

## **SHETLAND LEADER 2007 - 2013 LAG**

### **MINUTES OF LAG MEETING HELD IN EDU BOARDROOM AT 9.30AM ON THURSDAY 30<sup>th</sup>OCTOBER 2013.**

Present: David Cormack, SGRPID  
Ruth Henderson, Seafood Shetland  
Alan Blain, Shetland Amenity Trust  
David Priest, HIE Shetland (proxy for Fiona Stirling)  
Mick Clifton, SIC  
Michael Duncan, SIC  
Donald Anderson, SADA  
Pete Glanville, Shetland Organics  
Jeemie Smith, FSB  
Kathleen Sinclair, NFU  
Wendy Hand, VAS  
Juan Brown, SNH  
Tommy Coutts, SIC  
Carole Laignel, SSMO  
Diana Abernethy, AB Associates Ltd  
Linda Coutta, SIC

Sheila Tulloch, SIC – LAG Co-ordinator

#### **1. Apologies and Introductions**

Apologies were received from Douglas Irvine, SIC; Fiona Stirling, HIE Shetland; Sally Spence, SIC and Maree Hay, NCDC. As the Chair and Vice Chair had both sent apologies a Chair had to be chosen from the LAG members present. Ruth Henderson proposed and Pete Glanville seconded Jeemie Smith to act as Chair. Jeemie accepted and acted as Chair for the meeting.

#### **2. Membership Balance**

Membership of the group was discussed and there was an appropriate balance.

#### **3. Declarations of Interest**

##### **LDR 118 – SCCDG – Technical Feasibility Study**

Diana Abernethy declared an interest.

##### **LDR 119 – Hame fae Hame Ltd – Scalloway Early Years Integration Project**

Diana Abernethy declared an interest.

##### **CVG 120 – SIC EDU – Hillhead Project**

Tommy Coutts, Mick Clifton and Michael Duncan all declared an interest as SIC employees.

#### **4. Minutes of 28<sup>th</sup> August 2013**

Pete Glanville raised a point regarding item 9 AOB. He stated that in addition to guidelines not changing more than necessary during the next scheme it is important to try and avoid having to apply these changes retrospectively to projects as it can cause difficulties for applicants. The minutes were proposed by Ruth and seconded by Tommy subject to this extra point being added in.

#### **5. Matters Arising – not dealt with elsewhere**

There were no matters arising.

#### **6. Latest Updates**

Sheila presented the financial updates. There were a few projects that had not had offer letters issued yet as they were not fully developed.

Sheila explained project LDR071 Hillswick Hall had been able to recover all VAT, therefore unused funds would be returned to LEADER. The remaining LEADER budget currently stands at £57,718 whilst there is £47,657 of Convergence funding available. There was enough funding available to support all potential projects due to be presented at the meeting.

Updates to targets, outputs and outcomes were noted and will need to be reviewed at a later date.

#### **7. Potential Projects**

##### **LDR 116 – Skerries Development Group – Visitor Facility**

The applicant, Skerries Development Group was seeking £5,000 or 50% of total project costs of £10,000 to develop visitor facilities to welcome visitors to Skerries and inform them of the tourist attractions available. The LAG discussed the application and felt it could be a good LEADER project located in a target area, but did lack sufficient detail in some areas. Some LAG members queried whether the project could be undertaken on the proposed budget as touch screen computer interpretation equipment could be quite expensive. It was assumed that the applicant already had a wealth of visitor information available. The LAG agreed to invite the applicant to submit a full application.

##### **LDR 117 – Peerie Foxes – Shoppers Play, Creche & School Holiday Service**

The applicant was seeking £17,500 or 50% of total project costs of £35,000 to relocate their business into new premises which would enable the business to expand by offering a shoppers crèche facility and to provide day care for additional older children during school holiday times. The LAG discussed the project and were supportive of the aims of the project however innovation was questioned as the main project aim was to relocate an existing business into different premises. This was discussed further and the applicant wishes to expand their business to be able to provide a wider range of services. The LAG agreed to invite the applicant to submit a full application.

### **LDR 118 – SCCDG – Technical Feasibility Study**

Diana Abernethy left the room.

The applicant, Shetland Camping & Caravanning Development Group, was seeking £5,000 or 50% of total project costs of £10,000 to undertake a technical feasibility study into developing a site at Seafield in Lerwick as a campsite for caravans, motor homes and tents.

The LAG noted that, while they supported the principle of developing the site, the group would need to ensure that the end result was achievable in terms of affordability and reasonableness of cost. The LAG considered that the feasibility study should look for cost effective, functional options rather than an “all singing all dancing” campsite that no funder is likely to support. They supported the use of a social enterprise type model for running the site but considered that employed staff should be minimal. The LAG acknowledged that Lerwick needs a campsite but stressed that the rest of Shetland is equally important. Hence the proposal to bring together all groups and organisations with an interest in camping and caravanning in Shetland to jointly promote what they can offer is something which they wish to see actively pursued and co-ordinated.

The LAG agreed that the applicant be invited to submit a full application.

### **LDR 119 – Hame fae Hame Ltd – Scalloway Early Years Integration Project**

The applicant, Hame Fae Hame Ltd, a private pre-school wrap-around nursery provider based in Scalloway, was seeking £15,000 or 50% of total project costs to relocate together with Scalloway Pre-School Ltd (a partner provider running the Scalloway Play Group) to premises within Scalloway School, which have become vacant following the closure of Scalloway School Secondary Department and the move of the primary school into the former secondary school. The move will further enhance the already close working ties between Hame Fae Hame, the Scalloway Playgroup, Scalloway School Nursery Department and Scalloway Primary School and allow for much greater efficiency by cutting down the number of moves between different childcare and nursery settings at different times of day for small children. The Scalloway Health Centre is also moving to adjacent premises in the former primary school.

Sheila provided a breakdown of the projected costs which are relatively modest as the premises have been primary classrooms. The LAG noted that the some of the proposed costs followed recommendations from the Care Commission and that Shetland Islands Council and Scalloway School are supporting the move. Planning permission is not required as there is no substantial change of use but the LAG questioned whether a building warrant would be required for the work and whether this would cause any delay to the start of the project. The LAG stated that there would need to be a clear distinction between what belongs to Hame Fae Hame and what to Scalloway Playgroup, both of whom will also move existing equipment into the new premises.

Some LAG members expressed concerns that moving both Hame Fae Hame and Scalloway Playgroup out of the centre of Scalloway might have a negative effect on the Scalloway shops and that moving the Scalloway Playgroup out of the Scalloway Youth Centre would result in a loss of income for that social enterprise.

The LAG agreed that this was a project which they should support and that the applicant be invited to submit a full application.

Diana Abernethy returned to the room.

### **CVG 120 – SIC EDU – Hillhead Project**

Tommy Coutts, Mick Clifton and Michael Duncan left the room.

Shetland Islands Council Economic Development Service were seeking £10,000 or 50% of total project costs of £20,000 to commission a concept design, including planning phases, which will examine converting the Old Library Building on Hillhead into a textile manufacturing hub to address many of the issues currently facing the sector. This process will include consultation with businesses and stakeholders over design, requirements, marketing and sustainability. The LAG discussed the application and had several queries. Linda Coutts was invited to answer some of these and provide more background information on the project.

Linda Coutts entered the room.

Linda provided some background on the project to date. She stated a recent industry review highlighted several barriers to growing the sector locally which could hopefully be overcome by developing an industry led textile hub including creative space, workshops, and facilitation units. The Old Museum and Library is in a central strategic location and could possibly be developed for this purpose. Information exists on the feasibility and costs of refurbishing the building and it was queried what the LEADER funding would be used for. This study would consider how the building could be used to meet industry needs by bringing together interested parties to develop and evaluate the concept of a hub.

LAG members queried who would own and run the building as well as apply for funding to refurbish it. Linda explained a new group would need to be formed with members from the industry. One possible idea is to develop the project like a BID (Business Improvement District). There is a huge amount of potential that is not being realised in the local textile sector. There are a wide range of jobs available from semi-skilled positions to working as a designer maker. Jobs in the industry are not viewed as being as worthwhile and as valuable as they could be. There is concern that skills are not being handed down from generation to generation as they once were and there is a risk of losing these skills due to the poor perception the industry has as a career choice. The study could investigate bringing the textile hub closer and if

feasible, develop the project to the developed design stage including a full planning application.

Linda Coutts left the room.

The LAG discussed the project further and felt the project could be very worthwhile for the textile industry and agreed to invite the applicant to submit a full application.

Tommy Coutts, Mick Clifton and Michael Duncan all returned to the room.

#### **8. Request for additional funding CVG097 Bridge End Outdoor Centre Trust**

The applicant had prepared a letter requesting additional project funding. Although funding had been secured from several sources, the project was facing a shortfall due to being unsuccessful in securing funding from the Weir Charitable Trust. BEOCT were awaiting the outcome of a funding application submitted to the Robertson Trust. The LAG had already approved £50,000 of funds and were being asked to consider a possible further £40,000 bringing the total requested to £90,000. If the application to the Robertson Trust was successful the total amount required would be £70,000.

The LAG were aware of how much effort the group had put into driving their project forward and attempting to secure as much external finance as possible. As a result the LAG unanimously agreed to approve funds of up to £90,000 for the project. Please see attached voting record.

#### **9. Expression of Interest LEADER 2014-2020 – Feedback**

Sheila discussed the feedback letter and circulated a timeline with indicative dates for the new scheme. Stage 2 requires the LAG to prepare a Local Development Strategy by March 2014. The earliest date the strategy could begin to be implemented is from January 2015.

A separate LAG meeting needs to be arranged to discuss this further, Sheila agreed to arrange a separate LAG meeting to discuss.

#### **10. Feedback from LEADER Co-ordinators Meeting**

Sheila attended a LEADER Co-ordinators meeting in Oban on 24<sup>th</sup> September. A number of issues were raised and discussed in detail at the meeting. These included;

- Transition funding
- LAG Expressions of Interest
- Audit Issues
- Local Development Strategies and Business Plans
- Strategic Delivery Partnerships

Sheila agreed to circulate a minute detailing more information on each of the points as well as an update on Audit Scotland findings. Sheila explained many of the issues the Shetland LAG is facing are common to other LAG's.

**11. AOB**

Ruth Henderson queried whether the LAG could send a brief note to the Shetland MSP or MEP to explain the amount of extra work created for the LEADER Programme by the interpretation of the rules at a Scottish level. Recent audits and changes to guidelines have resulted in a huge amount of extra work for those involved in implementing the programme locally.

**10. Date of next meeting/closure**

12<sup>th</sup> December 2013 EDU Boardroom.

Meeting closed at 11.45 am.