

SHETLAND LEADER 2014 - 2020 LAG

MINUTES OF LAG MEETING HELD IN EDU BOARDROOM AT 9.15AM ON WEDNESDAY 24th August 2016.

Present:

Fiona Stirling, HIE (Chair)
Ruth Henderson, Seafood Shetland
Juan Brown, SNH
Michael Duncan, SIC
Steve Mathieson, Visit Scotland
Ann Johnson, Shetland Food Producers
Lewie Peterson, SIC
Alan Blain, Shetland Amenity Trust
Alec Miller, Voluntary Action Shetland
Graeme Howell, Shetland Arts
Diana Abernethy, AB Associates
June Porter, SIC
Annie Nicolson, NFU
Bryan Leask, Hjaltland Housing Association;
Kathleen Sinclair, NFU;
Sally Spence, SIC
Andy Ross, Global Yell
Ingrid Webb, Cope Ltd

Sheila Tulloch, LEADER Co-ordinator
Jennifer Sjoberg, LEADER Development Officer

1. Apologies and Introductions

Apologies were received from:

Elizabeth Robinson, NHS and Douglas Irvine, SIC

Fiona welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked all of the LAG members to introduce themselves for the benefit of new LAG members; Ingrid Webb and Andy Ross.

Fiona as Chair of the LAG wanted to thank Brian Spence, who has now left the LAG, for his input to the LAG and wish him well for the future.

2. Membership Balance

There were eleven members from the private/voluntary sectors and seven from the public sector.

3. Minutes of 4th May 2016

The minutes were approved by Ruth Henderson and seconded by Steve Mathieson.

4. Matters arising

Alec said he had been in contact with Kellie, she would be happy to join the LAG if we needed another member. Sheila said that we had filled the two vacant positions but it would be beneficial to have another member from the Voluntary/Private sector, to help ensure meetings are quorate. Sheila asked members if they had any opinion on this, none were raised, Alec to contact Kellie.

Action – Alec to contact Kellie

No other matters were raised.

5. LEADER 2014-2020 Update

Fiona provided the LAG members with information on the three LEADER networking groups. The LEADER Coordinators group, which is a continuation from the previous LEADER programme, Sheila is a member of this group. The LAG and FLAG Chairs group which Fiona and Ruth are members of and the Accountable Bodies group which Douglas is a member of.

The purpose of the networking groups is to assist networking between LAGs and to support LAGs to be more proactive in commissioning projects. The LAG Chairs group will meet around two times per year in addition to communication by email. The most recent meeting was held in Falkirk at the end of June, due to the timing, the EU referendum result dominated the agenda.

Sheila will provide an update from the LEADER co-ordinators group at the next LAG meeting as the next co-ordinators meeting is scheduled for the 13th and 14th September in Inverness.

LARCs Sheila attended training on the application process earlier in the month, the system is now semi-live. Some LAG areas now have access and have started to set their projects up on the system. The LAGs which have started to use the system are reporting some teething trouble but from using the system at the training Sheila confirmed that the system appears to be easy to use.

Sheila ran through the different access levels for the system. Sheila said that it looked like it would be necessary to appoint another person as vice chair to have three names available, as it is not possible to add someone to the system as required and asked the LAG for their thoughts. Alec and Bryan asked if the chair or vice chair if not present at the meeting could approve things on the system based on the minutes. Sheila said that it did not look like this would be possible. Fiona said that it would probably be best to have a third person; this was backed up by Alan. Ingrid volunteered to be the third person to have Chair access on the system.

Action – Ingrid to be the third LAG member with Chair access.

Sheila ran through the application process; applicants can work on their application online until they are satisfied, before submitting to the LAG. The application is then

reviewed and evaluated by the project officer. Once the project officer has completed their evaluation, the LEADER Coordinator then submits the application to the LAG ahead of their next meeting. At this stage 5% are selected at random by the system and are diverted to the Scottish Government for a pre approval audit. The Scottish Government have a target of 10 days to complete their checks; this could potentially be higher at the start if the Scottish Government staff have a high number of projects to review at the same time. While projects are being reviewed they are frozen and cannot be accessed or amended by anyone. Sheila asked the LAG if they thought it was necessary to extend the application deadline based on the new information. At present applicants are asked to submit their applications 4 weeks before the next LEADER meeting, but if there is a potential two week delay, if a project is diverted to the Scottish Government for checks, projects could potentially miss the next LAG meeting. Fiona asked the LAG for their thoughts. Ingrid said that as it was only 5% which was a small proportion of projects, applicants could be advised if their application has been diverted to the Scottish Government and has missed the meeting. Graeme and Michael said that we could extend the deadline as many grant awarding bodies have a much longer lead in time. The LAG agreed to extend the deadline for the submission of grant applications to 8 weeks.

Action – 8 week lead time for grant applications update timeline

Sheila said that a high priority is being placed on cashflow projections and ensuring that projections are linked to milestones and targets. Milestones are linked to claims and can be for £0 except for the last milestone/claim which must be for at least 10% of the amount awarded and all targets set in the application must be complete. This is a change from the old programme and will impact on our achievements as we won't be able to record legacy achievements. Sally asked if it would be necessary to review our targets. Sheila said that it would be necessary to do this once the information from the Scottish Government regarding targets was clearer.

Sheila said as a final point regarding LARCs, don't double click as the system security logs you out. Fiona asked if there was a timescale for rollout, Sheila answered that she didn't know when the system would be rolled out but other areas did have access so it is likely to be soon.

6. Declaration of Interest in any Application or Expression of Interest

Fiona asked LAG members for declarations of interest, financial or otherwise, in any of the Expressions of Interest to be considered at today's meeting.

- None raised

7. Expression of Interest

021 Tresta Boating and Fishing club – Tresta's gateway to the sea.

Tresta Boating and Fishing Club (TBFC) are looking to upgrade and develop the pier at Tresta. The pier is owned by TBFC and the group have made some improvements including the installation of a pontoon but further work is required to encase the pier with concrete. This would significantly strengthen the pier and it would become much safer as the pier surface would be smooth. The group have secured match

funding and have done a number of fund raising events to raise their contribution towards the project.

Diana initiated the discussion by saying that it was good to see that they had match funding in place already. Ruth added that the project appears to be a good fit to the local development strategy and was not a high sum of money. Ann said that the community in the area was growing with more houses being built. Alec said that in addition to raising funds towards the project the group have contributed a lot of volunteer labour to make the initial improvements to the pier. Alec asked if the project would require planning or any other permission. Juan and Bryan said that the project would not require planning permission as the work was being undertaken on an existing structure but that other permissions may be required. Sheila said that while the project was in essence a repair project it would enable new activity to happen in the area so would be considered eligible for funding. Sally said that as it could be classed as repair and maintenance there would need to be a clear development plan to show that the project was an enhancement.

Fiona asked the LAG members if they thought the project should be invited to complete a full application.

The LAG members agreed that the project should be invited to complete a full application.

022 Bakka – Mary Macgregor mobile knitwear shop and exhibition.

Mary Macgregor, Bakka is looking for funding towards a travelling shop to allow her to 'pop up' where and when she pleases. This would allow her to attend agricultural shows, the airport and sites in Lerwick along with locations outside Shetland, such as the Highland show or Edinburgh Fringe to exhibit and sell her goods.

Ann initiated the discussion, asking what employment opportunities would be created in Walls if some of the work was being done by Shetland College, Sheila said that Bakka did use a couple of local people for the finishing of garments. Sally asked if the vehicle would be used for the exhibition or moving of stock. June said that the vehicle would be for the sale and exhibition of stock. Fiona added that Bakka also plan to do online sales. Andy asked what capacity is there at present at the college to get items produced. Sheila said that Mary had raised concerns regarding the college and would ideally like to get her own machine but this would be expensive and would require 3-phase electricity which is not currently available in the Dale of Walls. Ingrid said that the biggest risk to the project was likely to be the supply chain and it was necessary for this to be sorted before the project could be considered viable. Graeme asked if there was a reason not to let it progress to the full application stage, as we sometimes interrogate the EOI too far. Juan added that the mobile shop would be innovative. Andy asked if the LAG would support shops. Sheila said that it would depend on the shop, where it was and what it was to be used for. Ruth listed priority actions from the Local Development Strategy which the project could be linked to. Lewie said that he did have reservations with regard to the project which was backed up by Bryan. Fiona added that by making the shop mobile did help to make the project more viable. Sheila added that the original

project for a shop and workshop in the Dale of Walls had been shelved as the applicant had struggled to raise match funding.

Fiona asked the LAG how they would like to progress the Expression of Interest. Michael felt that there was a lot of work to be done by the applicant for the amount of funds being requested before the application could be accepted by the LAG. Jennifer said that a quick look on the internet would suggest that the amount of funding requested looked to be low and she did expect the actual application to be for a higher amount. Graeme added that this would in part support her to focus on the development of the project and her business. Michael questioned if the LAG had the same approach for all applications and the LAG members agreed that a similar approach had been taken for other projects. Following further discussion the LAG decided to take a vote.

11 LAG members voted in favour of inviting the applicant to complete a full application. All were in agreement that further work was required to demonstrate that the project was a good fit to the Local Development Strategy.

8. Promoting the new programme

Sheila said that we have attended 3 shows to date and have another two shows over the next two weekends. Sheila thanked the LAG members who have attended the shows. The feedback from those who had attended was that it had been worthwhile and they had learned more about LEADER. Sheila said that the three shows to date had been different, with several potential projects being discussed. Sheila asked for more volunteers for the shows in Unst and Yell as at present the only volunteer was Andy to attend the Yell show. No volunteers were forthcoming but Steve suggested contacting Kellie as she is based in Unst and may be able to help.

In addition Sheila and Fiona visited Fair Isle last week and held two meetings. Both were well attended with 4 potential projects likely to come forward to either the LAG or FLAG. Ruth said that attending the shows and holding the meetings in Fair Isle would help at a later stage for audit purposes to demonstrate how information was disseminated.

1015 June left the meeting

1020 Graeme left the meeting

Fiona asked for any other ideas for the promotion of LEADER. Sally suggested an advertorial. Bryan suggested the promotion of a case study from the last programme. Alec suggested the promotion of the Mackenzie farm shop as that project was awarded LEADER funding. Sheila said that the farmshop project had been in the Landwise section of the Shetland Times a couple of weeks ago but the timescale on the farm shop was that work should be complete by January when more promotion could be done on this project. Steve suggested a banner along the side of the road next to the farm shop site as it is a busy piece of road. Jennifer said that we do have a banner and we could have it at the farmshop site in Cunningsburgh after the food fair. Sheila said that there should be some signage at the site during the building works but this would be small. Ingrid asked if Shetland LEADER had a Facebook page, Jennifer said that we do have a facebook page which she kept up to date, but there were only a handful of likes. Ingrid

suggested the LAG could investigate sponsored posts which were a cheap way to get information out to everyone with a facebook page within a certain radius. Michael said that he had a mailing list which he sent grant information out to and agreed to send out mailshot regarding LEADER. Ingrid advised the LAG about the 3rd sector forum which meet on a regular basis where a presentation could be made to promote LEADER.

9. Ideas for co-operation projects –

i) walks and walking

Fiona provided an update to the LAG on the discussions which have been ongoing with regard to walking. A small working group has been formed, with others being kept up to date and there is space for others to join. At present the working group is looking to organise a one day event, to provide training on paths, resources and to explore what can be done in Shetland.

Sheila has been in discussion with John Duffy from Paths for All who would be available to come up to Shetland to facilitate and provide some training on the promotion of walking and developing and maintaining paths. A template timetable for the day was included with the minutes along with a list of potential invitees.

The event aims to be both stand alone and have the potential to lead onto future projects. John Duffy would be available two weekends in September but it was thought too short notice to arrange an event and September is still part of the tourist season. Sheila said she would go back to John to check his availability for late October and into November.

Juan said that John Duffy had been up for a training event held in Hoswick last year which he had missed but the feedback he had heard was positive. Kathleen said that it would be good to have someone from a crofting background involved in the organising of the event; Sheila said that would good, and asked if Kathleen could suggest someone to be involved, Alec suggested that it could be someone from the Shetland access forum.

Action – Sheila to check with John Duffy for his availability in late October

Action – crofter/farmer to be involved with organising the walking event

i) Day of the Region

Bryan provided an update on his meeting with Derek and Lesley from Dumfries and Galloway LEADER. He found the meeting to be very interesting.

Bryan provided a background to the Day of the Region events which is summarised in his report circulated to the LAG along with the meeting agenda.

The key points regarding the 'day of the region' events

- The original concept was started in Germany in 1999
- Dumfries and Galloway held their first event in 2011,
- The applicant for the funding is the Local Authority with the project initially being investigated and progressed by the Councils Strategic management Group, as a way to assist the Local Authority to meet the key themes of their LDS including encouraging active lifestyles.

- The project is 100% funded through LEADER at £57,500 per year this covers the project officer, advertising and the purchase of legacy equipment.
- The events are completely free to attend
- Local businesses are encouraged to give donations such as meat for the barbeque.
- Each year groups of at least three community groups apply to host and organise a day or weekend event to engage with the community and raise awareness of opportunities available.
- Last year around 1800 people attended each of the events.
- The events are often used as a basis for consultation on plans for the future such as future LEADER projects, one of the events last year used their day of the region event as an opportunity to consult on a planned new play park for the area.
- A region can host more than one event but the groups organising the event must be different each year.

June back 1040

Bryan said that the 'Day of the Region' is now looking to develop regional connections and have sent out an invitation to anyone who would like to attend the events and learn more. In addition to Scotland wide invitations Dumfries and Galloway hope to have some visitors from Germany attending the events this year.

Alec said that everything being free would have an impact on community groups as they often used gala days as fund raising events, Fiona added that it could be a backward step for everything to be free. Sheila said that we did not need to duplicate the events completely we were just looking to see what could possibly work here in Shetland. Bryan said that the events did appear to be a good way to draw people in and get free promotion for LEADER.

Sheila asked if any of the LAG members would like to attend one of the Day of the Region events, due to be held in September. Bryan suggested it may be better for someone to attend the gathering event in October, when representatives from each of the events presents how the events went. Anyone who would like to attend is to let Sheila know.

Action – Anyone interested in attending an event to let Sheila know

10. AOB

Sheila asked the LAG members if there was anyone who would like to attend a meeting of the Scottish Rural Network, the meeting is to be held in Brechin in October. If anyone is interested, contact Sheila or Fiona.

Michael said the Big Lottery will be in Shetland for two events on the 7th September at the Town Hall and Islesburgh, LEADER can have a stand at this event.

11. Date of next meeting/closure

Next meeting on 5th October 2016

Meeting closed at 10:55