



OUTER HEBRIDES LEADER 2014-2020 PROGRAMME



Note of the Meeting of the Outer Hebrides LEADER Local Action Group
In the Committee Room 2, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Stornoway
with video-conference to Comhairle offices in Balivanich and Barra Comhairle office

on Wednesday 5th December at 10.30am

Present: Ian Fordham, Outer Hebrides Tourism (Private) (Chairperson)
Colin Gilmour, Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership (Private) Vice Chairperson
Andrew Ross, North Uist Development Company (Private)
Rachel Mackenzie, Highlands and Islands Enterprise (Public)
Matt Bruce, Lewis and Harris Horticultural Producers (Private)
Neil Campbell, Community Land Scotland (Private)
Duncan MacInnes, Western Isles Fishing Association (Private)
Donnie Macdonald, MG Alba (Public)
Johanne Ferguson, Scottish Natural Heritage (Public)
Cllr. Donald Crichton, Chair of Sustainable Communities Committee CnES (Public)
Eoin MacNeil, Co-Cheangal Innse Gall (Private)

In attendance: Donna Matheson, Outer Hebrides LEADER Co-ordinator (DM)
Charlene Macmillan, Outer Hebrides LEADER Project and Finance Officer (CM)
Ameena Camps, Outer Hebrides LEADER Development Officer, Uist and Barra (AC)
Domhnall MacDonald, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Accountable Body Representative

Apologies/ Absent

Alison MacCorquodale, Tourism Outer Hebrides 2020 Leadership Group (Private)
Iain MacLennan, Skills Development Scotland (Public)
Lorna Macaulay, Harris Tweed Authority (Private)
Michael Smith, Mossend Residents Association (Private)
Alistair MacLennan, Federation of Small Businesses (Private)
Catherine Myles, Outer Hebrides LEADER Project Support Assistant (CMY)

	<i>Action for:</i>
<p>1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies from those listed above.</p> <p><i>Representation from 4 Public and 7 Private members of the LAG were present.</i></p>	
<p>2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>Matt Bruce declared an interest in project 15/P00088. It was noted that he scored the application in error; as MB is on the Board of a potential Match funder for the applicant, his score was excluded from the final decision. There was no significant difference to the score</p>	



<p>with the application still receiving an approval score of 61.</p>	
<p>3. REVIEW OF THE DRAFT NOTES OF THE LAST MEETINGS AND MATTERS ARISING THEREOF</p> <p>The minutes of the LAG meeting on 24th October 2018 were presented and approved by the LAG.</p>	
<p>4. PROJECTS</p> <p>a) Note of Projects approved and conditions (round 20) The paper of approved projects and conditions was presented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li style="margin-bottom: 20px;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 15/P00088 Innovation Centre <p style="margin-top: 10px; color: blue;">The LAG agreed to approve the Project and accept the conditions of grant provided. The project was noted as being worthwhile and of benefit to the community.</p> <p style="margin-top: 10px;"><i>Matt Bruce declared an interest and his score was excluded from final decision.</i></p> </div> <div style="width: 50%; text-align: right;"> <p>Decision: APPROVE LEADER Grant: £29,953.98</p> </div> </div> <li style="margin-bottom: 20px;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 15/P00091 Eriskay Pony Trekking <p style="margin-top: 10px; color: blue;">The LAG approved this project and accepted the conditions of grant provided. It was felt that this proposal would provide substantial benefits to the local community</p> </div> <div style="width: 50%; text-align: right;"> <p>Decision: APPROVE LEADER Grant: £74,454.35</p> </div> </div> <li style="margin-bottom: 20px;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 15/P00100 Uist and Benbecula Youth Café <p style="margin-top: 10px; color: blue;">The LAG noted that this project addresses an important social issue and was a worthwhile project for young people in an underserved target area. The LAG approved the application and accepted the conditions presented.</p> <p style="margin-top: 10px;"><i>Colin Gilmour and Eoin McNeil declared an interest and refrained from scoring or any discussion.</i></p> </div> <div style="width: 50%; text-align: right;"> <p>Decision: APPROVE LEADER Grant: £9,1010.10</p> </div> </div> <li style="margin-bottom: 20px;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 15/P00102 Ardvourile Woodland Observatory <p style="margin-top: 10px; color: blue;">The LAG agreed that this was a good project which would result in boosting activating in the area and enhance tourism needs. The Project was approved with presented conditions agreed.</p> </div> <div style="width: 50%; text-align: right;"> <p>Decision: APPROVE LEADER Grant: £31,821.16</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 15/P00087 Islewear Croft Studio </div> <div style="width: 50%; text-align: right;"> <p>Decision: REJECT</p> </div> </div> 	

The project did not receive an approval score and was 'rejected' by the LAG on a number of grounds including lack of croft assignation, match funding potential, the inclusion of accommodation in a non-prioritised area as per the LAG tourism policy. Overall it was felt that the application was submitted prematurely and had a number of issues that raised queries over its viability.

The LAG agreed to reject the project and agreed the reasons presented.

The LAG did note that this particular application had significant potential and queried whether support was available to assist such applicants with their proposals. It was noted that LEADER staff and business gateway support was made available, although communication was not always reciprocated.

b) Change Requests

A table of project change requests completed since the previous LAG meeting was presented for noting.

c) Updates

005 Hebrides Dance and Wellbeing Studio – The LAG noted progress was being made on this project and were pleased to learn that groundworks would be commencing in November.

5. CO-ORDINATOR UPDATE

DM Provided an overview of the Co-ordinators update paper which was noted by the LAG.

Evaluation

The LAG commended the mid-term evaluation provided and highlighted the issue and recommendation for LAG members to be consistent in Meeting attendance and scoring Projects. The Chair Thanked the LAG members present for their contribution to the Programme and encouraged other members to increase efforts, if possible, on their participation in the Programme.

It was noted that the positive achievements of the LAG were not highlighted and it was agreed that DM would contact a selection of LAG members for their own reviews/ experiences on their involvement in the Programme could be included to the final draft of the mid-term evaluation.

Co-operation

It was noted that Outer Hebrides LEADER first co-operation project has been signed off by all participants and AC provided an update on the status of the Smart Island Pathways co-operation project she is currently working on; it was noted that the Irish LAGs involved in AC's project had highlighted a benefit to the **Outer Hebrides being the Lead LAG on the project, to which the Outer Hebrides LAG agreed to.**

<p>Given its youth enterprise elements, the LAG suggested that the project should also consider contacting the recently approved 'Innovation Centre' project to explore any potential linkages.</p> <p><i>Staffing</i></p> <p>It was noted that Kathlene Morrison will be returning to her position as Outer Hebrides LEADER Co-ordinator in January 2019; the LAG Chair thanked and commended Donna Matheson for fulfilling the role in her absence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Action – Contact LAG members for evaluation of LEADER experience</i> • <i>Action – Discuss/ explore with applicant any potential benefits of linking Small Islands Pathways project with Innovation Centre Project</i> 	<p>DM</p> <p>AC</p>
<p>6. FINANCIAL UPDATE</p> <p>The LAG were presented with the current financial update for noting. Based on scores received in the previous funding round the full LEADER budget has now been committed, along with £45,889.13 of the £50,000 pledged by Comhairle nan Eilean Siar as a contingency for any potential Programme underspend.</p> <p>LEADER funding is now only currently available for co-operation projects.</p>	
<p>7. TOURISM SUB-GROUP UPDATE</p> <p>As agreed at the previous LAG Meeting, the tourism sub-group held a tele-conference with an aim to review and update the current LAG Tourism policy. However with the potential of funding being fully committed, it was agreed that should any further funding become available in the future, then the LAG will revisit and amend the tourism policy if necessary, at such a time; The wider LAG agreed to this.</p>	
<p>8. LAG</p> <p>a) Scottish Crofting Federation The LAG agreed to accepted the SCF offer of a replacement representative on the LAG in response to Sarah MacLean's resignation. It was noted that the new member should be made aware of the level of commitment anticipated.</p> <p>b) 2019 LAG Meetings Provisional timetable for LAG Meetings throughout 2019 were presented to and approved by the LAG.</p> <p>c) APPG Report The LAG was provided with the APPG's report of an initial inquiry into the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which was noted.</p>	
<p>9. AOCB</p> <p>No other business was noted</p>	



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<p>10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The Next LAG Meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday 13th February 2019 at 10.30am, in Committee Room 2, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Stornoway with video conference links made available to CnES offices in Balivanich and Castlebay.</p>	