

SHETLAND LEADER 2007 - 2013 LAG

MINUTES OF LAG MEETING HELD IN EDU BOARDROOM AT 9.30AM ON THURSDAY 15TH DECEMBER 2011.

Present: Douglas Irvine, SIC (Chairperson)
Mhari Pottinger, HIE Shetland (Vice Chairperson)
Alice Mathewson, AB Associates Ltd
David Cormack, SGRPID
Tommy Coutts, SIC
Michael Duncan, SIC
Pete Glanville, Shetland Organics
Wendy Hand, VAS
Kathleen Sinclair, NFU
Sally Spence, SIC
Mick Clifton, SIC
Alan Blain, SAT
Maree Hay, NCDC
Ruth Henderson, Seafood Shetland
Jim Smith, FSB

Sheila Tulloch, SIC – LAG Co-ordinator

1. Apologies and Introductions

Apologies were received from; Ann Johnson, SNH Jennifer Mouat, SSMO; Kathy Hubbard, Shetland Arts and Hannah Nelson SIC. Douglas Irvine welcomed Alice Mathewson to the group who is replacing Diana Abernethy, and thanked Diana for all the hard work she had put in over the last few years. He also said that Vaila Simpson would be replacing Hannah Nelson.

Membership Balance

The public/private status of the group was checked and there was an appropriate balance.

Declarations of Interest

Declarations of interest regarding the following potential projects were noted;

- 086 – Voluntary Action Shetland –Wendy Hand declared an interest as an employee of VAS.
- 087 – Transition Turriefield – Mick Clifton declared an interest as he had been involved with the project
- 069 – CDAS Showfield Development – Kathleen Sinclair declared an interest as she is a member of the group
- 088 – FICA – Alice Mathewson declared an interest as she had been involved in preparing the application
- 089 – ABA Services – Alice Mathewson declared an interest as an employee of ABA Services

Douglas Irvine informed the group that following a monitoring visit by the Scottish Government they had been given a red at risk status. The monitoring officers had been up in September, had reviewed project files with the Lead Partner (i.e. SIC) as applicant and had found minor deficiencies with all. He stated that an email had been sent to all managers of Lead Partner projects stating that processes required to be looked at. On the 5th of December a meeting had been held between Douglas, Sheila and Scottish Government officers (by VC) at which Douglas had presented them with a list of actions taken in response to the Monitoring Visit Report. The monitoring officers are returning in February and will review all Lead partner files again, where they have to find significant improvement. All project officers have been asked to review all files, and Sheila Tulloch has made a list.

The main points raised by the monitoring officers were:-

1. From this meeting a record sheet must be completed for all decisions made at full approval stage.
2. The application evaluation form requires to be more detailed.
3. The application check list for supporting documentation must be on file before a project proceeds.
4. The letter of offer must be gone through with the applicant in person before it is signed.
5. All payments must now be checked and countersigned by Sheila Tulloch.
6. There must be more internal meetings with SIC staff involved with LEADER projects.

He stated that these matters were in hand and was hopeful for an amber light in February.

2. Minutes of 27th October 2011

The minutes were proposed by Pete Glanville and seconded by Sally Spence.

3. Matters Arising – not dealt with elsewhere

An update was given on the Burravoe project. State Aid is not now thought to be an issue however match funding has not been secured and the approval is to be withdrawn.

In relation to the COPE project, it was stated that the Charitable Trust is to have a meeting next week, but it is looking unlikely that the project will go ahead. Whalsay has raised £85,000 towards match funding, and the local charity shop has said it will cover any losses in the first 5 years, however the project has been turned down by the Lottery.

The Fetlar green Transport project will go ahead on a reduced basis, as they no longer wish to pursue grant for the wind turbine due to issues with feed in tariff. They hope to submit a full application to the next meeting.

It was suggested that the next meeting date could be timed to coincide with the Auditors visit on the 15/16 of February.

4. Latest Updates

Sheila Tulloch explained the latest updates. She said that there were no new approvals, and that existing projects were not spending their grant as quickly as might be hoped. The Scottish Government monitoring officers had stated that they should withdraw claims from any project which did not claim quarterly, and that the system would need to be tightened up. The overall budget summary showed the scheme was almost fully committed, but this did not reflect around £30,000 of anticipated underspends, nor did it reflect the project updates which had just been given to the meeting.

Mhari Pottinger asked if there were any transnational projects, and Alan Blain stated that there was a Shetland Amenity Trust project.

Sally Spence enquired about the wind to heat final claims, Douglas Irvine responded that as there were issues with the installer going into liquidation the SIC were currently paying the claims, but not reclaiming from the Scottish Government until the situation was resolved.

Michael Duncan enquired if the £1,000 minimum spend was a total cost, or LEADER grant as this may cause issues for some of the schemes which have been approved. Sheila Tulloch is to ask which is the case.

5. Potential Projects

087 Transition Turriefield – Westside Veg Box Scheme

Mick Clifton left the room.

The project will provide the communities of Sandness and the Westside of Shetland with locally produced, chemical free, fresh fruit, vegetables and eggs.

Concern was raised over whether dry goods would also be sold and if so what impact this might have on local shops, as well as if there was evidence of demand. The issue of security of tenure for the CIC was also raised, and land ownership was felt to be a major issue. It was also thought possible that this could be funded through CCAGS, where it might be a better fit. It was decided that the group be asked to resubmit a Stage One application clarifying these points.

Mick Clifton returned to the room

088 Fair Isle Community Association (FICA) - Sustainability Review and Plan for Fair Isle

Alice Mathewson left the room.

There was a lot of discussion about this proposal, most of which concerned whether another plan was really needed, what mechanisms are already in place to offer this kind of support and what agencies have an existing role in providing such support. More specific questions asked were:

- Is the target of 30 micro businesses expected to benefit from the project unrealistically high for a small community?
- Can FICA not do this themselves without bringing in anyone from outside?
- Is it understood that the preparation of the review and plan would have to be put out to tender?
- Greater clarity required as to precisely what the proposal would address.
- What is in the Fair Isle Management Plan 2009-2019?
- What is the involvement of the National Trust for Scotland in this? Should they be taking on a bigger role and /or providing funds?
- Has there been any communication with the SIC Community Worker for the South Mainland as a first step towards involving other agencies through the Community Regeneration Partnership?

The LAG's decision was that a first step should be to set up a meeting of the various agencies who have a remit to provide support to communities to decide whether it is really necessary to bring in an outside agency. Depending on the outcome of this meeting, either FICA will be asked to revise and resubmit their stage one application or another way of delivering the project will be proposed.

089 ABA Services - Shetland Opportunities (SHOP)

The LAG expressed strong views that this proposal would duplicate and/or overlap the work of the Community Regeneration Partnership, SIC Economic Development Unit, SIC Community Planning and Development and other statutory and voluntary agencies and that a lot of what is proposed is already being done. The project was seen as expensive in terms of what it offers and the level of duplication involved.

The LAG considered that the proposal goes against the LEADER ethos by being top-down rather than bottom-up. The initiative should come from the communities themselves.

The LAG also questioned what the ultimate achievement of the project would be as the proposal is a process without any clearly defined goal. They considered it to be a complex proposal that would require a detailed presentation to demonstrate how it all holds together.

Another point made was that this is a case of the private sector attempting to engage where the public sector is seen to be withdrawing but if public funds are required to do this then there is no real saving to the public purse. It was also pointed out that the services proposed would need to be put out to tender in order to comply with LEADER rules.

The LAG's decision was to reject the project proposal but to indicate that they would be happy to consider discrete projects from individual communities.

Alice Mathewson entered the room

6. Convergence Action 4 Projects

069 CDAS – Show Field Development

Kathleen Sinclair left the room

CDAS organises the annual Cunningsburgh show which is well supported by the local community, open to exhibitors from across Shetland, and is well attended by members of the public, exhibitors, and traders. The current facilities on the site comprise 2 sheds and a limited hard-standing area for parking. CDAS plan to improve and upgrade these facilities, enhancing both the main show event and allowing further activities to take place throughout the rest of the year, as follows:

1 – Undertake groundworks to increase the usable area of the showfield, in particular for equestrian but also Shetland Dog Club and Shetland Athletics use at other times of year;

2 – Construct 2 new multipurpose sheds (18m x 9m) for storage of showfield equipment year-round, and for displaying exhibits on show day. Other groups (e.g. South Mainland Up Helly Aa and Cunningsburgh History Group) will also use the sheds throughout the year.

It was felt that there was good community support for the project, however questions were raised as to whether it was good value for money, given that the Cunningsburgh Show was only one week end per year. After some discussion about other users Kathleen Sinclair was invited back into the room to answer questions.

She was asked what use the dog and athletics club would make of the facility, and stated that this would be use of the field and not the sheds. She was then asked what use the South Mainland Up Helly Aa would make of the facility, and stated that they would use one shed from September to March to construct a galley, and this shed would then be cleared for the Show. She also stated that the history group wished to do an exhibition on the Show, which would tie in with Sunday teas and car boot sales at the hall. In addition she stated that on the Show day there was a sport programme which included the Show mile that starts and ends on the Show ground. In terms of revenue she stated that it was the intention to hire out the second shed as storage over

the winter for a fee, and that rental would be paid by the Up Helly Aa Committee for use as a galley shed.

Kathleen Sinclair then left the room again.

It was stated that match funding was key to the project going ahead, and that this had to be in place prior to the project commencing. Although a suggestion was made to defer a decision until the match funding was in place, after some discussion it was decided that a decision on approval at this stage would be better in order that the project would have more chance of attracting match funding should it be approved by LEADER.

A vote was then undertaken and the project was unanimously approved, conditional on match funding being secured. See LAG meeting record of voting 069.

Kathleen Sinclair then returned to the room

086 Voluntary Action Shetland - Parent Link Shetland

Wendy Hand left the room

Questions were raised again as to why the Family Centre were not undertaking this work, and it was stated that they were supportive of this project. Questions were also raised as to what the VAS management fee was for, and it was stated that this was staff time, and would be justified by time sheets. Questions were raised as to whether the service required to go out to tender, and Sheila stated that VAS had successfully tendered to deliver the service and other products had been considered by the Parenting Strategy Group but Parent Link was the only one that offered what they wanted at a reasonable cost. Questions were also raised as to the low number of men targeted, and what sort of monitoring would be in place. Following further discussion the project was unanimously approved, conditional on sufficient monitoring being in place. See LAG meeting record of voting 086.

Wendy Hand returned to the room.

7. AOB

Scottish LEADER Programme 2007-2013 - Guide

Copies of the Guide were circulated to members by Sheila Tulloch, who asked that they also take some to distribute on a wider basis. She stated that the Guide had been paid for by the Scottish Government and was available online.

Future of LEADER

It was decided that this would be discussed further at the next meeting.

Shetland Organics

Pete Glanville stated that he would like to give a presentation on this project in the New Year, and it was suggested that this could be timed to coincide with the return visit of the Scottish Government monitoring officers. Sheila stated that Global Yell had also requested that they be invited to make a presentation. Alan Blain stated that the ethos of LEADER was for people to gain something, so presentations on the outcomes of projects would be good to see.

FLAG

Ruth Henderson asked if there was anything further on FLAG. It was stated that there was no news, but Douglas Irvine said he would ask Lizzie to find out.

8. Date of next meeting/closure

The date of the next meeting is to be left as 9th February 2012, at the EDU Boardroom, but this may change due to the Scottish Government Monitoring Officers' visit.

Meeting closed at 10.35 am.