

Tyne Esk LEADER Local Action Group

Minutes of the Assessment meeting held on Monday 2nd March 2009, 9.30am at McSence Group Ltd

Present

Frank Beattie	Scottish Enterprise
John Beveridge	Midlothian Council
James Bruce	ELVON
Robert Conway	East Lothian Tourism Forum
Allison Cosgrove (chair)	Ass. of East Lothian Community Councils
Ian Davidson	Scottish Government/ Forth RPAC
Tom Hobbs	Forestry Commission
Robert Hogg	Midlothian Federation of Community Councils
Graham McCulloch	LAYC
Alan McGregor	Pentland Hills Regional Park
Cllr Barry Turner	East Lothian Council

In attendance

Jayne Adamson	Tyne Esk LEADER Project Officer
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1. Apologies

Robert Dale (NFU), Myra Galloway (East Lothian Council), Cllr Russell Imrie (Midlothian Council), Andrew McDonald (Midlothian Tourism Forum), Scott Murray (SAC Advisory), and Margaret Nisbet (MVA)

2. Welcome

Allison Cosgrove welcomed everyone to the meeting and a representative from McSence gave a history of the social enterprise.

4. Minute of the last meeting

The minutes 1st December 2008 were accepted as a true record.

First: Robert Hogg

Seconded: Allan McGregor

5. Matters Arising

- JA advised the LAG that due to work commitments that she had been unable to develop a LAG Guidance document. It was agreed that the LAG would use the interest from the LEADER+ programme to contract a consultant to develop and train the LAG. JA to tender for the work.
- Frank Beattie gave an update on the Scottish Enterprise Rural Funding

Main Points:

- Draft process for fund currently being discussed and will be disseminated to Local Authorities, LAG, etc who will be able to recommend the SE funding to projects
- £1.5m funding available (match fund projects)
- Main areas of funding: forestry, tourism, food and drink

4. LEADER+ Update

- The Programme had received a letter from the Scottish Government (SG) detailing the closure of the LEADER+ programme. It was agreed that £48,627 was to be repaid to the SG from funds not used by the programme. £3,322.24 was accumulated from interest in the TEL+ account, which is to be spent on LAG activities. £9,026.44 was unspent from East Lothian Council and Midlothian Council contribution, which is being used to underwrite the funding short fall for the LEADER programme with Scottish Enterprise withdrawing their funding.
- The LAG agreed that they would use part of the £3,322.24 money to employ a consultant to write a LAG Guidance document to assist them in scoring and LAG duties

Action

JA to tender for a consultant

5. Budget Report

It was reported that the 7% (£163,800) advancement from the SG had been received.

Main expenditure till the end of January 2009 was for staffing costs, Claim workshops, adverts and expenses incurred for a LAG member to attend the Action 2 Leipzig conference and £9,922 payment to projects

JA gave a budget overview of claims to the SG. The programme has submitted two claims to the SG:

Claimed from SG	2008	2009 (Quarter 1)	Total Claimed	Predicted Expenditure for SG records (2008 – Quarter 1, Jan – March 09)	Difference
Projects Budget (Action 1)	£5,922	£4,000	£9,922	£10,000	£78
Operations Budget	£18,596.82	£2,194.64	£20,791.46	£23,495	£2,703.54

6. Update on LEADER Activities

- JA working with the three small grant schemes (East Lothian Homecoming, Midlothian Homecoming and Association of East Lothian Community Councils) funded by TEL
- Presentations:
 - 2 funding events in East Lothian
 - East Lothian Rural Funding Event
 - Midlothian Strengthening Communities
- Claim Workshop: 8 people attended representing 6 projects. All approved projects except four have attended a claim workshop.
- JA attended a Scottish Rural Gathering workshop held by the SG. The main points of discussion were; what would people want from an event, possible venues, who should be invited and purpose of the event
- JA attended the Big Lottery Consultation event. Interesting to see that all applicants have the same issues for funding as per the LEADER application and claims.
- JA and SS attended the Coordinators meeting on 4th February. Main points:
 - Possible increase of LEADER funding under the 341 funding, which would be funding for local strategies
 - EU Fisheries Fund Axis 4: bid in process similar to LEADER funding. Areas in east Lothian would be included in the fund.
 - State Aid: LEADER Programmes must make applicants aware of state aid. JA has devised a sheet that will be assessed when scoring projects

- that will enable TEL to cover state aid concerns
- Scottish National Rural Update: Anticipated Regional Coordinator to be appointed by the end of May
- Action 2 Projects: Lag not required to seek SG approval for Action 2 projects as long as it fitted with the LAG strategy. However LAGs should notify SG when involved in an Action 2 project
- AOB: Iain in discussions with other EU countries regarding 25% retention of LEADER funding till end of projects.
- The LAG was alerted to a letter that was being sent by Rural Dumfries and Galloway LAG to Richard Lochhead, MSP with their concerns about the LEADER Programme. AC commented that she had replied to the letter on behalf of the LAG in disagreement of their remarks.
- Project Update: The programme had processed three project claims and it was anticipated that two projects would be complete by the end of March 2009.

7. Forth RPAC Update

ID update:

- For information on Rural Priorities visit the SG rural website as it is updated weekly
- At the 1st December Forth RPAC meeting 98% of the projects were approved
- 26th March Forth RPAC meeting 141 cases were assessed
- The budget for the Rural Priorities is decreasing and becoming more competitive
- In the Forth area projects are needed from East Lothian and Midlothian as they are few in numbers
- Example of projects being funded: wind turbines, agri environmental, diversification and farm sheds

8. Business Plan review 2009

A meeting was held in December 2008 with Midlothian Council, AC, AMc and JA to discuss the business plan review event. The following was agreed:

- Invites were to be sent to LAG, RPAC, AG, CPP and projects. To be sent on 6th March
- The event is to be held on Monday 23rd March 2009, 9:30am – 2pm, Newbattle Abbey College
- Event will be split into three workshops:
 1. Projects (MLC facilitators)
 2. LAG and RPAC (Sheila Fraser, Rural Direct, facilitator)
 3. CPP and others (MLC facilitators)

9. AOB

- The LAG approved that Garvald Village Hall, TEL016 project could increase their budget and LEADER funding, for a 10% payment to VIRIDOR. The LAG agreed that in future, projects that are receiving match funding from VIRIDOR or WREN would be allowed to claim the 10% payment from LEADER (**approved by SG,**). Projects were to be made aware of the 10% payment to these match funders.
- The LAG agreed that Gorebridge Community development Trust would be allowed to apply for £100,000, 5% of the projects capital costs to build a community hub.
- The LAG approved advancement of £14,698 and for the projects advancement process for the Association of East Lothian Community Councils project.
- The Programme has been advised that LAG minutes should be available on the TEL website. This was approved by the LAG
- Monitoring Update: Sandy MacMillan (Midlothian Council) and Jacqueline Lesley (East Lothian Council) will be carrying out the monitoring visits on the TEL projects.

10. Date of Next Meeting

Business Plan Review: 23rd March, Newbattle Abbey College
Assessment Meeting: 1st June, Venue in East Lothian

Project Ref	Project Title	Area	LEADER funding requested	LAG Decision
TEL024.1	Route YC	East Lothian	£50,000	Approved
TEL025.1	Harbour Development Stage 2 Feasibility Study	East Lothian	£30,000	Approved
TEL029.1	North Berwick Lobster Hatchery Feasibility Study	East Lothian	£15,000	Approved
TEL031	Development of Howgate Village Hall 2009 and Country Market	Midlothian	£2,833	Approved
TEL032	East Linton Community Hall Roof and Repointing	East Lothian	£13,181	Approved
EL033	Midlothian Community Funding	Midlothian	£51,670	Deferred
TEL034	Lighting Up the Promenade	East Lothian	£30,913	Approved
TEL035	Howgate Health and History	Midlothain	£14,203	Approved