



**TYNE ESK LAG MEETING MINUTES**  
**1<sup>st</sup> November 2018, 9:30am – 1.00pm**

**St Gabriel's Hall, West Loan, Prestonpans, EH32 9JX**

**LAG Members Present**

- Andrew McDonald, (AM), Edinburgh Butterfly World, LAG Chair
- Anne Hastie, (AH), Private Individual, LAG Vice Chair
- Andrew Bayne-Jardine, (AB) Private Individual, LAG member
- Cheryl Brown, (CB), Midlothian Sure Start, LAG member
- Karen Calvert, (KC), Papermill Restaurant, LAG member
- Sandra Duncan, (AD), Scottish Women's Rural Institute (SWRI), LAG member
- Provost John McMillan, (JM), East Lothian Council, LAG member
- Patrick Playfair, (PP) Edwin Thompson, LAG member
- Hilary Smith, (HS), North Berwick Coastal Area Partnership, LAG member
- Yvonne Stoddart, (YS), STRIVE, LAG member

**LAG Observers Present**

**Staff Members Present**

- Joy Godfrey, (JG), LEADER Support Assistant, LEADER Team (notes)
- Angela Lamont, (AL), LEADER Project Officer, LEADER Team
- Dawne Milligan, (DM), LEADER Finance Support Officer, LEADER Team
- Neil Ramsay, (NR), LEADER Programme Co-ordinator, LEADER Team
- Nelly Runesson (NRu) LEADER Support, LEADER Team

**Apologies**

- Frank Beattie, (FB), Scottish Enterprise, LAG member
- Claire Gilles, (CG) Penicuik YMCA -YWCA, LAG member
- Cllr Russell Imrie, (RI), Midlothian Council, LAG member
- Alasdair Mathers, (AMs), Midlothian Community Planning Partnership, LAG Observer
- Simon Poole, (SP), Jerba Campervans, LAG member
- Susan Smith, (SS), East Lothian Council Economic Development, LAG Observer
- Paolo Vestri, (PV), East Lothian Partnership, LAG Observer

<b>Welcome and Apologies</b>	<b>Actions</b>
<p>AM welcomed everyone to the meeting and declared the meeting quorate, with 10 LAG members in attendance with only one LAG member from the public sector.</p> <p>Apologies were noted as above.</p>	
<p><b>1. Matters Arising From Minutes</b></p> <p>The LAG reviewed the actions from the last meeting and noted that all had been actioned. The minutes of the last meeting were approved as accurate and AM signed them off.</p>	



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## 2. Feedback on Scottish Government Developments

NR reported that deadlines for applications have changed. The Scottish Government now require all cooperation projects to be awarded by the end of March 2019, Rural Enterprise and Farm Diversification projects to be awarded by the end of June 2019 and all other applications need to be awarded by the end of the calendar year. This will affect the anticipated redistribution of funds which is now more likely in summer 2019 and then it is likely to involve only co-operation budgets being redistributed.

The final report of the National Council of Rural Advisors has been published. NR reported the main recommendations:

- Mainstream rural policy in all policy decisions in Scottish Government
- Develop a Rural Economic Framework (REF) in the period before rural policy has been mainstreamed as a delivery model for rural policy, development, support and investment. "The REF will be our roadmap and investment strategy for the transitional journey towards mainstreaming the rural economy."
- Create a Rural Economic Action Group (REAG) "which has the clout to get things done and set the tone for change".

Sub recommendations of relevance to LEADER are:

- "A Rural Challenge Fund for communities and small/micro enterprises to be established in 2019 to ensure no hiatus in LEADER, EMFF or other Rural Development Programme Funding.
- "Recognise the value of the Community-led Local Development principle espoused in LEADER and other programmes".
- The Scottish Rural Parliament is taking place in Stranraer from 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> November. A fringe event is taking place on 14<sup>th</sup> November called 'A Celebration of 25 Years of Scottish Leader' with Peter Ross. This will be a facilitated discussion with LAG Chairs about past successes and suggestions for the future.
- Scottish Rural Action have a Survey Monkey Questionnaire on their website about LEADER
- The LAG Chairs are trying to organise a date for a Holyrood reception to mark 25 years of LEADER, which will be held towards the end of February.

The LAG discussed the impact of Brexit on LEADER with a focus on the value to communities of maintaining a continued bottom-up system for allocating funding. The LAG recognised that neither the Scottish Government nor the LAG Chairs are in a position to say what will happen. Scotland has a 'Chair of



<p>Chairs' – Peter Ross from Dumfries and Galloway LEADER and LAGs can present their feedback to him.</p> <p>NR reported that the Nourish and Whitadder projects were both deferred by the lead LAGs and so are not going ahead at present.</p> <p>It was agreed that funding for the Access Project: Phase 2 should not be ring-fenced as Tyne Esk LEADER is already on track to meet its co-operation target. Once the Access Phase 2 project is ready Tyne Esk LEADER will inform the Scottish Government that it could be funded from other LAG cooperation underspends.</p> <p>AM reported on the LEADER conference in Austria, site visits and how the projects aimed to optimise activity, prove achievement and have distinct communications. AM noted the conference had an emphasis on 'Smart Villages' and that there could be a lot of scope for this approach to be taken with the development of Tyne Esk LEADER's next Local Development Strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AL reported that there is a new Economic Action Plan Supporting the Rural Economy, the Scottish Government Economic Strategy Document. AL will send links to NR to forward to the LAG along with the links to the Report from the Council of Rural Advisors.</li> </ul>	<p>AL to email NR NR to email LAG</p>
<p><b>3. Election of Chairs</b> AH took over as Chair as the LAG voted for the position of Chair. NR reported that only one nomination for Chair had been received since the last LAG meeting and that it was AM who had been nominated. AM was voted in as Chair unanimously. AM then took over as Chair while the LAG voted for the position of Vice Chair. NR reported that AH was the only nominee to the role of Vice Chair. AH was voted in unanimously as Vice Chair.</p>	
<p><b>4. Conflicts of Interest</b> JM declared a potential conflict of interest. He confirmed that he would have to leave the meeting early anyway and so planned to stay until the project was discussed and then leave the meeting.</p>	
<p><b>5. Update on:</b> <b>5.1 GDPR</b> AL reminded LAG members to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear their caches</li> <li>Hand to LEADER staff any printed papers for shredding</li> </ul>	



It was suggested that papers the LAG can view be watermarked or given a header/footer to say 'confidential', 'in confidence', 'draft', 'to be destroyed' and 'public' and detail/instruction as to this be added to the LAG Protocol.

## 5.2 Budget

NR reported that there is £250k left to allocate with an anticipated admin underspend of £139k. DM and the accountant have kept up-to-date with Scottish Government drawdowns totalling nearly £900k and all claims uploaded on LARCS. NR thanked DM for everything being up to date.

LAG members were requested to apply for any outstanding expenses due to them. Going forward claims should be made within three months of the expenditure being incurred or not at all.

## 5.3 Governance

### 5.3.1 Annual report

AH said the report was comprehensive and reflects well on the hard work of the team and LAG. Highlights were positive reports from the 'On the spot' visit by the Scottish Government and the annual monitoring visit upgrading in audit status from amber to green.

### 5.3.2 Internal Audit Report

AH said the Audit Report was a follow up on the 2017/18 recommendations for improvement. There were 16 recommendations in the previous audit and the recent audit identified that 13 out of the 16 were completely satisfactory. The auditor identified improvements for 3 of which 2 were rated Low and 1 Medium priority. All improvements were agreed and were then actioned by NR by 31/10/18. The audit report also highlighted eight examples of good practice.

### 5.3.3 Governance Subgroup

The Subgroup met on 10 October 2018 to consider how to allocate the remaining funds. It was agreed to prioritise 6 Expressions of Interest (EoIs) based on the following criteria:

- Time in system
- Cost/fit
- Duration
- LDS
- Readiness to start
- Engagement with staff team

Scores of 0 (negative) or 1 (positive) were allocated to each Expression of Interest (Eoi) for each criteria and added to the

**LEADER team to look into watermarking of documents**



original EOI collated scores from the LAG. It was agreed that projects scoring 10 or more would be taken forward in the first instance, which resulted in 6 projects being prioritised for development by the LEADER staff team.

The LAG was happy with how the Governance Subgroup had scored the projects. The LAG discussed the need to retain staff until the end of the 2014-2020 programme.

**5.4 Projects**

**5.4.1 Midlothian Science Zone Project**

This project is now beyond the milestone due date and the work is not done yet. NR spoke with the applicant recently who intimated that that they may pull out of the project altogether. The LAG noted that the project has had four extensions. The LAG agreed to inform the applicant that they have until 15 November 2018 to make a decision on whether they will progress their project with LEADER funding or the LAG will assume they are not going forward with it and the funding will be withdrawn. NR will draft an email explaining this to be checked by AM and AH before being sent.

**5.4.2 The Fraser Centre**

The applicant has send another project update which has been uploaded into the LAG documents on the website detailing that they have largely completed the demolition.

**5.4.3 Crowdfunding Coaches**

The Crowdfunding Coaches project has been approved by all LAGs and has now been procured with Crowdfunder.co.uk being awarded the contract. The crowdfunding coaches should be in place very soon.

**Quorum**

JM declared an interest in the Athelstaneford Village Hall project and left the room while the project was being discussed. The LAG remained quorate with 9 LAG members who were all from non-public sector.

**5.4.4 Athelstaneford Village Hall**

JM declared an interest and abstained from decision making on this project. The LAG remained quorate.

Athelstaneford Village Hall would like an extension until the end of March 2019 to secure match funding. A majority of the LAG approved this extension.

**Quorum**

**NR to contact applicant and inform about new deadline**

**NR to update LARCS**



JM re-entered the room, which brought the number of LAG members up to 10 with only one from the public sector.

**5.4.5 Midlothian Sure Start**

CB reported that the person who had accepted the newly created post had withdrawn due to personal reasons. Recruitment consultants quoted £4,000 to recruit, which cannot be accommodated in the project budget. CB asked if the post title could be altered to Fundraising and Communications Manager to encourage more interest in the post. The LAG agreed that the post title could be changed.

**5.5 Accountable Body Staffing**

NR reported that the Head of Service, whose remit includes Economic Development within which Tyne Esk LEADER is based, had retired. He had been the Acting Accountable Body Representative. The LAG agreed for NR to approach Alasdair Mathers of the LAG's wish to appoint him as the Accountable Body in the interim while a new Economic Development Manager is being recruited.

NR to contact Alasdair Mathers

**5.6 LAG Staffing**

It was noted that Jane Burrige had stood down as a LAG member.

NR to contact LAG Members and Observers who have missed three meetings in a row or more to ask if they still wish to continue as LAG members.

NR to contact LAG members / observers

JM suggested that he would contact PV to ascertain whether he was keen to continue as an Observer to the LAG.

JM to contact PV

NR reported that a Trustee from Gorebridge Community Development Trust had been invited to apply for LAG membership. The Team was waiting for the application.

**5.7 Swedish Intern – Nelly Runesson**

NRu gave the LAG a presentation about her home area, her interest in LEADER and her activities in the LEADER team. NRu had spent a lot of time working on case studies, creating an interactive map of projects in the area and managing the development of film showcasing some of Tyne Esk LEADER's best projects.

NR thanked NRu for her contribution to the Tyne Esk LEADER Programme.

**6. Assess Applications**



<p><b>Quorum</b> JM left having declared an interest and ABJ also left the meeting at this point. The meeting remained quorate with 8 LAG members present and no LAG members from the public sector.</p> <p><b>6.1 Wheatrig Business Hub</b></p> <p>This project is a farm diversification project to create a business hub. Office and workshop spaces will be created through the renovation of a currently derelict building.</p> <p>The LAG appreciated that the project was good for businesses from Longniddry and Haddington as the location is nearer than Edinburgh.</p> <p>The LAG discussed innovation and agreed that whilst there are other similar projects happening elsewhere in the Tyne Esk area, there was nothing particularly close to the applicant and it is certainly a new product for them.</p> <p><b>Technical Check</b> The technical check had raised the issue of whether the project could continue for five years given that the applicant has a life-long lease rather than a time limited one.</p> <p>The LAG felt that the decision was risk based and given the youth of the applicant and spouse and that succession of tenure would pass to the spouse, the risk of the project not being in place five years from completion was low.</p> <p><b>Score:</b> The LAG overall score for the project was 7, which will be entered into LARCS.</p> <p><b>Vote:</b> The LAG voted by a majority vote in favour of awarding a grant to the project of £60,000.00 subject to standard conditions and the match funding being secured.</p>	
<p><b>5 Finish – Date of next meeting</b> Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2019</p>	

**Actions**

- AL to email NR Scottish Government Economic Strategy Document. NR to email to LAG
- LEADER team to look into watermarking of documents for LAG meetings
- NR to contact Midlothian Science Zone and inform about new deadline
- NR to update LARCS about Athelstaneford Village Hall extension



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- NR to contact Alasdair Mathers about being interim AB representative.
- NR to contact LAG members / observers who have not attended 3 or more LAG meetings. JM to contact PV on the same issue.

28/3/19.