

**MINUTE OF MEETING OF
RURAL ABERDEENSHIRE LEADER
PROJECT ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE**

**TUESDAY, 2 MARCH 2010 AT 10.00 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM D, WOODHILL HOUSE**

Present

Eleanor Anderson	Aberdeenshire Local Rural Partnerships
Ewen Cameron	Scottish Natural Heritage
James Knowles	Aberdeenshire Council
Donald McKernie	Scottish Enterprise
Lorna Paterson	National Farmers' Union Scotland

Officers in Attendance

Vicky Thomson	Aberdeenshire Council
Anne MacLennan	Aberdeenshire Council

Apologies

David Fyffe	Scottish Rural Property and Business Association
Jamie Rankin	Scottish Enterprise
Maureen Stephen	Aberdeenshire Councils for Voluntary Services
Andy Willox	Federation of Small Businesses

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

James Knowles welcomed Donald McKernie from Scottish Enterprise to the meeting and introductions were made round the table. Apologies were noted as above.

2. MINUTE OF LAST MEETING

- 2.1 The minute of the PAC meeting of 24 November 2009 was approved and will be uploaded on the LEADER website.
- 2.2 The draft LAG minute of 11 December 2009 will be considered for approval by the LAG at the meeting on 15 March.

3. LEADER Strategic Board Meeting, 23 February 2010

- 3.1 A bullet-point note from the LEADER Strategic Board (LSB) meeting was circulated and James Knowles summarised the main points.

Discussion was held regarding remit of the LSB. The main aim of the LSB is to oversee strategic direction and delivery of LEADER post 2013.

A conference involving LAG Chairs, Co-ordinators and Lead Partners was suggested. Aberdeenshire LAG volunteered to host the conference. PAC considered the conference to be of benefit as long as there is clear purpose and strong leadership.

The Strategic Group was updated on Measure 341, 321 and Broadband Consultations and a report on LEADER Spend and Profile was issued.

4. LEADER CO-ORDINATOR UPDATE

4.1 Financial Update

Funding summaries were circulated for Round 7.

4.2 Scottish Government Claims

To date, 5 claims have been submitted to the Scottish Government with drawdown of £405k. Rural Aberdeenshire LAG is steadily drawing down funds. Some LAG areas have still to make a claim to SG. Rural Aberdeenshire LAG spend profile will not be amended at the current time.

4.3 Scottish Government Consultations

The following papers were issued and will be circulated to the full LAG:

- Transfer of Measure 341, Local Development Strategies, from Rural Priorities to LEADER
- Proposed transfer of Measure 321, Community Services and Facilities, from Rural Priorities to LEADER.
- Broadband proposal.

4.4 LEADER Co-ordinators Meeting, Edinburgh, 20 January 2010

The Co-ordinator's meeting focused on financial aspects of the LEADER programme. A detailed minute of the latest Co-ordinator's meeting is available on request.

4.5 Finland LEADER Groups visit to Scotland

Vicky summarised the successful visit of a party of seven delegates from Finland. Aberdeenshire LAG visits included Maud Village Trust and Huntly Development Trust. The programme of events organised for Cairngorms was suspended due to bad weather and thanks go to Murray Swap from Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust who travelled to the Lonach Hall at short notice to speak to the Finnish delegates about COAT's joint project with Cairngorms LEADER.

There is potential for transnational projects but as yet there has been no opportunity for follow-up.

4.6 Issues Outstanding

Terms of Reference will be available for the LAG meeting on 15 March 2010.

Vicky is to attend the first UK National Rural Networking Conference in Belfast on 10/11 March.

5. PROJECTS 079 to 086

5.1 079 – Insch Institute Sports Hall

The project is to build a Sports Hall adjacent to the Insch Institute for the benefit of the Insch and surrounding communities. The facility will target outdoor bowlers who wish to continue over the winter months with indoor bowls. Young people and recuperating patients at Insch Hospital will also benefit from use of new indoor facility. There is evidence of demand and clear links with Active Schools and the hospital. The Bennachie Sports Centre also backs the proposals.

Sports Council and ELL Capital Grant are the major match funders and outcome will be known soon. The planning application has been submitted.

The applicants have considered the economics and sustainability of making the facility work.

PAC considered this to be a good project for the community of Insch which has almost doubled in size. The proposal will also free up space in the Insch Institute building to allow the Library to expand.

PROJECT FUNDING OF £67,200 RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL BY PAC.

5.2 081 – Making the Most of Aden Country Park

The project is to research and develop a five-year strategic plan for Aden Country Park to increase the use of the facility. This is a Measure 341, Local Development Strategy type project which can attract a grant rate of greater than 50%.

An Officer will be employed for an 18 month period to carry out consultation in the community and with visitors to establish what priorities the community wish to focus on in development of Aden Country Park. A 5 year action plan will be developed and this will be a pre-cursor to looking for major funding to undertake the outcomes from the consultation.

The application is submitted by Buchan Development Partnership on behalf of a stakeholder group. BDP has a long record of undertaking community consultation and a good record of delivery.

PAC felt that Aden is a valuable but slightly tired resource which has had very little investment made in it in recent years. PAC was supportive of the logic of undertaking the development plan.

PROJECT FUNDING OF £37,386 RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL BY PAC.

5.3 082 – CLAN in the Community

CLAN provides additional care for cancer patients and their families through a counselling/holistic approach. Uptake is voluntary and the service is complementary to what is provided by the NHS and other palliative care

resources.

The project aims to employ an additional 3 local co-ordinators to provide CLAN's service to the rural communities of Aberdeenshire.

CLAN has a very good record of fundraising and if other funders do not commit, they will allocate more funds from fundraising to allow the project to progress.

A detailed report analysis of the successful 2-year pilot outreach project is available. There is wide ranging support for the service from NHS, GPs and nursing staff who consider the service to be complementary to NHS care.

PAC felt that this was a different type of project for LEADER and the community benefit and value of service is very worthwhile.

PROJECT FUNDING OF £52,990 RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL BY PAC.

5.4 **083 – Wildlife Crime Education Officer**

This is a joint application with Moray LEADER to promote community and educational awareness of wildlife crime. The project will create a new 3-year post of Wildlife Crime Education Officer to deliver a range of awareness raising and prevention priorities to school pupils, encouraging ownership and pride in the environment. The officer will also work with landowners and land managers.

North East Grampian Police are pioneers in this area and the post, which is a first for Scotland, will be considered for roll-out across Scotland following the Aberdeenshire/Moray initiative. Grampian Police have an excellent record of involvement in education.

Regular meetings will be required with the management group where the Officer will provide an action plan and report back on what has been achieved.

PAC agreed the transferability of this project is good with the possibility of the post being rolled out to other forces.

PROJECT FUNDING OF £37,800 RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL BY PAC.

5.5 **080 – Aboyne Into Martignas Exchange**

The project is to hold a programme of events to showcase the Aboyne area to a delegation from Martignas sur Jalle in France, leading to the signing of a formal twinning agreement between the two settlements.

The proposal will stimulate tourism and create valuable educational links.

PAC felt that Aboyne was particularly well placed for a twinning agreement with the Aboyne games in the summer. Aboyne tourism will benefit greatly from the increased footfall. The project fits particularly well with the Scottish

Enterprise tourism strategy.

PROJECT FUNDING OF £4,987 APPROVED BY PAC.

5.6 **084 – Monymusk Hall Development: Scoping Study**

The project is to carry out a professional scoping study and appraisal of development work to be carried out in Monymusk Hall. The scoping study will be undertaken by an Architect who will liaise with Planning and draw up a formal plan of what works can be carried out at what cost and in what order.

The study will consider options to improve energy efficiency and building works to expand storage space and add a disabled toilet.

PAC agreed this was a sensible approach to assist the hall committee consider the most effective and timely way to carry out improvement works.

PROJECT FUNDING OF £2,644 APPROVED BY PAC.

5.7 **085 – Haddo Widening Participation – Foundation Phase**

The project relates to the employment of an Officer over a 5 month period to promote the wider use of resources at Haddo in terms of cultural arts. A key element will be the establishment of the Haddo Foundation which will focus on ways of widening the participation opportunities for Haddo.

The project will work towards developing a business plan for the Haddo Foundation and will be a pre-cursor to the development and action plan for the future.

PAC felt that although 5 months is not a long time for the Officer to be in post, it was a sensible to come forward with a strategic approach as to how to make best use of resources.

PROJECT FUNDING OF £4,000 APPROVED BY PAC.

5.8 **086 – Options Appraisal of Boyndie Kirk**

Boyndie Kirk is a category B listed building which was acquired by Aberdeenshire Council through compulsory purchase order following a fire. North East Scotland Preservation Trust will undertake an options appraisal of the building to determine whether future use would be financially viable.

Community consultation will be carried out to establish the preferred use for the building in the future. There are various options for potential community use.

PAC felt that NESPT has a good track record of restoration and, if the building is salvageable, could be a useful asset for the community.

PROJECT FUNDING OF £4,275 APPROVED BY PAC.

6. AOCB

- 6.1 Ewen Cameron confirmed that SNH project budget for next financial year had been confirmed. SNH will commit the agreed annual amount towards LAG admin costs. Ewen advised that the LEADER Co-ordinator should contact SNH towards the year end regarding SNH contribution.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

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

LAG meeting – Tuesday, 15 June 2010, Committee Room 4, Woodhill House.