

Note of the Meeting of the Outer Hebrides LEADER Local Action Group Virtual Meeting, online via 'LifeSize'

on Wednesday 2nd February 2021 at 10.30

Present:

Matt Bruce, Lewis and Harris Horticultural Producers (Private) Chairperson
 Colin Gilmour, Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership (Private) Vice Chairperson
 Neil Campbell, Community Land Scotland (Private)
 Kathleen Stewart, Highlands and Islands Enterprise (Public)
 Johanne Ferguson, Scottish Natural Heritage (Public)
 Donald Mackinnon, Scottish Crofting Federation (Private)
 Duncan MacInnes, Western Isles Fishing Association (Private)
 Alison MacCorquodale, Tourism Outer Hebrides 2020 Leadership Group (Private)
 Donnie Macdonald, MG Alba (Public)
 Cllr. Donald Crichton, Chair of Sustainable Communities Committee CnES (Public)

In attendance:

Kathlene Morrison, Outer Hebrides LEADER Co-ordinator (KM)
 Charlene Macmillan, Outer Hebrides LEADER Project and Finance Officer (CM)
 Domhnall MacDonald, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Accountable Body Representative (DM)

Apologies/ Absent:

Eoin MacNeil, Co-Cheangal Innse Gall (Private)
 Andrew Ross, North Uist Development Company (Private)
 Lorna Macaulay, Harris Tweed Authority (Private)
 Rob MacKinnon, Outer Hebrides Tourism (Private)

	<i>Action for:</i>
<p>1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES</p> <p>Project 15/P00033 gave a brief presentation, providing an overview of their Project and the impact it has had. The applicant was also the successful tender for creating the promotional LEADER films which were successfully launched in Summer 2020. They noted the benefits that the project has provided and assisted in the businesses sustainability. The filming also provided an insight into the communities' experiences and current and future views on the funding landscape.</p> <p>The Project applicant left the Meeting once the presentation was finished.</p> <p>The acting Chair, MB, welcomed everyone to the Meeting and noted apologies from Rob Mackinnon and Lorna Macaulay.</p> <p><i>A quorum was achieved with 6 Private members and 4 Public Members present at the meeting.</i></p>	

<p>2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest</p>	
<p>3. CHAIR AND VICECHAIR APPOINTMENTS</p> <p>As per the business plan, a new chair and vice chair were required to be elected as CG's maximum 2-year tenure in the position of chairperson was reached.</p> <p>The AB representative and LEADER Co-ordinator took temporary control of the Meeting to allow for nominations for the position of chairperson to be declared.</p> <p>2 nominations for Matt Bruce as Chairperson were received, with no further nominations; the nomination was proposed and seconded with MB agreeing to take the position of Chairperson of the Outer Hebrides LEADER LAG.</p> <p>MB resumed position as Chair of the Meeting and read nominations for the proposal of Colin Gilmour to the position of Vice Chairperson. There were no further nominations and this was seconded with CG agreeing to undertake the role.</p>	
<p>4. REVIEW OF THE DRAFT NOTES OF THE LAST MEETINGS AND MATTERS ARISING THEREOF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note of Meeting on 18/11/20 – this was agreed to be a true and accurate reflection of the meeting and was approved by the LAG. <p>All Actions within the minutes had been addressed.</p>	
<p>5. CO-ORDINATORS REPORT</p> <p>The Co-ordinator provided a brief overview of the paper and urged LAG members to undertake the LAG Survey to contribute to the OH LEADER Programme 2014-2020 Evaluation.</p> <p>5.1 Change Request Policy Update</p> <p>To coincide with the recent extensions of the OH LEADER Programme and existing staff beyond March 2021, the LAG agreed to extend the OH LEADER Co-ordinators authority to approve Change Requests on LARCs until 31st May 2021.</p>	
<p>6. PROGRAMME FINANCIAL AND PROJECT UPDATE</p> <p>6.1 Financial Report and Project Updates</p>	

CM provided an overview of the Programme's financial position noting that Programme's anticipated underspend was reducing. An update on current project positions was also provided.

6.2 LARCs processed Change Requests

The LAG formally approved all Change Requests that had been submitted via LARCs since the previous LAG Meeting.

6.3 Scottish LAG Position

A forecast paper from each LAG area was provided to SG detailing anticipated Project expenditure pre and post 31st March 2021.

6.4 OH Risk Register

An updated Risk Register of Project expected to continue post March 2021 was provided along with resulting costs. This paper supports costs outlined the previous paper in section 6.3.

The LAG agreed and approved all timescales and associated costs presented in papers appended to items 6.3 and 6.4

6.5 Specific Project Requests

6.5.1 15/P00096

It was noted that this particular project had showed great resolve and developed a good project that increased their legacy through adapting to the COVID-19 restrictions.

With the potential to now carry the project on past March 2021 the applicant would now like to take the opportunity to put further resources into areas of the Project that were not managed to be fully explored due to time constraints and COVID restrictions and request the following:

- i) An additional grant increase of £30k. This to be divided between the 3 supporting LAG areas, £10k each and will be sought directly from SG from the pan-Programme underspend. However, as the lead LAG, OH LAG will be applying for the funding and administering on behalf of all LAGs involved in the Project.
- ii) For OH LAG to match an agreed additional contribution of £1664.16 by Orkney LAG, from funds available locally. It was noted that Shetland LAG have no further funding available.
- iii) For the Project to be extended to 31st October 2021 should the additional funding be approved.

KM

The LAG agreed and approved all requests by the applicant.

Action – OH LAG to request additional funding from SG for Project 15/P00033

<p>7. CHAIR'S UPDATE</p>	<p>The Chair referred to the MSPs letter's that had been circulated to the LAG previously and noted that as the programme has now been extended beyond March 2021 until December 2021 that, to comply with regulatory requirements within the SLA, there is a need for the LAG to continue to meet and take decisions on the programme. There would also be discussion on future developments. The Chair sought confirmation from LAG members with regards to their current and future commitment to their LAG role to this extended period. All present members agreed.</p>	
<p>8. ACCOUNTABLE BODY UPDATE</p>	<p>The LEADER Exit strategy was approved by Comhairle at their December series along with corresponding staffing contracts. However, the Programme has since been extended until December 2021 and discussions with regards to the delivery requirements of this are ongoing.</p> <p>SG will be meeting with each AB area imminently to discuss delivery post-March 2021 including any possible financial contributions required by the two bodies along with workload and possible sharing of staffing resources. The possibility of a LEADER/CLLD successor fund will also be considered and what that could look like.</p>	
<p>9. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS – POST MARCH 2021</p>	<p>The Co-ordinator explained that this Appendix detailed forecasted admin and animation costs for the Outer Hebrides for March 2021 until end of December 2021 and these were compiled and forward to SG for their consideration upon their request.</p>	
<p>10. AOCB</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CG noted that he had been in conversations with an Economic Development group commissioned by Scottish Government who were looking at the Scottish Economic Strategy and the economic landscape in 5 areas of Scotland and any potential and corresponding frameworks. It was agreed that CG would liaise with KM and collate feedback with regards to the LEADER CLLD method. • The FLAG has now fully committed the EMFF funding allocation with slight overcommitment. • It was queried what the delivery model of the Crown Estate funding was and whether this had proved to be successful. In response, it was noted that the fund had just completed its Second round of funding with good uptake and has been oversubscribed. Applications are assessed by CnES ward Councillors in line with the requirements of the Scheme and any resulting awards are paid by the Comhairle's Finance department. 	<p>CG/KM</p>

<p><i>Action – CG to liaise with KM with regards to Economic group feedback</i></p>	
<p>11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>The date of the next meeting is scheduled for <u>Wednesday 24th March 2021 at 10.30am</u></p>	

CONFIRMATION OF APPROVAL OF MINUTES	
LAG MEMBER	
SIGNATURE	
DATE	