

Tyne Esk LEADER Local Action Group

Minute of Assessment meeting held on Monday 6th September 2010,

9.30am at Newbattle Abbey College, Dalkeith.

Present

Frank Beattie	Scottish Enterprise
John Beveridge	Midlothian Council
James Bruce	East Lothian Voluntary Organisation Network
Robert Conway	East Lothian Tourism Forum
Allison Cosgrove (Chair)	Association of East Lothian Community Councils
Ian Davidson	Scottish Government/Forth RPAC
Sandra Duncan	SWRI
Robert Hogg	Midlothian Federation of Community Councils
Cllr Russell Imrie	Midlothian Council
Andrew McDonald	Midlothian Tourism Forum

In Attendance

Graham Young	LEADER Project Officer
Pamela Mckinlay	East Lothian Roots and Fruits

1. Apologies

Tom Hobbs (Forestry Commission), Cllr Stuart Mackinnon (East Lothian Council), Scott Murray (Scottish Agricultural College), Margaret Nisbet (Midlothian Voluntary Action), Susan Smith (East Lothian Council).

2. Welcome

Allison Cosgrove chaired the meeting and introduced Graham Young, the new LEADER Project Officer, to the Group.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting

The Round 8 minutes were agreed as a true record by Robert Hogg and seconded by Andrew McDonald with the exception that Scott Murray should have been recorded amongst the apologies, and Andrew McDonald should have been noted as representing Midlothian Tourism Forum.

4. Projects Update

Graham Young gave the following update on projects;

TEL018 Aberlady High Cross Reconstruction

The applicant has asked for a second extension to December 2010, due to the stonemason on the project not being ready to start on site.

TEL 052 Exchange Project

Activity is underway and two claims now made.

TEL054 Temple Village Hall Refurbishment Phase1

Activity is underway and 1st claim received for construction costs.

TEL 056.1 Skateraw Infrastructure Development

The applicant has asked that this project be withdrawn, due to match funding falling through.

TEL058.1 Rural Skills Programme

A first claim is expected in September.

TEL059 Aberlady Community Woodland Regeneration project

The offer was withdrawn, as no activity had taken place within 3 months of the March LAG meeting.

TEL062 Amisfield Stables Feasibility Study

In the absence of match funding, this project has been withdrawn, to be resubmitted for December's meeting when the match funding criteria is likely to be more favourable.

TEL063 Empowering Stenton Village to Go Green

CNS has resubmitted their budget to show match funding from them. Costs have been incurred and a first claim is expected in September.

TEL064 Supporting Renewable Projects in East Lothian

Requested additional information on procuring LIDAR equipment, links with previous project, clarification of the applicants relationship with Community Wind Power and links with the local community have been received. A first claim is expected in September.

TEL065 Family and Cabaret Elements

Additional match funding information received. A first claim is expected in September.

TEL 067 Temple Village Hall Refurbishment Phase 2

The project successfully gained its necessary match funding and is incurring costs. A first claim is expected in September.

5. Budget Report

Graham Young gave the budget report. Last quarter's claim to Scottish Government was £91,305.36, against last months of £71,223.37, which represents a continuation of the pattern of increasing spend during 2009-2010. Action 3 spend (administration costs) remains close to profile at £6,230.59 against last quarter's figure of £7,533.68 and profile £8,000.

Overall over the lifetime of the project, we have claimed £149,067.16 more than proposed against Action 1 and £5,064.27 more than proposed against Action 3. In that it looks as if we are way ahead of our projected expenditure, this is slightly misleading. This is because our proposed spend profile for 2010/11 (£436k) is very heavily skewed to the last two quarters of the financial year, with Q1: £28k, Q2: £38k, Q3: £162k, Q4: £208k. Therefore it is likely that a significant underspend will take place in quarters 3 and 4 which will balance out the overspend in quarter 1 and probable overspend in quarter 2.

Our overall project budget has increased this quarter by £800,000, from 2.34million to 3.14million. due to the transfer of two budgets from Rural Priorities (called the Community Services and Facilities and Local Collaborative Development Strategies budgets, or measures 321 and 341). This also needs to be taken into account when considering our overall financial position.

Broadly speaking, the financial position of Tyne Esk LEADER is strong, with spend and activity in line with expectations. We are performing well in comparison to our peers. There is good evidence that we have been able to deliver as a partnership.

6. LAG Coordinators Meeting

Graham Young updated on the recent LEADER coordinators meeting. Points of discussion included an upcoming audit, which will take place in Tyne Esk in October, the new SLA which will be signed shortly, and confirmation from the Scottish Government that a project is only deemed to have started (and allowed to incur spend) when a signed grant acceptance form is received by the LEADER Officer, not at the date of the LAG meeting that approves the project, as has been happening up to now.

The clear message from discussions with Scottish Government is that spend should be accelerated nationally, and LEADER areas that demonstrate an ability to deliver spend and outcomes will have a greater chance of being allocated further funding.

7. LEADER Networking Event

Andrew McDonald updated on the Networking event in Aberdeen. The Scottish Government had promised the new SLAs by the end of August, obviously this date is slipping based on the feedback from the Co-ordinators meeting. Points of discussion included a possible increase in the frequency of LAG meetings, more effective marketing in LEADER areas, and the possibility that LEADER areas that overspend could in future take resources from areas that underspend.

8. Small Grants Scheme

Allison presented a paper on the Small Grants Scheme, with which she has an interest, and requested three changes to the scheme to be approved as follows; 1)that the amount of £23,752.50 which represents the balance of the funding minus a 25% retention rate, to be made immediately available following the initial advance of £15,000, with the aim that all funding be allocated by autumn 2011; 2)That the LAG approve the extension of the Scheme from September 2010 to September 2012 to allow sufficient time for the panel to collect all the necessary documentary information required by LEADER; and 3)That the funding allocation be increased from a maximum of £1,000 to a maximum of £2,000 to enable groups to access larger amounts in the current financial climate where match funding is less readily available.

This request was granted.

9. Broadband Challenge Fund Update

Graham Young updated on the Broadband Challenge Fund. The Scottish Government's deadline for applications to its £1million National fund is 31st October 2010. Tyne Esk LEADERS deadline for receipt of outline applications to hit this deadline will be 30th September 2010. Activities supported could be, amongst other things, feasibility studies, upspeeding existing exchanges or extending broadband coverage to areas that are currently not part of the network. Graham Young asked for Group members to disseminate this information and asked for potential project ideas to come forward to him by the above date.

10. RPAC Update

Ian Davidson updated on the recent Forth RPAC meeting. 60 cases were considered, 17 projects approved and 16 were rejected. A total of £24million was allocated. Allison asked if there were many applications for wind turbine projects, Ian responded that there had not been.

11. LEADER Grant Intervention Rate

After discussion, it was agreed that Tyne Esk LEADER would continue with the same policy in relation to grant rate, which is that the normal grant intervention rate limit is 50% of total project cost. However, a higher intervention rate than this may be considered if either a)A particularly strong proposal comes forward that makes a substantial contribution to LEADER outcomes or b) The applicant demonstrates that they have experienced particular problems accessing match funding.

12/13/14 Items of AOB

The date of next meeting was confirmed as December 6th, at an East Lothian venue to be confirmed.

Allison Cosgrove welcomed Pamela McKinlay to the meeting. Pamela presented on the proposal by Roots and Fruits, deferred from the last round, called 'Plans to be more Social Enterprising'. Questions were asked and a discussion ensued. Pamela McKinlay was thanked and left the meeting, the project assessments then followed.

15. Project Assessments for Round 9

TEL068 Shop Haddington- Approved. After discussion it was decided that this project should be approved despite scoring slightly under the nominal 80 point threshold because of the relatively low cost of the project and low risks associated with it. The LAG would be pleased for the applicant to investigate ways in which the HBA could link with other town based business associations on similar projects.

TEL069 Energy and Renewables-Declined.

TEL070 Learning for Life- Approved at 50%. With note taken that the applicant will be submitting an application to cashback for communities, and potentially East Lothian Educational Trust, for the remaining match.

TEL071 Plans to be more Social Enterprising-Approved without conditions.

TEL072 Working Playing Learning Together- Approved without conditions.

TEL073 Helpin Home-Approved subject to MLC approval of new wording in application being forthcoming by 20th September.

TEL074 Inspire Multi Trade-Approved subject to approval being reached between MTS and McSense in relation to deliverability and clarification of wording by 20th September.

TEL075 Pishwantan-Declined.

TEL076 Rathbone Revitalise-Approved subject to a) taking out reference to Musselburgh delivery in the application (or explaining how this delivery is targeting rural beneficiaries) and b) receipt of letter from McSense confirming partnership and delivery arrangements by 20th September.

TEL077 Peter Potter Lost Landscapes- Deferred, with a request that a resubmission take into account disabled access and equal opportunities both in relation to the premises and the exhibition programme.

TEL078 Dunbar Community Bakery-Deferred, subject to a resubmission of application with a new financial profile. Further discussion required around possible displacement of jobs from neighbouring businesses, and the future consideration of the application is also subject to the applicant's planning application in November 2010.

TEL079 River Tyne Path- Approved without conditions.

TEL080 Accessible Art-Declined, with the appendum that the board liked the application in principle, and that a more worked up application would be welcomed in future.

After a recap all decisions were agreed. The total amount awarded for projects in Round 9 was £435,400.

END