

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

In the Council Chambers, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Stornoway  
with video-conference to Comhairle offices in Balivanich

on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> July 2017 at 10.00am

**Present:** Colin Gilmour, Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership (Private) Chairperson  
Ian Fordham, Outer Hebrides Tourism (Private) (Vice Chairperson)  
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)  
Bill McMillan, Highlands and Islands Enterprise (Public)  
Andrew Ross, North Uist Development Company (Private)

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

### Apologies/

**Absent** Carola Bell, Community Energy Scotland (Private)  
Cllr. Roddie Mackay, Princes Trust (Private)  
Iain MacLennan, Skills Development Scotland (Public)  
Cllr. Donald Crichton, Chair of Sustainable Communities Committee CnES (Public)  
Hector MacLeod, Third Sector Hebrides (Private)  
Lorna Macaulay, Harris Tweed Authority (Private)  
Helen Sandison, Private  
Michael Smith, Mossend Residents Association (Private)  
Sarah MacLean, Scottish Crofting Federation (Private)  
Johanne Ferguson, Scottish Natural Heritage (Public)

	Action for:				
<p><b>1. WELCOME &amp; APOLOGIES</b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the Meeting and noted apologies from Lorna Macaulay, Cllr Roddie Mackay, Iain Maclellan, Helen Sandison, Johanne Ferguson, Cllr Donald Crichton, Hector Macleod and Michael Smith.</p> <p><i>Representation from 2 Public and 9 Private members of the LAG were present.</i></p> <p><i>A quorum was not present and as such, as per the Business Plan, due to the urgency of some matters all decisions require to be ratified by members by email.</i></p>					
<p><b>2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p><u>Item 4:</u> 15/P00049 Rural Nations – Deeds Not Words</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bill Macmillan and Donnie Macdonald</li> </ul> <p><u>Item 4:</u> Co-operation Projects - Tighean Innse Gall – Hard to Treat/ Hard to Advise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Matt Bruce</li> <li></li> </ul>					
<p><b>3. NOTE OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING</b></p> <p>The note of the meetings on 30.06.17 and 15.06.17 was agreed to be a true and accurate reflection.</p> <p><u>Matters Arising:</u></p> <p>It was agreed that a review of the Local Development Strategy would be delayed until September 2017. The Chair called for LAG members to assist in the review and Alison MacCorquodale and Ian Fordham volunteered.</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>As Quorum not present members must review and accept both the above matters again.</i></li> </ul>	LAG				
<p><b>4. PROJECTS</b></p> <p><b>a) Decisions to be ratified</b></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Project 15/P00049: Rural Nations – Deeds Not Words</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£18,650</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Decision: <b>DEFERRED</b></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>‘Deeds not Words’ project was discussed. Twelve LAG members had scored the project but two had subsequently declared an interest due to match funding</p>	Project 15/P00049: Rural Nations – Deeds Not Words	£18,650	Decision: <b>DEFERRED</b>		
Project 15/P00049: Rural Nations – Deeds Not Words	£18,650				
Decision: <b>DEFERRED</b>					

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reasons which requires the LAG to identify a minimum of two other members to score the project. Given that a quorum was not achieved no decision could be ratified. In addition some concerns were raised regarding the feasibility of the project to raise the necessary match funding in the timescales set out. **The LAG agreed to defer the decision** and the applicant can rework their application and invited to apply to a future round detailing reviewed delivery timescales and having match funding arrangements in place for the project.

**b) Approved Projects Renewables – CES Projects**

Kathlene Morrison presented a record of all the projects which have been approved in the 2014-2020 programme to date. Two projects have fully completed, First Love Studio and The Wee Haven.

**c) Projects Withdrawing**

The LAG were notified that the Glen River Restoration project have indicated their intention to withdraw their project.

**d) Enquiries and Pipeline Projects**

The LAG were presented with a list of all current Expressions of Interest received by the Programme. Several EOI's have become ineligible since the reprioritisation by the LAG regarding the remaining programme funding.

It was noted that accommodation enquiries were still forthcoming however the LAG emphasised the need for potential projects to demonstrate compliance with the refocused priorities, particularly around innovation and the extension of the season beyond the summer months. The LAG are also keen to see a varied range of enterprises coming to application beyond accommodation businesses.

Officers raised queries with regards to some Expression of Interests they had received that were perceived to be within a 'grey' area of the new re-focused priorities; the LAG confirmed that they wanted applications that were a strong fit with the new re-focused priorities and not tangents.

**e) Cooperation Projects**

Kathlene Morrison updated the LAG on the progress of pipeline cooperation projects. An EOI has been received for preparatory costs for a cooperation project, the first such EOI to be received by a LAG in Scotland to date. The LAG reaffirm that they would still accept applications for Co-operation at any time during the programme.

**5. OHL CO-ORDINATOR UPDATE**

Kathlene Morrison presented an update on the team's activities since the June LAG meeting. Charlene Macmillan continues to participate in the LARCs working group.

The LAG Chair attended the CLLD Chair's meeting in Stirling on 20 June where discussions were held on the redistribution of programme spend and the future of funding post-Brexit; it was noted that reallocation of funding would be unlikely to be considered until

at least Spring 2018. The Chair will also arrange to meet with the Chief Executive of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar as he has been appointed to the Scottish Government’s Standing Council on Europe, which is an advisory panel comprising a group of experts set up to advise the Scottish Government in the aftermath of the Brexit vote with the aim of protecting Scotland’s interests – legal, financial and diplomatic.

Along with other Accountable Body representatives Domhnall MacDonald is also actively participating in discussions with regards to the future of LEADER and will keep the LAG updated with any developments. The LAG discussed the importance of sharing funding success stories which demonstrate the significant impact LEADER funding has locally.

The new Outer Hebrides LEADER website is in the final stages of completion and is due to go live shortly.

## 6. MONITORING AND AUDIT

Kathlene Morrison presented a report detailing the result of the recent Scottish Government Business Assurance team audit which took place in July 2017. The programme retains its ‘Green’ RAG status and no significant improvement issues were noted. The Chair congratulated the LEADER team on the result of the audit.

An internal audit by the Comhairle is ongoing.

## 7. FINANCIAL REPORT

Charlene Macmillan presented a report updating the LAG on the financial position of the programme to date. A total of £1,478,563.00 has been committed to date with a remaining £904,686.50 to be spent. For the 21 projects currently approved, 31 claims have been processed totalling £284,113.14.

The LAG noted the specific amounts ring-fenced for Cooperation and Crofting Diversification projects. It was decided that there was no need currently to ring-fence funds for Renewables projects given that there were several in the pipeline process. This may be reviewed in the future.

It was agreed that 2% over commitment of funding should be investigated, with the AB representative agreeing to communicate with the AB regarding the possibility of this.

Charlene presented a paper on the topic of the Youth LAG. The LAG discussed the various structures that could work to disburse funding for projects benefitting young people. Discussion regarding ring-fenced funding for a Youth LAG was deferred until the next LAG meeting, pending a further paper. **It was agreed** that Officers and Community Learning Development staff would progress with the development of the Youth LAG, but that consideration should be given to a good geographical spread of representation.

Actions:

- *AB representative to seek confirmation from AB for permission to over-commit funding.*

DMD

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Continue the formulation of the Scheme of Administration of the Youth LAG</i></li> </ul>	CMM
<p><b>8. OUTER HEBRIDES LEADER FUNDING ROUND</b></p> <p><b>a) Revised LAG member Project Assessment form</b></p> <p>Kathlene Morrison presented a revised project assessment form for the LAG to consider. It has been amended as per the LAGs request to take account of the decision to refocus priorities for the remaining programmes spend and the weighting has been adjusted accordingly.</p> <p>The LAG considered the weighting given to innovation, match funding and the geographic location of projects and agreed that weighting should be removed from the matching funding category.</p>	
<p><b>9. AOCB</b></p> <p><b>a) Youth LAG</b></p> <p>This item was discussed at the same time as item 7, Financial Update.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An update on application 15/P00035 was provided to the LAG; it was noted that the applicant was keen to re-apply however would not be able to provide evidence of match funding until January 2018, when a decision from Lottery is expected. The LAG agreed that they could not put funding ‘on hold’ for any applications and the Project would be required to meet the same requirements as all applicants under the new refocused priorities.</li> <li>• As the OH LEADER and EMFF 2014-2020 LDS is due to be revised and any potential updates presented to the LAG Members agreed that the a sub group would review the strategy with officers. Ian Fordham and Alison MacCorquodale agreed to undertake this work on behalf of the LAG.</li> <li>• Due to the difficulty of getting quorum in the Summer months, it was agreed that July meetings should be avoided where possible. A proposed Schedule for 2018 LAG Meetings will be presented at the next LAG.</li> </ul> <p><i>Actions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Review the LDS prior to the next meeting</i></li> <li>• <i>Create schedule for LAG Meeting dates 2018.</i></li> </ul>	IM &AM KM
<p><b>10. Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p><b>Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> September at 10am, Committee Room 3, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, with v/c links to Comhairle offices in Balivanich and Castlebay</b></p>	