

Orkney LAG is being part-financed by the Scottish Government and the European Community
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Minutes: LEADER Programme 2014-2020.

Local Action Group Meeting.

6 February 2019 (11.00) – St Magnus Suite, Pickaquoy Centre, Kirkwall

Present: LAG Members (Public) – Francesca Couperwhite (Chair), Phyllis Harvey (Vice Chair), Kerry Spence, Alister Brown.

LAG Members (Private) – Dawn Flett, Brian Cromarty, Susan Pirie, Julian Branscombe, Edgar Balfour and Steve Ray.

LEADER Team – Alison Barclay (LEADER Development Officer), Jill Sutcliffe (LEADER Assistant Project Officer), Michelle Koster (LEADER Assistant Project Officer).

The Chair checked that the meeting was quorate, per the LAG's Constitution formally adopted at the LAG meeting held on 3rd December 2015. The Chair also checked and confirmed that the public/private minimum 49/50 split was met.

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed the LAG members to the meeting.

Apologies had been received from Sarah Sankey, David Scarth, Tom Duff and Hannah Ker.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 31 October 2018 were presented.

The Chair asked the LAG for any comments, or queries and, there being none, Julian Branscombe proposed that the minutes be approved and this was seconded by Edgar Balfour.

3. Financial summary and outputs

The Chair asked Alison to present and explain the financial summary and outputs papers.

Commitment by Category (3a)

- To date, 30 projects have been awarded funding, with £1.539 million committed to project costs.
- The Economic Business and Farm Diversification budgets have been merged giving a combined target of 20% of overall costs. There is still £212,928.36 left to allocate.

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- The Community Support, Environmental Support and Tourism, Heritage, Crafts, Food and Drink Support budgets can now be considered together, and there is currently £278,098.24 left to allocate.
- The Co-operation Support budget currently has £84,394.50 left to allocate.
- The Admin and Staffing budget is fully committed.

Budget Summary (3b)

Claims are now coming in from projects regularly with 37.83% of the committed budget spent. Some of the larger scale projects are now getting underway with claims so it is anticipated that this will rise steadily. 4 projects have now completed, with budgets fully spent, and remaining projects will be encouraged to submit claims on a regular basis.

Anticipated applications (3c)

- Community theme – 5 applications to be considered today; if approved the budget remaining will be £30,265.50.
- Environmental theme – 3 applications to be considered today; if approved the budget remaining will be £45,757.11.
- Tourism, Heritage, Food, Drink and Craft theme – 1 application to be considered today; if approved the budget remaining will be -£16,635.99 with the ability to move monies from either community or environmental budget heading to make up the shortfall.

Project Outputs (3d and 3e)

- The farm diversification and environmental targets are low as is the spend but this will increase after this and the following round.
- The targets for businesses supported and community facilities benefited look likely to be met and will increase after this round.
- When time allows, all project targets will be re-visited by LEADER staff to refine and adjust where necessary.

4. Enquiries received

The Chair asked Alison to provide a summary of the Enquiries and Expressions of Interest (EOIs) received.

- On 4 Dec 2018 Orkney Leader opened for EOIs for the farm diversification and economic/business themes and this closed on 9 Jan 2019.
- 15 EOIs were received and approved with 1 withdrawn due to lease issues. 4 existing farm diversification EOIs with 1 that has since withdrawn could also come forward to the 1 May 2019 meeting.

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- A further 2 co-operation projects may come forward before the end of March.
- 2 further initial enquiries have been received, 1 of which did not qualify and 1 had planning issues and could not continue.

5. Approved Applications Progress and Change Requests (paper by email only)

The Chair asked if any of the LAG members had any questions with regards to the Approved Projects Update, or the Change Requests papers circulated by email. There were no questions raised.

6. Projects as at 16 January 2019

The LAG members were provided with a list of current projects as at 16 January 2019 for their reference. The Chair asked if the LAG members had any questions relating to any of the projects. No questions were asked.

7. Dates of next meetings

Alison confirmed the deadlines for draft applications as follows:

Round	Deadline for Applications	Papers to LAG	LAG Meeting
12 (Co-operation)	27 February 2019	14 March 2019	21 March 2019
13	14 March 2019	24 April 2019	1 May 2019

Round 12 will be for the consideration of 2 co-operation projects only, which were not finalised in time for the LAG meeting. It is proposed to hold this on 21 March, with Board members attending either in person or by teleconference. There will be no financial papers to consider, so the meeting should be of fairly short duration. A poll will be circulated to finalise the exact date, and the location is to be confirmed.

8. AOCB

Alison advised that the changes to the business plan agreed at the last LAG meeting have been approved by the Scottish Government.

At this point all OIC employees left the meeting, as all applications to be considered had either OIC as applicant or match funder.

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9. Assessment of Round 11 projects:

The project applications were assessed using the scoring criteria previously agreed by the LAG as follows:

- Farm diversification projects – 12 criteria with a total of 36 marks available and a pass rate of 24
- Other projects - 13 criteria with a total of 39 marks available, and a pass rate of 26

Which were scored against the following current LAG and Applicant Guidance versions:

- LEADER General Guidance for Applicants, Version 5, dated 13 February 2018
- LAG Project Assessment Guidance, Version 4, dated 13 February 2018

Happy Valley Access and Biodiversity Improvements – 14/P00048

This is an environmental project by Orkney Islands Council to extend and improve access to those with reduced mobility to the Happy Valley Local Nature Reserve using recycled plastic boardwalk. In addition, two sheltered stone seating area will be created.

It will create a circular route reducing the pressure on the existing woodland paths and will include the relatively recent addition of the freshwater pond and wildflower rich grassland. Letters of support have been received for the project from RSPB, Orkney Field Club, Friends of Happy Valley, VAO, schools, NHS Orkney, Orkney Heritage Society and locals.

The project is likely to lead to economic benefits for the local area with a greater number of visitors, social benefits by improving the site and access more families and community groups can enjoy and learn about the Reserve, and environmental benefits from installing the recycled boardwalk to help reduce pressure and conserve the wet meadow habitat.

Match funding from Friends of Happy Valley is in place and pending from EB Scotland Ltd (end Jan), and the project has been approved in an SG pre-approval check.

The Chair took the LAG members through the scoring criteria, and the following was agreed:

- The project will have significant benefits and a local level and throughout Orkney, with significance to many people.
- The project offers a high level of benefits. Excellent value, recycled plastic boardwalk has a long life, and is a good use of recycled plastic.
- Broad consultation has been carried out to demonstrate need and demand, with many letters of support received.

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- The project will mainly be carried out by the appointed contractor, but there is involvement from the Friends of Happy Valley.
- The project plan is robust and not too complicated. It identifies how the need and demand will be met, and has realistic costs and timeframes.
- The objectives and milestones are appropriate and appear achievable. The milestones are broad and not too complex.
- 3 potential barriers and risks to the plan have been identified, and all are appropriate.
- All identified barriers and risk have been adequately addressed.
- The project is innovative in Orkney being one of the first to use recycled plastic boardwalk.
- The project has clear linkages with the Orkney Council Plan and Access Strategy.
- There are strong linkages between the project and both social and environmental criteria.
- The project will enhance the environment.
- The project could not proceed without LEADER support.

With a score of 33 the project was **Approved**, and the grant to be awarded will be £22,442.50 (50% contribution towards approved eligible costs of £44,885.00), **conditional upon full match funding being in place.**

Mull Head LNR Access and Interpretation Project – 14/P00049

Alison advised that, since the LAG papers were circulated, confirmation had been received that HLF match funding has been refused. The applicant is actively investigating other funding avenues (including re-applying to HLF), and the LAG was therefore asked to score the project in the expectation that it will be able to proceed.

This is an environmental project by Orkney Islands Council to improve access and interpretation at the Mull Head Local Nature Reserve by installing recycled boardwalk, a GPS based interpretative app as part of a Geocaching treasure hunt, finger post marking, hazard cliff signs, entrance sign, new gates, new leaflet and 2 interpretation boards.

Letters of support have been received from local community council, Duke of Edinburgh Award, Institute for Northern Studies, Orkney Field Club, Orkney Ramblers, SNH, Orkney Science Festival, Friends of St Ninian's and Orkney Archaeological Society.

The project is likely to lead to economic benefits through increased tourism to the east mainland, social benefits from the app-based interpretation to appeal to younger generations through the geocaching treasure hunt and environmental benefits for both locals and visitors gaining a greater appreciation of their environment and the use of recycled materials.

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The project has been approved in an SG pre-approval check.

The Chair took the members of the LAG through the scoring criteria. The LAG members agreed that:

- The project will have significant benefits and a local level and throughout Orkney, with significance to many people.
- The project offers a high level of benefits. Recycled plastic boardwalk has a long life, and is a good use of recycled plastic. The project is not asking for much money.
- Broad consultation has been carried out to demonstrate need and demand, with many letters of support received.
- The project will mainly be carried out by the appointed contractor.
- The project plan appears viable, with 3 delivery milestones and not too complicated. It identifies how the need and demand will be met, and has realistic costs and timeframes. Concern that the project may not be able to start by the estimated start date of 1 March 2019.
- The objectives and milestones are appropriate and appear achievable. The milestones are broad and not too complex.
- 4 potential barriers and risks to the plan have been identified, and all are appropriate.
- All identified barriers and risk have been adequately addressed.
- The project is innovative in Orkney for its use of a GPS app and for being one of the first to use recycled plastic boardwalk.
- The project has clear linkages with the Orkney Council Plan and Access Strategy.
- There are strong linkages between the project and both social and environmental criteria.
- The project will enhance the environment and it will hopefully stop footpaths being widened to avoid muddy areas.
- The project could not proceed without LEADER support.

With a score of 32, the project was **Approved** and a grant to be awarded would be up to £21,388.65 (50% LEADER contribution towards the approved eligible costs of £42,777.30), **conditional upon full match funding being secured.**

The LAG was very supportive of the project and asked the LEADER team to work with the applicant regarding timescales for securing match funding. The LAG agreed they didn't wish to see/re-score the project again unless there was a material change.

Post the LAG meeting, the LEADER team has liaised with the applicant and a deadline of 31st of May 2019 has been agreed to secure match funding.

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Heating and Environmental Upgrade for Firth Community Centre – 14/P00043

This is a community project from Firth Community Association SCIO to upgrade the heating and hot water to be a more sustainable and effective system, create a wildflower garden and install an electric car charger.

Letters of support for the project have been received from Orkney 2023 Islands Games Organising Committee, MSP, MP, Community Energy Scotland, Firth SWI, Firth Mums and Toddlers, Orkney Weddings, Firth Youth Club and local wildlife enthusiasts.

The project is likely to have economic benefits in reducing the overheads to the Firth Community Association and hall charges to local groups/Islands Games Committee, social benefits by providing upgraded facilities for users of the hall with groups more inclined to meet with pleasant surroundings, and, environmental benefits from the new wildflower garden and electric car charger.

The Chair took the members of the LAG through the scoring criteria. The LAG members agreed that:

- The project will have significant benefits at a local level.
- This is a strong project with a high level of benefits for the funding requested.
- Broad consultation has been carried out to demonstrate need and demand, with many letters of support received.
- The project will build capacity through broad involvement in development and delivery. It is a community-led project for community benefit.
- The project appears viable, with appropriate delivery mechanisms, realistic costs and timeframes.
- The objectives and milestones are appropriate and appear achievable.
- The risks and barriers identified are not very specific but all are appropriate.
- All identified barriers and risk have been adequately addressed.
- The project is innovative as this is the first public car charger to be installed in the local area.
- The project has clear linkages with strategies at a local level through the Local Development Plan.
- There are strong linkages between the project and social, economic and environmental criteria. It is recognised that a fit for purpose Community Centre is essential component in sustaining a community.
- The project will enhance the environment.
- The project could not progress without LEADER support.

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With a score of 32, the project was **Approved** and the grant to be awarded would be up to £11,816.06 (47.49999196% LEADER contribution towards the approved eligible costs of £24,875.92). Match funding is in place from own funds and OIC Community Development Fund.

Stromness Community Development Officer – 14/P00052

This is a community project by Stromness Community Development Trust Ltd to employ a part-time Community Development Officer for Stromness.

Letters of support have come from the Stromness Museum, Stromness Primary School, Stromness Community Business Forum, Stromness Community Garden and the Pier Arts Centre.

The project is likely to lead to economic benefits for Stromness with an additional part-time post as well as from the delivery of the projects on the retail sector, social benefits from increasing the capacity of community groups to enhancing community spaces within the town and, environmental benefits through the projects on recycling and enhancing the play area.

The Chair took the members of the LAG through the scoring criteria. The LAG members agreed that:

- The project will have significant benefits at a local level.
- There will be a high level of benefits proportionate to the funding requested. It is important to monitor progress being made on the project.
- Broad consultation has been carried out to demonstrate need and demand.
- The project will build capacity through broad involvement in development and delivery. The community will be supported by the CDO.
- The plan appears viable, with appropriate delivery mechanisms, realistic costs. The timeframes are very ambitious.
- Further refinement of the milestones is required. (See note under “additional comments”).
- 6 potential major barriers and risks to the plan have been identified, and all are appropriate.
- All identified barriers and risk have been addressed as far as is possible.
- There are some innovative aspects, although there was previously as Stromness CDO for the Per Mare project.
- The project has clear linkages with strategies at local and Orkney-wide levels.
- This is difficult to score on environmental impact as the project is for a post, but some of the projects being supported by the CDO will protect the environment.
- The project could not progress without LEADER support.

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Additional comment:

A more detailed breakdown is required of the delivery milestone plan, with information about future funding plans for the post if all the projects are not delivered during the lifetime of the LEADER funded project.

Note: An additional milestone will be added to the project on 31 March 2020, to review CDO progress against projects delivery. The delivery milestone costs will be £23,367.91, which will be taken from the final milestone delivery costs.

With a score of 30, the project was **Approved** and the grant to be awarded would be up to £21,525.01 (50% LEADER contribution towards the approved eligible costs of £43,050.02). Match funding from OIC Economic Development Fund has been approved.

South End Play Area – 14/P00054

This is a community project by Stromness Community Development Trust Ltd to redevelop the South End Play Park in Stromness to provide a safe and sustainable park for future generations.

Letters of support have been received from many in the community through facebook, the Stromness Community Council and the Stromness Primary School P3/P5 pupils.

The project is likely to lead to local economic benefits by the use of local contractors and materials in the redevelopment, social benefits by encouraging outdoor play improving overall health and wellbeing of families, and, environmental benefits using sustainable materials (wood and stone) for the majority of the play equipment and incorporates planting of native shrubs, trees, wildflowers and grass.

The Chair took the members of the LAG through the scoring criteria. The LAG members agreed that:

- The project will have significant benefits at a local level.
- The contribution to outputs is proportionate to the funding being requested.
- Broad consultation has been carried out to demonstrate need and demand, with input from the local children themselves.
- The project will build capacity through broad involvement in development and delivery.
- The plan appears viable with appropriate delivery mechanisms, realistic costs and timeframes.
- The objectives and milestones identified are appropriate and appear achievable.
- Appropriate potential barriers and risks specific to the plan have been identified well.
- Thorough and robust plans to address the barriers and risks are outlined. A fixed price budget has been set.
- The project shows some innovative aspects in the use of materials.

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- The project has some limited linkages demonstrated through the Play Park Strategy.
- There are good linkages between the project and social and environmental criteria.
- The project will enhance the appearance through the planting of shrubs and bulbs improving a local amenity.
- The project could not progress without LEADER support.

With a score of 30, the project was **Approved** and the grant to be awarded would be up to £36,000.00 (50% LEADER contribution towards the approved eligible costs of £72,000.00). Match funding from OIC Community Development Fund has been approved.

Hall of Clestrain Project Manager – 14/P00039

A tourism project by the John Rae Society for a feasibility study on the plans for the Hall and employment of a part-time Project Manager to develop the plans and apply for grants to achieve the project.

Letters of support have been received from EMEC, MSPs, Orkney heritage Society, and 18 emails/40 letters from both members and non-members of the John Rae Society.

The project is likely to lead to economic benefits from a part-time job in the rural area, and, social benefits leading from the project with strengthening genealogy links with the Hudson Bay Company Archives in Canada.

The Chair took the members of the LAG through the scoring criteria. The LAG members agreed that:

- The project will have significant benefits at a local and programme level.
- There is a high number of benefits for the relatively small amount of funding requested. There is a high potential gain from this busy post.
- Broad consultation has been carried out to demonstrate need and demand, with considerable wide-ranging support.
- The project will build capacity through broad involvement in development and delivery. There are many local people involved with a wide variety of skill sets.
- Some areas of the project plan require further development. This is a varied and ambitious roll, and captures the enthusiasm of the applicant, and they will need to refine the role further once outcomes of the feasibility study are known.
- Further refinement of the objectives and milestones is required to ensure the outcomes of the feasibility study are planned and prioritised to assist the postholder in the delivery of the project.
- Appropriate potential barriers and risks have been identified.

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- Appropriate plans for potential barriers and risks have been identified.
- The project shows some innovative aspects in the project manager's role.
- The project has some limited linkages demonstrated through tourism.
- There are good linkages between the project and social and economic criteria, through the use of the building and international links.
- The project will protect the built environment.
- The project could not progress without LEADER support.

With a score of 27, the project was **Approved** and the grant to be awarded would be up to £18,111.73 (50% LEADER contribution towards the approved eligible costs of £36,223.46). Match funding from OIC Community Development Fund has been approved.

Broadening Accessibility – 14/P00055

A Community project by Kirkwall Kayak Club to purchase kit that ensures there are craft and equipment available to suit younger ages (8 years) and those less able (larger and with additional support needs).

Letters of support have been received from Scottish Autism, Scottish Canoe Association, RSPB, Orkney Sea Kayaking Association, Younger Befrienders and members of the club.

The project is likely to lead to economic benefits from reducing the economic barriers to people joining the sport, social benefits from inter-generational working together to learn new skills whilst increasing the confidence to those taking part helping their health and well-being, and, environmental benefits from greater appreciation of unusual and inaccessible habitats.

The Chair took the members of the LAG through the scoring criteria. The LAG members agreed that:

- The project will have significant benefits at a local and programme level due to the Orkney-wide benefits for the size of the project.
- There is a high number of benefits for the relatively small amount of funding requested.
- Broad consultation has been carried out to demonstrate need and demand, with support from worthy organisations.
- The project will build capacity through broad involvement in development and delivery. The project is all about community and encouraging more involvement.
- The project plan is simple and robust and clearly articulates how the identified need will be met, with realistic costs and timeframes.
- The objectives and milestones identified are uncomplicated, specific and it is clear how they will be achieved.
- The potential barriers and risks specific to the plan have been identified.

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- Thorough and robust plans to address the barriers and risks are outlined.
- The project shows some innovative aspects in its inclusivity.
- The project has clear linkages with strategies at local and programme level.
- There are good linkages between the project and social and environmental criteria, raising awareness by removing barriers that prevent participation.
- The project will protect the environment by raising awareness.
- The project could not progress without LEADER support.

With a score of 35, the project was **Approved** and the grant to be awarded would be up to £7,859.33 (47.49996525% LEADER contribution towards the approved eligible costs of £16,545.97). Match funding from OIC Community Development Fund has been approved.

Development of Wyre Community and Heritage Centre – 14/P00050

A community project by Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO to develop and up-grade the Wyre Community and Heritage Centre.

Letters of support have been received from the MSP, MP, REW Development Trust, REW & Gairsay Community Council, 9 residents and 17 others.

The project is likely to lead to economic benefits from increased visitor numbers, social benefits from the redeveloped centre fostering a revitalising of the community, and, environmental benefits from the removal of asbestos roofing sheets and use of the wind turbine for the heating system.

The Chair took the members of the LAG through the scoring criteria. The LAG members agreed that:

- The project will have significant benefits at a local level on this small island.
- The project contributes proportionately to the funding being requested.
- Broad consultation has been carried out to demonstrate need and demand, with many letters of support received.
- The project will build capacity through broad involvement in development and delivery, and will benefit the whole island.
- The project appears viable, with appropriate delivery mechanisms, realistic costs and timeframes.
- The objectives and milestones are appropriate and appear achievable.
- 5 potential risks and barriers have been identified. LAG concerned about potential unknown risks involving the state of the building when works commence, but a QS report has been produced which should have picked up on all potential risks.

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- All identified barriers and risk have been adequately addressed. The project has the backing of the REWDT to assist with any contingencies.
- The community centre will be connecting to the existing wind turbine, which is innovative.
- The project has clear linkages with strategies at a local level, including the North Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme.
- There are strong linkages between the project and social, economic and environmental criteria. As the Community Centre it is essential in sustaining the community.
- The project will protect the environment by removing an existing asbestos roof.
- The project could not progress without LEADER support.

With a score of 29, the project was **Approved** and the grant to be awarded would be up to £29,168.33 (47.49998494% LEADER contribution towards the approved eligible costs of £61,407.03). Match funding from OIC Community Development Fund and REW Development Trust has been approved.

Francesca Couperwhite left the meeting at this point, having declared an interest in the next project (NILPS Biodiversity) as her employer Highlands and Islands Enterprise is a match funder of the overall Northern Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme, and Dawn Flett took over the Chair.

NILPS Biodiversity Projects – 14/P00053

An Environmental project, with Orkney Islands Council as Lead Partner in NILPS, proposing to deliver two biodiversity projects – Natural Heritage Guides and Interpretation in the North Isles and Virtual Dives in the North Isles.

Letters of support have been received from the MSP, Eday Partnership, North Ronaldsay Trust, Rousay Heritage Trust, Sanday Heritage Group, Westray Development Trust and REW & Gairsay, Papa Westray, Shapinsay, Westray Community Councils.

The project is likely to lead to economic benefits from stimulating increased tourism numbers from improved information/interpretation, social benefits from inter-generational researching for the project, and, environmental benefits from a greater understanding for locals and visitors of the wildlife, landscape and biodiversity underwater.

The project has been approved in an SG pre-approval check.

The Chair took the members of the LAG through the scoring criteria. The LAG members agreed that:

- The project will have significant benefits and a local level and throughout Orkney.
- Contribution to outputs is proportionate to the funding being requested.

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- Broad consultation has been carried out to demonstrate need and demand, with many letters of support received.
- The project will build capacity through broad involvement in development and delivery.
- The project plan is robust. It identifies how the need and demand will be met, and has realistic costs and timeframes.
- The objectives and milestones are appropriate and appear achievable.
- 4 potential barriers and risks to the plan have been identified, and all are appropriate.
- All identified barriers and risk have been adequately addressed.
- The project is innovative in Orkney with virtual dives being new to the local area.
- The project has clear linkages with strategies at local, Orkney-wide and European levels.
- There are strong linkages between the project and social, economic and environmental criteria.
- The project will protect the environment.
- The project could not progress without LEADER support.

With a score of 33, the project was **Approved** and the grant to be awarded would be up to £50,400.00 (36% LEADER contribution towards the approved eligible costs of £140,000.00). Match funding from Heritage Lottery Fund has been approved.

The meeting closed at 14.20.

Approved by:Date:
Francesca Couperwhite (Chair)

Approved by:Date:
Dawn Flett (Acting Chair for the NILPS Biodiversity project 14/P00053)