

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



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Minutes: LEADER Programme 2014-2020.

Local Action Group Meeting.

26 March 2019 (14:30) – HIE Board Room, 12-14 Queen Street, Kirkwall

Present: LAG Members (Public) – Francesca Couperwhite (Chair), Phyllis Harvey (Vice Chair),

LAG Members (Private) – Edgar Balfour, David Scarth and Sarah Sankey.

LEADER Team – Alison Barclay (LEADER Development Officer) and Jill Sutcliffe (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 Kerry Spence, Brian Cromarty, Tom Duff, Mark Hull, Steve Ray, Hannah Ker, Alister Brown, Julian Branscombe and Susan Pirie.

2. Budget for Co-operation projects

As this meeting has been called to only consider 2 co-operation projects the normal finance papers were not presented, but Alison provided a financial breakdown of co-operation project costs committed to date, and the funds left available to allocate.

Originally 10% of the total LAG budget was ring-fenced for co-operation projects, but this has subsequently been reduced to 5% with the approval of the LAG and Scottish Government (SG). 1 project has already been approved and is now underway.

£84,394.50 is available to allocate; £60,000 is being requested by the Foraging Fortnight Scotland project with the balance of £24,394.50 being sought by the Scottish Islands Passport project. The Lead LAG of this project (Highland Council) is applying to SG for approval to allocate a further £24,346.00 of their own co-operation budget on behalf of Orkney, which if approved would make the total contribution £48,740.50.

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3. Assessment of Round 12 projects:

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

- 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

Foraging Fortnight Scotland - 09/P00051

This is an inter-territorial Scotland LAG led co-operation project, with the objective in Orkney to create a Foraging Fortnight to run concurrently with “Scotland’s Food and Drink Fortnight” held during the first two weeks of September 2019 and 2020. It is envisaged that the project will celebrate Orkney’s natural environment and wild food through a national programme involving a wide range of foraging and wild food activities. 2020 is Visit Scotland’s designated year of Scotland’s Coasts and Waters which the foraging concept fits well.

This project is being led by Forth Valley and Lomond LAG, who are already part of an international foraging co-operation project, with a further 3 LAG areas participating. It has already passed an SG pre-approval check.

£60,000 funding is being sought, of which £40,000 will be to deliver the project in Orkney, and the remaining £20,000 being added to a central fund to manage the project.

It was confirmed that there will be a steering group set up to co-ordinate the project, comprising representatives from all participating LAGs, but that the Orkney representative had not yet been confirmed.

A reasonableness of cost assessment and technical assessment have been carried on the project.

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

- The project will have significant benefits Orkney-wide.
- Contribution to outputs is proportionate to the funding being requested.

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- The Economic Development Section of the Orkney Islands Council and Orkney Food and Drink have been consulted regarding need and opportunity, but no comprehensive survey has taken place.
- This is a niche opportunity and therefore there will be limited opportunity for community involvement.
- The project plan appears viable, with appropriate delivery milestones, realistic costs and timeframes, although no in-depth details have been provided.
- The objectives and milestones are appropriate and appear achievable. Contracts have been advertised on PCS today, which gives the project very tight timescales.
- Some broad 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 highly innovative and unique in Orkney, being something never tried before.
- The project has clear linkages with the Food and Drink Strategy, Food Tourism and Ambition 2030.
- There are strong linkages between the project and both social and economic criteria.
- The project will understand the environment, but not necessarily protect it.
- The project could not proceed without LEADER support.

Feedback to Lead LAG:

Applicant should consider incorporating more information on sustainable foraging and protecting the environment into the project.

With a score of 29 the project was **Approved**, and the grant to be awarded will be up to £60,000.00.

Scottish Island Passport - 11/P00135

This co-operation project which is being taken forward by HITRANS will develop a Scottish Island Passport to help promote all of Scotland's offshore islands which are accessible by regular transport and in so doing help encourage more people to visit more of these islands.

The project will see the recruitment of an island-based project manager for a 2-year period who will be responsible for implementing a detailed project plan that will include the development of both a physical and online app-based version of a Scottish Islands Passport that is capable of appealing to different markets and demographics. HITRANS and ZETRANS will be responsible for funding the remainder of the project manager costs after the end of the LEADER programme.

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The Lead LAG for this project is Highland Council, who will be responsible for carrying out the reasonableness of cost and technical assessments; Orkney LAG has not been sent copies of these. Neither has it received a copy of the letter of support which the Lead LAG advises it has received from the Scottish Government.

£24,394.50 being sought from Orkney LAG by the Scottish Islands Passport project. The Lead LAG is applying to SG for approval to allocate a further £24,346.00 of their own co-operation budget on behalf of Orkney, which if approved would make to total contribution £48,740.50.

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

- The project will have significant benefits Orkney-wide. There may be an opportunity for individual islands to create new tourism businesses such as isles tours, bike hires etc
- There will be a high level of benefits for the small amount of funding being requested.
- Limited consultation appears to have taken place regarding need and opportunity, and there is no evidence that the island communities have been consulted.
- There will be limited opportunity for community involvement although there is potential for isles residents.
- The project plan appears viable. No milestones have been detailed in the paperwork received, and there is only 1 milestone in LARCS. However, the GANTT chart and Activity Plan provided do appear to include milestones.
- Further refinement of potential barriers and risks is required as well as details on how these will be addressed.
- The project is innovative as it has never been done for the Scottish Islands as a whole before.
- The project has clear linkages at a programme level with Visit Scotland's designated year of Scotland's Coasts and Waters 2020.
- There are strong linkages between the project and both social and economic criteria.
- The project has neither a positive nor a negative effect on the environment.
- The project could not proceed without LEADER support.

Feedback to Lead LAG:

- It is essential that the right person is appointed to the Project Manager post, with extensive marketing experience, as the post is essentially for marketing of the Scottish Islands. The physical location of the manager is not relevant (i.e. does not need to be island-based).
- It is also essential the right person is selected to represent Orkney on the steering group.
- The LAG is disappointed at the lack of detail provided in the project application by HITRANS.

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- The project needs to collaborate with existing marketing initiatives within Orkney and be of the same high standard.
- Orkney LAG was concerned that visitors are unable to book online with Orkney Ferries, and felt this requires to be addressed to ensure parity of opportunity in attracting visitors.
- More thought must be given to the legacy of the app – how it will be funded and who will be responsible for the content.
- The steering group should be involved with the appointment of the Project Manager.

Note: Following this meeting, Ruth Kirkpatrick from HIE agreed to act as the Orkney named representative on the Steering Group for this project.

With a score of 28 the project was **Approved**, and the grant to be awarded will be up to £24,394.50.

4. AOCB

There was no further business to discuss, and meeting closed at 15:30.

Approved by:Date:
Francesca Couperwhite (Chair)