



TYNE ESK LAG MEETING MINUTES
29th November 2017, 09:30m – 10.30pm
St Martin of Tours Hall, Tranent

Members present

Andrew McDonald, (AM), Edinburgh Butterfly World, LAG Chair
 Frank Beattie, (FB), Scottish Enterprise, LAG Member
 Cheryl Brown, (CB), Midlothian Sure Start, LAG Member
 Karen Calvert, (KC), Papermill Restaurant, LAG Member
 Alexandra Duncan, (AD), SWRI, LAG Member
 Cllr Russell Imrie, (RI), Midlothian Council, LAG Member
 Susan Smith, (SS), East Lothian Council Economic Development, LAG Observer proxy for LAG Member Cllr John McMillan
 Hilary Smith, (HS), North Berwick Community Council, LAG Member
 Yvonne Stoddart, (YS), STRIVE, LAG Member

In attendance

Jane Crawford, (JC), Midlothian Council Economic Development, LAG Observer
 Joy Godfrey, (JG), LEADER Support Assistant, LEADER Staff (notes)
 Lesley Gordon, (LG), LEADER Project Officer, LEADER Staff
 Neil Ramsay, (NR), LEADER Co-ordinator, LEADER Staff

Apologies

John Anzani, (JA), Midlothian Council Economic Development, Accountable Body
 Anne Hastie, (AH), Private Individual, LAG Vice Chair
 Angela Lamont, (AL), LEADER Project Officer, LEADER Staff
 Alasdair Mathers, (AMs), Midlothian Community Planning Partnership, LAG Observer
 Cllr John McMillan, (JM), East Lothian Council, LAG Member
 Dawne Milligan, (DM), LEADER Finance Support Officer, LEADER Staff
 Simon Poole, (SP), Jerba Campervans, LAG Member
 Paolo Vestri, (PV), East Lothian Partnership, LAG Observer

Welcome and apologies	Actions
AM welcomed everyone to the meeting and declared the meeting quorate.	
Apologies were noted as above.	
Conflict of Interest	
None was declared.	



<p>1. LAG Member Applications</p> <p>The LAG discussed the applications and skills matrix of each prospective LAG member in turn. It was felt that their skills would complement those already on the LAG and that a number of gaps would be filled, particularly experience of LEADER projects and capital builds. The LAG unanimously approved the applications from the following candidates:</p> <p>Andrew Bayne-Jardine, Private Individual (Farming Partner)</p> <p>Jane Burridge, Private Individual (Architect & Partner at SHS BURRIDGE Architects; Project Officer for Gorebridge Community Development Trust)</p> <p>Claire Gilles, CEO Penicuik & District YMCA -YWCA</p> <p>Patrick Playfair, Private Individual (Chartered Surveyor; Farming Grant & Subsidy Applications Agent)</p> <p>The Business Plan states that a maximum of 16 members are allowed on the LAG and it was noted that these additions brings the number of members of the LAG to 16.</p>	
<p>2. Assess Applications</p> <p>2.1 Digital Access Project</p> <p>LG outlined the project, which is to improve digital access skills of people disadvantaged because of lack of digital skills living in rural East Lothian. The applicant is Haddington Citizens Advice Bureau and the project aims to create two jobs: a 2 year full time and a 2 year part time Digital Access Officer role. The project employees will deliver training to help CAB clients to understand how to access and apply to online benefits systems for example Universal Credits, HMRC and other online benefits. They will also train other CAB advisors and produce guides and evaluation publications.</p> <p>LG noted that CAS (Citizens Advice Scotland) is providing the match funding because they see the value of the project. Haddington CAB realised the need for the project as client appointments increased in length and that there was a lack of knowledge in-house.</p> <p>Haddington CAB took the project idea to Citizens Advice Scotland the latter agreed that the project offers a strong possibility of a best practice pilot being delivered.</p>	



Discussion:

One LAG member asked how the LAG could be persuaded that the CAB was the 'right place with the right skills' to deliver the project – suggesting that similar types of advice available through East Lothian Council already, including training delivered through "East Lothian Works" and East Lothian Council's libraries. It was felt that the service Haddington CAB were looking to deliver to rural East Lothian was indeed unique, which was made clear at the site visit, and was not being delivered or likely to be delivered by East Lothian Council or any other organisation. It was noted that CAB staff provide digital access services in libraries, rather than East Lothian Council, and so there was definitely no duplication or displacement between these services. It was further noted that East Lothian Council has a Digital Inclusion and Participation Strategy although there were plans only to train people in using online benefits systems in Musselburgh to target the datazones in multiple deprivation there, which are not in the LEADER eligible area.

It was suggested that greater engagement between the CAB and the Council would ensure a more joined up project. The LAG agreed that an appropriate Officer from the Council's area partnership should sit on the steering / advisory group to gain oversight of what is going on across different services.

LG was asked if there would be any level of concern of this recommendation and advised that no, as there are already relationships within ELC for the project, through those who have shown support that she could not see any issue with this recommendation.

The LAG discussed additionality and it was felt that a LEADER intervention was necessary in order for the project to happen as CAB resources are increasingly having to be used for core work. It was also felt that the intervention was good value for the significant impact that the project would have on a large number of vulnerable people with the training of future trainers creating a strong legacy.

Score:

The LAG overall score for the project was 6, which will be entered into LARCS.

Vote:

The LAG voted unanimously in favour of awarding a grant to the project of £72,952.01 with specific condition

- The LAG require confirmation that an appropriate Officer from East Lothian Council will be included in a steering group to oversee the project.

4 AOB



4.1 Guidance on Projects

4.1.1 Service Course

This project is taking longer than originally planned – there is core work still to do which has delayed the marketing element of the project, which is the aspect of most importance to Tyne Esk LEADER.

The applicant has asked for an extension to 30th April 2018 – which would put the project one year behind. It was noted that like other early projects in the current programme the timescales for this project had been very ambitious to start with.

The LAG were keen to monitor Service Course’s progress and NR said that he would be keeping better track of the project. It was noted that MBTAG have send inbound tourism companies on a course and this could be something that would help the applicant also.

4.1.2 Gorebridge Community Development Trust (GCDT) & Gallery and Café Project

NR reported that Blueprint funding is taking a long time to be confirmed in writing. It was awarded 4 to 5 months ago but the applicant still does not have the grant award letter. Tyne Esk LEADER’s decision in principle’ expires after 60 days so they have asked for an extension.

The applicant wanted the project milestones to be moved well into 2018. The LAG unanimously approved this.

4.1.3 Paths Project

NR had received four quotes for preparatory work and to get costings for big strategic paths linking Tyne Esk with the Scottish Borders.

Gorebridge Paths

There has been some exploration of creating paths that would better link Gorebridge with neighbouring towns and areas. This project appears substantially bigger than anticipated but would have good outcomes because of that. It could be linked to the long distance route (4.1.3), to transport hubs and to other communities. The LAG were happy with the linking of the Gorebridge paths to the strategic project.

4.2 Complaints

4.2.1 ‘In It Together’ Complaint re Mayfield Easthouses Masterplan Application

NR to monitor Service Course’s progress

NR to contact Blueprint to find out what is the hold up with issuing the letter of grant



NR reported that a sub-group composed of LAG members not present at the original decision on the project had met to assess In It Together's complaint. The meeting was convened by AH.

The sub-group especially considered the process of the initial scoring and the LAG meeting alongside the remit of the LAG. Ultimately the two grounds for complaint were not upheld, however it was agreed that the applicant had just cause to complain because the letter of rejection did not offer a full and clear enough explanation for the grounds of rejection.

4.2.2 Third Party Complaint

NR reported having received a complaint from a café about Tyne Esk LEADER's support for Track 2 Train, which the complainant thought created unfair competition for their business. NR had visited the café before the award meeting and included that in the displacement statement. The LAG highlighted that LEADER support for Track 2 Train covered coast associated with renovating a building, rather than with supporting a specific business, and that by encouraging train travellers to get off at local train stations Track 2 Train would also be encouraging tourists into local towns to benefit more businesses.

4.3 Other Topics

4.3.1 Rural Development National Conference

AM reported having attended the Rural Development National Conference. A key focus had been "what constitutes 'rural' in different areas?" It was noted that Scotland has a much better network and infrastructure than some other areas – such as in Northern Ireland. Programs for the future will look at ways to achieve results through making small changes.

4.3.2 Survey to successful applicants to gain qualitative Evidence for a mid-term review of Leader

The LAG discussed the future of Tyne Esk LEADER funding in the face of Brexit. The LAG were keen for political staff to know about the outcomes and impact of the LEADER programme.

The LAG agreed that it would be important to establish an evidence base to show the outcomes and impact of the Leader programme and to create an argument for its important work. The LAG decided to use a survey on Survey Monkey to gain qualitative evidence from successful applicants to create a solid base for a mid-term review of the Programme.



<p>4.4 Upcoming Events</p> <p>4.4.1 Possible Scottish LEADER Conference</p> <p>NR reported that the Scottish Rural Network had previously been discussing organising a Scottish LEADER conference similar to the previous conferences in Aviemore and Glasgow. NR suggested that Tyne Esk might want to volunteer hosting such a conference but did not know of any venues that would be large enough. It was suggested that Queen Margaret University and the Brunton Theatre would be large enough. It was agreed that NR would contact Alistair Prior of the Scottish Rural Network to suggest holding the next LEADER conference in Tyne Esk with QMU and The Brunton as possible venues.</p>	<p>NR to e-mail Alistair Prior about holding conference in Tyne Esk area</p>
<p>4 Finish – Date of next meeting</p> <p>Thursday 8th February 2018, venue TBC</p>	

Actions

- NR to contact Blueprint to find out what is the hold up with issuing the letter of grant
- NR to e-mail Alistair Prior about holding conference in Tyne Esk area

Ongoing Actions

- NR to monitor Service Course's progress