the Community and Old Smiddy

11 September – The Station Hotel, presentation from Building the Case for a Care Community

11 December – The Millennium Centre, Stranraer

There is still business to be conducted but it is anticipated that meetings would last no more than a couple of hours. Bringing both the groups together will hopefully mean a stronger, more engaged LEADER Group will emerge.

If the Groups do come together there will need to be a discussion around election of a Chair.

NH - We are anticipating a small amount of underspend (about £20,000) coming back in from existing projects and she asked the Group, if there was an amalgamation, would they look at a last round of applications in September. It was tabled that the applications would be smaller amounts and small scale projects, able to be turned around quickly.

SMG asked if there was a list of applications which the LEADER group might have supported if there had been funds. NH advised no, there is no list as we were careful to manage applicant's expectations at the time. We do however have some EOI's.

The SMG felt it was prudent to wait until the LEADER group had discussed and made their decision on amalgamation before making any other decisions on how to deal with applications. In principal, they felt that looking at targeted projects was a good idea, but did not want to get into the detail of how that would be achieved until after the LEADER Group made their decision.

Budget Profile

ST and JM left the room at 2.40pm.

Staffing to end of Project – discussion took place. SMG members were willing to wait on the outcome of the ED review before undertaking any recruitment process to address capacity deficit around claims process.

ST and JM rejoined the meeting at 3.05pm.

Future Budget Priorities

We are at a point in the programme where the LAG should review the budget priorities for the remaining programme period. Project Evaluation and Rural Awards 2019 are both sizeable chunks of work which require allocated budget.

A discussion took place.





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ST was asked to prepare a budget for the Group to view at the September meeting. This should demonstrate how the Programme is delivering against 25% allowed for operating costs. At present the Programme is sitting at approximately 18% for operating costs.

The information on budgets, brought to the meeting was appreciated.

Evaluation of the Programme, the LAG will need to put together a brief. It should be noted, we do not have the capacity within the team to carry out evaluation in-house. A Consultant will need to be contracted to assist the LAG in undertaking the evaluation exercise.

Staff Report

An excellent reference document prepared by the staff. DR queried why there were not updates from all projects. NH advised, we can ask for updates, but it is not part of the agreed terms. Although when projects submit claims, they do have to give an update at that time and this can also be selected for the staff report, giving staff options and not having to chase applicants for information.

The South of Scotland Golden Eagles project had recently submitted a change request as they were on target for a large underspend of approximately £119,000. This was due to unknowns when setting budgets at the beginning of the project. As this is a cooperation project with Scottish Borders LAG, our LAG was asked for comments, these were forwarded to the Programme Facilitator at Scottish Borders LEADER.

During the recent project visit, a presentation given by their project team confidently addressed most of the questions raised by the Change Request.

Discussion took place on other projects, it was good to see most of them had given an update for use in the staff report.

NH – commented that it would be great to have more LAG members attend in-situ visits if possible.

AMcN – confirmed to the Group that although the FLAG started off slowly at the beginning of their programme, they had now committed all but £4,000 of the funds. Rowan Lloyd has been working hard with applicants and also networking with other FLAGS. Rowan has provided support to the Cockles Study Group above and beyond his role to submit application to Marine Scotland for external funding.

Chair's Reports





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The Chair gave an update on attendance of meetings etc, please see attached documents.



SMG April Chair's
 Note.docx



SMG Chair's Report
 May 2109^.docx

LEADER Future

This Group is meeting regularly. Discussions are taking place with Scottish Borders and LAG in an attempt to take a joint solution forward to SOSEP regarding a LEADER-like programme.

Day of the Region

2019 will be the last Day of the Region event of this Programme. Lesley Ross, Project Officer, is at present processing the claim and recruiting communities. A Steering Group Meeting is to be scheduled. Romania and Ireland will hopefully be visiting during September and attending some of the events. Next year will be used to produce the evaluation.

Amaze Me LEADER

We continue to work with Sleeping Giants on a Group of Young People, who have identified their own key priorities. Confirmation has been received from Estonia and they are hosting the AML event this August. When we receive information from them, we will begin the recruitment. The culmination of AML will be the evaluation which is being undertaken by the Crichton Institute. NH and Grace Cordozo of Sleeping Giants will delivery a presentation to the region's Strategic Partnership on 21 June 2019.

Rural Awards

Caroline Bell of Clear as a Bell Marketing has been awarded the contract and the Coordination of the event has been delegated to the Steering Group. GG's yard has been identified as a venue, the date is 5 December 2019. There will be a save the date going out. Categories are to be discussed and agreed by 3 June. Promotion of the Rural Awards will commence soon after with the closing date for entries being 8 July. Judges will be assigned categories and they will meet with shortlisted projects late summer.

Specific categories and judges, if you have any suggestions, please let NH know.

Date of Next Meeting

To be agreed

Meeting closed at 4.30pm

