



Scottish Borders LEADER

Developing Enterprising Communities

SCOTTISH BORDERS LEADER PROGRAMME 2014-2020

Local Action Group meeting

17th November 2015

10.00 Tweed Horizons, Newtown St Boswells

MINUTES

Present:

Heather Batsch, The Bridge (HB)
Frank Beattie, Scottish Enterprise (FB)
Claire de Bolle, Youth Borders (CdB)
Carol Byers, The Haining (CB)
Luke Comins, Tweed Forum (LC)
Gordon Harrison, Scottish Borders Community Council Network (GH)
John Henderson, Scottish Borders Food and Drink Network (JHe)
Ian MacDonald, NFU Scotland (IMacD)
Paula McDonald, VisitScotland (PMcD)
Bryan McGrath, Scottish Borders Council (BMcG)
Andrew Mitchell, Berwickshire Community Councils' Forum (AM)
Andrew Panter, Scottish Natural Heritage (AP)
Jane Rosegrant, Borders Forest Trust (JR)
Ian Tod, The Hippodrome Arts Centre CIC Ltd (IT)
Hans Wautl, Federation of Small Business (HansW)
Gary White, Peebles CAN (GW)

Secretariat:

Hugh Williams, Scottish Borders Council (Principal Officer Rural) (HW)
Bartje Magee, Scottish Borders Council (European Programme Support Officer) (BM)
Simon Lynch, Scottish Borders Council (LEADER Facilitator) (SL)

		Action
1.0	Welcome BMcG welcomed the group, and members introduced themselves.	
2.0	Apologies John Dougan, Forestry Commission Scotland (JD) Jules Horne, Borders Creative (JH) Will Haegeland, Selkirk Chamber of Trade and Commerce (WH)	



Scottish Borders LEADER

Developing Enterprising Communities

<p>3.0</p>	<p>Minutes of previous meeting Minutes of previous meeting had been circulated previously. Meeting notes of the familiarisation event of 22 September 2015 were handed out.</p> <p>HW advised that the LEADER Coordinator had been appointed, to start on 01 December 2015. The interview panel was made up of BMcG, JR, HW.</p>										
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Election of Chair and Vice-Chair At its introductory meeting on 29 June 2015 the group agreed to elect a Chair and Vice-Chair from its membership. Nominations were requested, to be made to the LEADER team by Friday 30 October. Two nominations were received by the closing date, one for each position:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="300 965 1206 1081"> <thead> <tr> <th>Position</th> <th>Nominee</th> <th>Organisation</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Chair</td> <td>Jane Rosegrant</td> <td>Borders Forest Trust</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vice-Chair</td> <td>Gary White</td> <td>Peebles CAN</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The candidates left the room while their nominations were discussed.</p> <p>LC proposed JR for Chair, briefly outlining her experience in leading organisations, including abroad, in the environmental field as well as community interest organisations. HB seconded and the meeting unanimously appointed Jane Rosegrant as Chair.</p> <p>CdB proposed GW for the post of Vice-Chair. She expanded on his work on climate change and working with young people in the Community Garden Project and mentioned his experience of setting up projects as well as running them. HB seconded the proposal and the meeting unanimously appointed Gary White as Vice-Chair.</p> <p>The candidates were invited back in and JR took over as Chair of the meeting.</p>	Position	Nominee	Organisation	Chair	Jane Rosegrant	Borders Forest Trust	Vice-Chair	Gary White	Peebles CAN	
Position	Nominee	Organisation									
Chair	Jane Rosegrant	Borders Forest Trust									
Vice-Chair	Gary White	Peebles CAN									
<p>5.0</p>	<p>Group Protocol The following points were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5.1 – should have an addition to the last sentence to reflect the diversity of background and interest • 5.12 – was an addition reflecting confidentiality for the LAG members which extends to members of their own organisations • 7.8 – does not yet specify the intention that a threshold would be set 	<p>HW</p>									



Scottish Borders LEADER

Developing Enterprising Communities

	<p>for initial scoring. Projects that pass the threshold will then be discussed at the LAG meeting where a decision is reached.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11.1 – sets out clear guidelines for information disclosure, protecting individual members' views. • 12.1 – Sets out a clear statement on liability. <p>The Group Protocol was accepted unanimously, with the proviso that HW would amend sections 5.1 and 7.8, as stated in minutes above.</p>	HW
6.0	<p>Memorandum of Understanding</p> <p>A brief discussion was held on LAG approval for LEADER staff attending events should the Accountable Body impose restrictions on staff travel expenses. BMcG stated this was unlikely to be an issue.</p> <p>The Memorandum of Understanding was accepted unanimously.</p>	
7.0	<p>Draft Business Plan</p> <p>Draft version 15/10/15 was sent to Scottish Government but a response is still forthcoming. The following points were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.39 – clause was deleted as it was not deemed feasible • 2.10 – sets out delegating authority to further sub-groups, particularly for Umbrella Projects, where some decision making had lacked transparency in the previous programme. Members of the sub-group could be co-opted members but the rules regarding quorum and public/private split would still apply. • 4.19 – Review section 4.19 to 4.22 was added to set out the procedure for review/feedback and how to make changes to the LDS or Business Plan. <p>PMcD asked for application forms to clearly indicate where they meet the LDS for ease of reading. It was agreed the LAG would be able to request what they would like to see in reports to the group, but the application form was to be decided by Scottish Government and the LARCs IT system.</p> <p>The group was informed that once the Business Plan was approved by Scottish Government a copy of the final version would be provided to members.</p>	
8.0	<p>Programme Budget</p> <p>A brief discussion was held on the inclusion of EMFF (European Maritime Fisheries Fund) administration in the Business Plan. Although the FLAG</p>	



Scottish Borders LEADER

Developing Enterprising Communities

	<p>(Fisheries LAG) was a separate entity and joined with East Lothian and Fife, the administration and animation was through the LEADER budget. That part of the Business Plan is still to be confirmed as an indicative allocation of fisheries funding has not yet been received. This means that the 24.1% for LDS animation and administration will be partly reduced by contributions from East Lothian and Fife for their part in the EMFF administration costs.</p> <p>£200,000 for Enterprise Facilitators is also included in the animation and administration budget, with projects to be decided by the LAG. Any underspend would be diverted back into the project budget.</p> <p>LDS spend profile has not been officially approved yet but it is in line with the minimum and maximum percentages as specified by the Scottish Government for each section.</p> <p>The annual spend profile in paragraph 5.19 of the business plan will be amended to reflect delay in appointments and LEADER and EMFF programme start dates.</p>	
<p>9.0</p>	<p>Project funding support</p> <p>The level of project funding in the previous programme was discussed and details and their consequences were outlined. The following decisions were approved:</p> <p>Non-public Sector Projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New programme does not require projects to contribute a minimum of 5% from own funds. • Grants available between £5,000 - £150,000 • Maximum 60% intervention rate <p>Public Sector Projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants available between £5,000 - £150,000 • Maximum 50% intervention rate <p>Cooperation Projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LEADER Team will ask SG for clarification as it was felt that any decision made might conflict with decisions made in other areas which would make administration very difficult. <p>Business funding / Farm diversification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The business plan specifies minimum £5,000, maximum £50,000. The £50,000 is derived from maximum €70,000 and guidance will be sought from SG on how to apply exchange rates. • Maximum 50% intervention rate, with match funding from private 	<p>LEADER team</p> <p>LEADER team</p>



Scottish Borders LEADER

Developing Enterprising Communities

	<p>sector sources. Any additional public sector funding would decrease the LEADER grant offered so that public sector grant funding is no more than 50%.</p> <p>Both revenue and capital projects will be considered.</p> <p>The LAG discussed the problems arising from the fact that LEADER funding is retrospective which has a major effect on cash flow, especially of community groups without unrestricted capital reserves. Access to banks can be difficult for small groups and interest is not an eligible expense under LEADER.</p> <p>CdB made a plea to work hard to get other funders on board, not make LEADER too off-putting but express clear messages and guidelines as to how these problems can be overcome.</p>	
<p>10.0</p>	<p>Business DMG sub-group membership</p> <p>Previously Business Grants were dealt with by SRDP direct, in this programme it has been delegated to LEADER. The Business Plan proposes a decision making sub-group of members with business skills. The rules on quorum and less than 50% public sector representation still apply.</p> <p>The following members have volunteered for the Business sub-group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Dougan – Forestry Commission Scotland (Public) • Ian McDonald – National Farmers Union Scotland (Private) • Hans Waltl – Federation of Small Businesses (Private) • Carol Byers – the Haining / PR consultancy (Private) • John Henderson – Scottish Borders Food and Drink Network (Private) • Gary White – Peebles CAN (Voluntary) • Andrew Mitchell – BCCF (Voluntary) • Paula McDonald – VisitScotland (Public) • Frank Beattie – Scottish Enterprise (Public) • Ian Tod – The Hippodrome (Private) • Gordon Harrison – SB Community Network (voluntary) • Bryan McGrath – Scottish Borders Council (Public) <p>It was noted that a co-opted member from SBC Business Grant panel may be appointed to represent SBC in place of Bryan McGrath</p>	
<p>11.0</p>	<p>Launch programme – Communications Plan</p> <p>SL gave a brief overview of the interest in LEADER so far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 63 contacts were made, 57 organisations and 4 public authority groups • 13 contacts resulted in an official Expression of Interest, 5 for the 	



Scottish Borders LEADER

Developing Enterprising Communities

	<p>Business grant and 8 from Community groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 groups have met with SL already with 2 visits lined up. <p>The Comms plan proposes to target geographic areas and communities that appear to have less capacity to access LEADER funding, and may not have benefitted from previous LEADER programmes. These areas are targeted for visits with accompanying publicity. Two joint events are planned, one in Eyemouth with BAVS and one with the Social Enterprise Chamber.</p> <p>An article about LEADER will appear in SBConnect end November, and again in Spring 2016. Contacts have been made with organisations like NFUS, Business Gateway, Chamber of Commerce and Village Hall Committees to publicise LEADER in their network communications. SL is also to speak to at least 20 Community Councils in the most rural areas.</p> <p>The current Comms plan will be delivered by Summer 2016, when a review will be undertaken to see if improvements can be made.</p> <p>CB expressed an interest to see the comms plan and several members requested a short statement that was ready to be used in their own communications, Facebook pages and/or web sites.</p> <p>LEADER team is still working on its website, with possibilities for Facebook and twitter being explored.</p>	<p>SL</p> <p>LEADER team</p>
<p>12.0</p>	<p>Project Outline</p> <p>The Expressions of Interest (EoI) form, generated through the Scottish Rural Network website, does not provide sufficient detail for LAG members. It was agreed that SL would meet prospective applicants and support them to produce a Project Outline for distribution to LAG members for their feedback.</p> <p>An example project outline was distributed to LAG members. It was agreed the format was appropriate, and could be changed in future if other information was required.</p> <p>Project Outlines will be distributed to LAG members with a request to provide feedback and initial thoughts on potential projects. This will provide members with an opportunity to influence project development, suggest linkages or offer mentoring if appropriate. Members' feedback will indicate if the Project should go to full application. It is proposed to give LAG members a two week turnaround period for commenting.</p> <p>As requested, outlines sent will be clearly marked whether they are for the</p>	



Scottish Borders LEADER

Developing Enterprising Communities

	<p>full LAG or for Business grant funding, so members may ignore/delete the email if it does not involve them.</p>	
13.0	<p>Pub is The Hub</p> <p>HW gave a brief outline of the Pub is The Hub project which is successfully run in England and Wales. Pub is the Hub exists to promote the provision of additional rural services through existing pubs and inns where other service provision is closing or being withdrawn. The Prince's Countryside Fund supports Pub is the Hub, and the Scottish Government Rural Communities Team is providing funding for a Scottish pilot which will take place in the Scottish Borders. A launch event is planned on 20th January 2016 at Carfraemill.</p> <p>The LAG is invited to support the programme, and potentially to be involved in decision making on which projects to support. A brief discussion highlighted that Scotland had a different culture and demographic to England, and it was highlighted that some people might not be happy to enter licensed premises for other services.</p> <p>HW said LAG members would be invited to attend the launch and could then discuss at the next meeting if the LAG would take an active part in this, and whether it required the main LAG or another sub-group.</p>	
14.1	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HW told the group about the new LEADER Coordinator, Fiona McDougall, who will start on 1st December. • A request was made for name place cards to be available at the next meeting 	LEADER team
15.1	<p>Dates and times of future meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In view of the delays with Scottish Government it was decided to put the next meeting, planned for 9th February, back a month. HW to check calendars and send out new meeting date. • The next two meetings will be held according to plan, 14th June and 18th October 2016. • Deadlines for applications will be published as soon as paper application forms have been approved and/or the LARCs system is ready to process applications. 	HW