

## Note of the Meeting of the Outer Hebrides LEADER Local Action Group

In Committee Room 1, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Stornoway  
with video-conference to Comhairle offices in Balivanich

on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2017 at 10.00am

**Present:** Ian Fordham, Outer Hebrides Tourism (Private) (Vice Chairperson)  
Hector MacLeod, Third Sector Hebrides (Private)  
Alison MacCorquodale, Tourism Outer Hebrides 2020 Leadership Group (Private)  
Matt Bruce, Lewis and Harris Horticultural Producers (Private)  
Neil Campbell, Community Land Scotland (Private)  
Alistair MacLennan, Federation of Small Businesses (Private)  
Duncan MacInnes, Western Isles Fishing Association (Private)  
Donnie Macdonald, MG Alba (Public)  
Murdina Naylor, Tagsa Uibhist (Private)  
Lorna Macaulay, Harris Tweed Authority (Private)  
Michael Smith, Mossend Residents Association (Private)  
Gayle Findlay, Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership (Private)  
Cllr. Donald Crichton, Chair of Sustainable Communities Committee CnES (Public)  
Bill McMillan, Highlands and Islands Enterprise (Public)

**In attendance:** Kathlene Morrison, Outer Hebrides LEADER Co-ordinator  
Charlene Macmillan, Outer Hebrides LEADER Finance and Project Officer  
Eilidh Johnson, Outer Hebrides Development Officer  
Domhnall MacDonald, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Accountable Body Representative  
Catherine Myles, Outer Hebrides LEADER Project Support Assistant

**Apologies/  
Absent** Andrew Ross, North Uist Development Company (Private)  
Carola Bell, Community Energy Scotland (Private)  
Eoin MacNeil, Co-Cheangal Innse Gall (Private)  
Roddie Mackay, Princes Trust (Private)  
Iain MacLennan, Skills Development Scotland (Public)  
Colin Gilmour, Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership (Private) Chairperson  
Deidre Steele, Storas Uibhist (Private)

	<i>Action for:</i>
<p><b>1. WELCOME &amp; APOLOGIES</b></p> <p>The Vice Chair welcomed everyone to the Meeting and noted apologies from Carola Bell, Eoin MacNeil, Iain MacLennan, Andrew Ross, Colin Gilmour (LAG Chair), Deidre Steele and Roddie Mackay.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed new LAG and team members to the programme.</p> <p><b><i>Representation from 3 Public and 10 Private members of the LAG were present.</i></b></p>	
<p><b>2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p><u>Item 4:</u> 15/P00034 – Helen Sandison <u>Item 4:</u> 15/P00032 and 15/P00034 – Bill McMillan <u>Item 5:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urras Storas an Rubha and Point &amp; Sandwick Coastal Community Path - Matt Bruce</li> <li>• West Harris Trust - Neil Campbell</li> <li>• Isle be by the Sea - Duncan MacInnes</li> <li>• Enquiries 09 and 037 – Matt Bruce</li> </ul>	
<p><b>3. NOTE OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS AIRSING</b></p> <p>The note of the last meeting was agreed to be a true and accurate reflection.</p> <p><u>Matters Arising:</u> Item 3: The LEADER Business Aftercare paper will be taken to the next LAG meeting.</p> <p>Item 4: Kathlene spoke with the Lottery and they confirmed that they are continuing to support projects throughout Scotland, including the Outer Hebrides. Projects must ensure they are innovative and make a strong case of using assets to tackle issues within communities including social isolation, space and need.</p> <p>Other items would be discussed later in the meeting.</p> <p><u>Actions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Prepare Business Aftercare paper for next LAG Meeting</i></li> </ul>	<b>KM</b>
<p><b>4. PROJECT APPLICATIONS</b></p> <p><b>a) Note of Projects Approved - Round 11</b> Two applications were received, with both receiving an 'Approval'. As projects were above £75 000 the LAG discussed them before ratification. The LAG were</p>	

supplied with a Late Paper containing specific 'conditions' to the Projects, resulting from comments/ advice at scoring stage:

**15/P00032 Grimsay Community Association – Anchor III- Sustaining Community**  
**APPROVED: with conditions £122,234.00**

The LAG agreed that this project had the potential to add value to what was considered a fragile and remote area of Uist. It was felt the project fitted well with the Local Development Strategy of the LAG. Some concern was raised about the dependency of the project on a number of match funding commitments being realised and the sustainability of the funded staff post in the longer term. The LAG agreed to approve the conditions attached to the project.

*Lorna Macaulay entered the Meeting (3 public and 11 private members present)*

**15/P00034 Kinloch Historical Society – Balallan Community Hub Redevelopment**  
**APPROVED: with conditions £125,000.00**

The LAG felt this project demonstrated great community support and had built on the funding previously granted by LEADER. Some concerns were raised about the long-term sustainability of the project and to that end a revised cash flow projection following the completion of the build will be required. The LAG agreed to approve the conditions attached to the project.

**b) Change Requests**

It was noted that there were an increasing number of change requests coming through LARCs for projects. The reasons why change requests may be required were explained and the report was noted. The LAG agreed that going forward, and in accordance to the LAGs Delegation of Authority Policy, they would only need to be party to any change requests that would result in a significant or material change to a project.

**5. PIPELINE APPLICATIONS**

A list of potential applications was provided to the LAG for consideration, no comments were noted.

The LAG were informed of two fast-moving enquiries that would potentially be moving to application stage with a view to applying to the June Round.

**6. OH LEADER LAG POLICIES REVIEW**

**a) Harris Tweed Policy**

Lorna Macaulay explained the origins of the current Harris Tweed policy that it had been shared with all 3 local Harris Tweed Mills, the Weavers Association and the Harris Tweed Authority members and those who replied were supportive of it. It was acknowledged that there were currently no Harris Tweed related projects and therefore Lorna committed to work with the LEADER team to promote the programme to the sector. No changes were proposed for

endorsement by the LAG at this time.

## b) OH Tourism Policy

Duncan MacInnes chaired this part of the meeting as Ian Fordham was presenting this item to the LAG.

### o Outer Hebrides Tourism (OHT) Survey Analysis Update

Ian Fordham provided an overview of the OHT Survey – *the presentation will be circulated to LAG members*. Work has taken place between HIE, OHT and CnES to examine the impact of LEADER funding on the local tourism industry. At present there is a hold on any further LEADER applications for tourist accommodation projects due to the volume already supported by OH LEADER funding to date.

Given the anticipated increase in tourist numbers due to the improved inter-island and mainland connectivity, it was felt that the LAG needed to carefully consider how future funding could support the identified gaps in provision.

OHT proposed that in future, in order to gain LAG support, projects must make a compelling case for financial support to develop projects which attract visitors to the Outer Hebrides outwith the peak season (October to April). Projects should also demonstrate how bed stock would be utilised outwith the peak season and also be located in the areas identified as having low availability on the Hebridean Way route. These areas will be agreed by the LAG in consultation with the Hebridean Way Project Team. It was queried and noted that Hebridean Way figures excluded self-catering accommodation and was in relation to availability of *nightly* accommodation providers.

It was agreed that the LAG could instead encourage applications around tourism activities to attract visitors including innovative transportation solutions.

The LAG agreed that the Tourism Policy would be amended to take the above into account but the radius of the accommodation locations would require to be defined. The policy information would then be publicised to inform potential projects and developments.

Donald Crichton left the meeting (**2 public and 11 private members present**).

### Actions

- *Circulate Tourism presentation to the LAG*
- *LEADER team to liaise with Lorna Macaulay regarding publicising LEADER to the sector*
- *Amend Tourism Policy and liaise with Hebridean Way Project Team to confirm which locations should be highlighted as eligible for support in future applications.*

KM  
KM  
KM

## 7. OHL CO-ORDINATOR UPDATE

An overview of the work undertaken by the team since the previous LAG Meeting was provided. A discussion was held regarding the allocation of the remaining LEADER funding and which areas of the Local Development Strategy were currently under-represented.

The LAG were provided an update of the current financial position of the remaining uncommitted LEADER project funding which stands at £903,682. LAGs are obligated to commit at least 30% of their allocated LEADER funding to Co-operation, Small Rural Enterprises (SME's) and Farm/Crofting Diversification (minimum 10% per each fund) and the LAG have successfully managed to surpass their obligation to support SME's. Work is currently underway to develop co-operation projects to fulfil the minimum requirements. Therefore for all other LEADER projects the LAG have £551,9793.25 of uncommitted funding available.

A discussion was held regarding the allocation of the remaining uncommitted LEADER funding and which areas of the Local Development Strategy were currently under-represented. The options which were discussed included:

- Continue to operate on a first come first served basis
- Further reduce intervention rates and the maximum grant allowable amount
  - *currently set at: Communities – up to 50% & up to £125k*
  - Businesses – up to 30% & up to £100k*
  - Co-operation – Communities up to 90% and businesses up to 70%*
- A final call for funding applications
- Ring-fencing and/or targeting funding – *geographical, sectoral, priority themes, target groups.*
- Cease supporting businesses - *as minimum requirement has been met*
- Or a mix of any of the above

Individual LAG members voiced their preferences, however as a majority consensus was not forthcoming, **The LAG agreed** to form a sub-group of the Chair, Vice Chair and a LEADER officer to consider the various options available to disburse the remaining funds and these will be presented to the LAG for discussion and a decision.

As a result of the above, it was agreed that of the two impending applications likely to submit to the June Round, only one (enquiry 170) was eligible to for the June round due to amount of funding being sought and the target group being met; with more details on enquiry 169 required following LAG officer's Meeting with the applicant, scheduled for later in the week.

Actions:

- *Subgroup to meet to discuss funding options*
- *Funding appraisal options to be circulated to the remaining LAG for a decision*
- *Forward LAG details of notes from meeting with enquiry 169*

SUB/KM  
KM  
CM

<p><b>8. AOCB</b></p> <p><b>Applications Submission Deadlines</b> The LAG agreed that application submission deadlines would be changed in line with the paper presented, shifting from once a month to once every six weeks to allow officers sufficient time to review applications between funding rounds.</p> <p><b>Co-operation and Commissioning Projects</b> The LAG require committing at least £317,766 to Co-operation projects, of which there are none to date, and therefore officers are currently working with projects to develop proposals.</p> <p>Furthermore the LAG can also commission projects to support specific sectors and themes and the LAG are invited to pass any project ideas to officers who are also seeking ideas from other partners. The LAG will be presented with a paper at the next meeting on the project proposals and ideas.</p> <p><u>Actions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>LAG members to consider possible co-operation project ideas they wish to take forward, either themselves or to contract work out</i></li> <li>• <i>Possible co-operation Project ideas to be circulated to the LAG for consideration</i></li> </ul>	<p>LAG</p> <p>KM</p>
<p><b>9. Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p><b>Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> July at 10am, Committee Room 3, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, with v/c links to Comhairle offices in Balivanich and Castlebay</b></p>	



# OUTER HEBRIDES LEADER 2014-2020 PROGRAMME

