

**MINUTE OF MEETING OF
RURAL ABERDEENSHIRE LEADER
LOCAL ACTION GROUP**

**MONDAY, 15 MARCH 2010 AT 10.30 AM
ST NINIAN'S & FORGLEN CHURCH, TURRIFF**

Present

Eleanor Anderson	Aberdeenshire Local Rural Partnerships
Ewen Cameron	Scottish Natural Heritage
Gordon Henderson	Aberdeenshire Council
Reid Hutchison	Aberdeenshire Council
Jennifer Kinnaird	Scottish Government Rural Payments Inspection Directorate
James Knowles	Aberdeenshire Council
Bob Leonard	Aberdeenshire Council
Donald McKernie	Scottish Enterprise
Tony Miller	Aberdeenshire Community Councils
Andy Willox	Federation of Small Businesses

Officers in Attendance

Vicky Thomson	Aberdeenshire Council
Anne MacLennan	Aberdeenshire Council

Apologies

Dan Cadle	Forestry Commission Scotland
Caroline Clark	NHS
David Fyffe	Scottish Rural Property and Business Association
Moira Gordon	SWRI
Alexander Macleod	Aberdeenshire Council
Ken Massie	Visit Scotland
Keith Newton	Aberdeenshire Council
Lorna Paterson	National Farmers' Union Scotland
Maureen Stephen	Aberdeenshire Councils for Voluntary Services

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

James Knowles welcomed Jennifer Kinnaird from SGRPID to the meeting and introductions were made round the table. Apologies were noted as above.

2. MINUTE OF LAST MEETING

2.1 Draft LAG Minutes of Monday, 11 December 2009

Approved as an accurate record. Minutes will be uploaded on the LEADER website.

2.2 Draft PAC Minutes of Tuesday, 2 March 2010

Item 6 AOCB – wording confirmed with Ewen Cameron. Minutes will be uploaded on the LEADER website.

3. LEADER CO-ORDINATOR UPDATE

3.1 Financial Update

Round 7 funding summary tables were circulated. Balance of LEADER funds available subject to Round 7 approvals is circa £800,000.

Birse Community Assets Project has been de-committed due to application to Big Lottery being unsuccessful. Applicant may come back with an amended proposal in the future. There are now 5 de-committed projects.

Turriff & District Ltd have advised that the current proposal for the Turriff Haughs has been withdrawn.

3.2 Scottish Government Claims

Total drawdown from Scottish Government = 12% of LEADER budget.

To date, 21% of total grant commitment has been paid out to projects.

3.3 LEADER Strategic Board (LSB)

LSB was established by the Scottish Government in December 2009 to oversee strategic direction of LEADER in current and future programming periods.

Membership comprises LAG Chairs. Not all LAG Chairs are Lead Partners. At the LSB meeting on 23 February in Edinburgh, the remit of the Board was discussed in detail. In order to improve communication, a conference for Chairs/Lead Partners/Co-ordinators was proposed. Aberdeenshire LAG offered to host the event.

It was agreed that LEADER be represented on the SRDP Programme Monitoring Committee and the Chair of the Cairngorms LAG attended the first meeting.

James Knowles presented a paper on the Transfer of Measure 321 (Community Services and Facilities) to LEADER. However a large number of CSF type applications have been submitted through Rural Priorities and this may result in little or no available budget remaining to transfer to LEADER.

Clear message from Scottish Government that LEADER spend must be increased across Scotland.

3.4 LEADER Co-ordinators Meeting, Edinburgh

LEADER Co-ordinators met with the Scottish Government to discuss LEADER finance and audit procedures.

Similar message regarding increasing spend over the programme as a whole to meet projected targets.

- 3.5 **Finland LEADER Groups Visit to Scotland, 27/01/10 to 31/01/10**
A party of 7 delegates from Finland visited Rural Aberdeenshire LEADER projects to investigate the possibility of co-operation projects with Scottish LAGs. Potential to follow-up possible projects in food industry or working with young people were identified.
- 3.6 **UK National Networking Conference in Belfast 10/11 March 2010**
Approximately 200 delegates attended the event which covered a wide range of rural development topics. Excellent presentations were provided by the speakers. Delegates then attended their choice of workshops.
- 3.7 **LEADER Promotion in Aberdeenshire**
It is proposed that Community Seminars to promote the LEADER programme will be held in Garioch and Kincardine and Mearns in May.

4. PAC AND LAG TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 4.1 Scottish Government SLA Monitoring Visit and Internal Audit requirement that LAG Terms of Reference be completed by the end of March 2010.

Draft Terms of Reference were circulated and discussed.

Minor changes and comments were noted and Terms of Reference approved.

5. SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT LEADER CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 Cabinet Secretary considering transfer of Measure 341 Local Development Strategy funding to LEADER with confirmation expected in the near future.
- 5.2 Aberdeenshire LAG responded to Scottish Government consultation on delivery of Broadband. SG waiting for all LAGs to respond before making a decision on transfer of funds.

6. PROJECTS 070 TO 086

- 6.1 **079 – Insch Institute Sports Hall**
The proposal is to build a Sports Hall adjacent to the Insch Institute. The new indoor bowling centre will be a multi-functional facility which will benefit young people and recuperating patients from Insch Hospital.

The proposal has significant support from potential users and potential competitors. There is evidence of links with Active Schools Co-ordinator and the Bennachie Leisure Centre. The proposal will also free up space in the Insch Institute building to enable the Library to be extended.

Sports Council and ELL match funding outcomes should be known by the end of March.

LAG felt that the facility would be a valuable asset for the community

considering that the population of Inch has almost doubled in size but amenities have not improved accordingly.

PROJECT FUNDING OF £67,200 APPROVED.

6.2 080 – Aboyne Into Martignas Exchange

£4,987 approved by PAC to hold a programme of events showcasing Aboyne to a party of delegates from Martignas sur Jalle in France, leading to the signing of a formal twinning agreement between the two settlements.

6.3 081 – Making the Most of Aden Country Park

The project is to employ a Development Officer over an 18 month period to develop a five-year strategic plan for Aden Country Park. This proposal is a Measure 341, Local Development Strategy type project, attracting a more flexible intervention rate.

A stakeholder group carried out a major exercise to look at uplifting and refreshing Aden Country Park. The Officer will undertake community consultation to raise the profile of the facility and will develop a 5-year action plan which will improve and sustain the facility for future generations.

LAG considered Aden Country Park to be an important resource for the North East which is in need of upgrading. Buchan Development Partnership has a good record of delivery and was considered as the best vehicle to work with the Development Officer.

PROJECT FUNDING OF £37,386 APPROVED.

6.4 082 – CLAN in the Community

The project is to employ an additional 3 local co-ordinators over 2 years to roll-out the services of CLAN to the rural communities of Aberdeenshire.

CLAN provides additional counselling/holistic services to cancer sufferers and their families. The service is complementary to that provided by the NHS.

A 2-year pilot outreach project has proven to be highly successful. There is evidence of strong support for the proposal.

LAG felt that CLAN is a well known organisation, with an extremely good record of delivery. The service provides good value for money and CLAN are constantly fundraising to sustain the service.

PROJECT FUNDING OF £52,990 APPROVED.

6.5 083 – Wildlife Crime Education Officer

This is a joint application with Moray LEADER. The project is to employ a Wildlife Crime Education Officer to deliver a range of awareness raising and prevention priorities to school pupils, instilling a sense of respect and responsibility for the environment. The Officer will link with Landowners and Wildlife Crime Officers.

Grampian Police will appoint the first Wildlife Crime Education Officer in post and, if successful, the programme will be rolled out across Scotland.

LAG felt the proposal, which will target rural communities, is wide ranging and has strong links to raising awareness of wildlife crime and organised crime. The transferability of the project is good.

PROJECT FUNDING OF £37,800 APPROVED.

- 6.6 **084 – Monymusk Hall Development: Scoping Study**
£2,644 approved by PAC to carry out a professional scoping study and appraisal of development work to be carried out in Monymusk Hall.
- 6.7 **085 – Haddo Widening Participation – Foundation Phase**
£4,000 approved by PAC to employ an Officer over a 5 month period to promote the wider use of resources at Haddo and to establish the Haddo Foundation.
- 6.8 **086 – Options Appraisal of Boyndie Kirk**
£4,275 approved by PAC to undertake an options appraisal of the category B listed Boyndie Kirk to determine whether future use would be financially viable.

7. AOCB

- 7.1 James Knowles thanked John Littlejohn for giving LAG members an interesting tour of the much improved St Ninian's Church facility.
- 7.2 LAG members are delighted with the progress of LEADER and it is hoped that the programme can be further publicised through the press and possibly even through a television feature about the fantastic community story, focusing on the amount of funding community groups are committing to their own projects.
- 7.3 LAG members were thanked for their valuable contribution to the meeting.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

PAC meeting – Tuesday, 1 June 2010, Conference Room D, Woodhill House.

LAG meeting – Tuesday, 15 June 2010, Rothienorman Bowling Club