

**FORTH VALLEY & LOMOND LEADER LOCAL ACTION GROUP MEETING**

**Killearn Village Hall**

**22 March 2017**

**10am - 12.30pm**

**Minutes**

**Present:**

<i>Kyle Barrie</i>	<i>Stirling Council</i>
<i>Susan Brooks</i>	<i>Loch Lomond &amp; the Trossachs National Park Authority</i>
<i>Bridget Clark</i>	<i>Community, Stirlingshire</i>
<i>Mike Ewart</i>	<i>Land Management, Central Scotland Green Network Trust</i>
<i>Lynn Hamilton</i>	<i>VisitScotland Janice Kennedy, Scottish Enterprise</i>
<i>Brian McColgan</i>	<i>West Dunbartonshire Council</i>
<i>Carolyn McGill</i>	<i>Clackmannanshire Council</i>
<i>Mike Strachan</i>	<i>Forestry Commission Scotland</i>
<i>Celia Burn</i>	<i>Community, West Dunbartonshire</i>
<i>Isla Campbell</i>	<i>Scottish Natural Heritage</i>
<i>Douglas Johnston</i>	<i>Community, Stirlingshire (Chairing the Meeting)</i>
<i>Julie McGrath</i>	<i>Community, Clackmannanshire TSi</i>

**Apologies:**

<i>John Armstrong</i>	<i>Community, Stirlingshire</i>
<i>Peter Sunderland</i>	<i>Business and Community, Stirlingshire</i>
<i>Tony Teasdale</i>	<i>Community, Rural Stirling Housing Association</i>
<i>Colin Tennant</i>	<i>Historic Environment Scotland</i>
<i>Jason Clark</i>	<i>Business, Stirling Enterprise Park</i>

**In Attendance:**

<i>Anne-Michelle Ketteridge</i>	<i>LEADER Programme Manager</i>
<i>Sarah Phillips</i>	<i>LEADER Development Officer</i>
<i>Ashley Robinson</i>	<i>LEADER Development Officer</i>
<i>Irene Watterson</i>	<i>LEADER Claims Officer</i>

	ACTIONS
<p><b>1. Welcome, Sederunt and Minutes of last meeting</b></p> <p>DJ welcomed everyone as Chair of today's meeting and thanked everyone for coming. He noted apologies from JC, TT,CT, PS and JA. DJ introduced Julie McGrath from Clackmannanshire Third Sector Interface who was attending as a new LAG member and asked Members to carry out a round the table introduction.</p> <p>He noted the resignations from the LAG from Janet Beveridge and Ian Mathieson due to competing work demands, thanking them in their absence for the work they had done to date in supporting the LAG and its Sub-Groups.</p> <p><b>2. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising</b></p> <p>DJ asked if anyone had any issues in relation to the accuracy of the Minutes of the meeting in December. No-one had any issues and these were proposed by CMcG and seconded by MS.</p> <p><b>LH joined the meeting</b></p> <p>Under the matters arising, AMK said that the cycle tourism and farm diversification actions would be discussed later in the meeting.</p> <p>AMK also advised that although some events are been attended by the LAG staff (like The Rural Roadshow today in Killearn), at the moment, the staff are concentrating more on the Expressions of Interest received, with the exception of Clackmannanshire and West Dunbartonshire where the staff are attending as many events as practical.</p> <p>AMK added that the FVL website has now been updated with an on-line scoring sheet and asked the Members what they thought of the new Scoring Sheet. They said they liked it but said they were unable to see their scores and comments on the sheets once it had been submitted. It was agreed that AMK would contact the website designer about this and in the meantime, IW would return their electronic scorings by email for the Members own records. It was also asked if an extra box could be added for additional comments.</p> <p>AMK advised there is two conflict of interest in today's applications; LH for the Mugstock Festival application as Event Scotland may be part-funding this and KB for Mugdock Courtyard application as Mugdock Country Park is owned by Stirling Council.</p>	<p>Action AMK &amp; IW</p>

### 3. Projects for discussion and decision

#### Mugstock Festival

#### LH left the room

SP presented this project to the Members explaining that the the Mugstock Festival is a 3-day festival of music, arts and outdoor activities organised by Mugstock Ltd. SP advised that this was the charity's 3<sup>rd</sup> year of operation and is working towards breaking even financially by 2020.

This project is a co-operation project with KVF LEADER. Mugdock Park is within the FVL area but is also close to the border of KVF LEADER and visitors to the Park and to the festival come from both LEADER areas, so the plan is that the interns, volunteers, traders and community groups will engage and involve from both areas.

SP informed the Members that this project builds on the 2016 pilot which the LAG contributed towards. This year's project focusses on skills development in event management and will create 8 bespoke intern roles (5 x FVL, 3 X KVF), work with 25 local volunteers to provide opportunities to 10 local businesses from both areas to participate in the 3-day festival. An Intern Co-ordinator would be employed to promote, recruit, design and programme for each individual and monitor and evaluate the programme to ensure the learning and evaluation can take place for future festivals.

SP went on to say that the total project cost is £13,550 and the applicant is seeking £6,775 split between FVL and KVF LAGs. As the total LEADER funding is above the usual minimum of £5K, we are proposing that it is considered for funding, SP asked if this was acceptable as a general principal to the Members. The Members approved this.

SP advised that FVL would be the greater funder providing 60% with KVF providing 40%.

Match funding confirmation should be through by 10 April 2017 however SP asked the LAG given the small sums involved, if the Applicant was unsuccessful with the full match funding required, would they consider granting a higher amount? This would increase the overall LEADER intervention to above 50%.

DJ thanked SP and asked for any questions or comments from the Members. The LAG agreed that as this was low investment for a large return, raising the grant amount and intervention rate would be acceptable if required to do so.

Co-operation projects under £5K can be considered for funding if the combined LEADER amount is greater than £5K.

It was commented that the interns and volunteers would receive no pay. SP confirmed that the directors of Mugstock Ltd receive no salary/pay either, with this festival being all about volunteering.

The LAG discussed this project. A question was raised about the skills being unaccredited and how the interns would evidence their training in the future. SP explained that the value came from the experience rather than a qualification and the benefit would be to their portfolios. The LAG discussed this being a condition of funding. There was also a question on why only the Forth Valley colleges were being contacted to link with their event management related courses. What about the West Dunbartonshire colleges?

The LAG approved this application with conditions, specifically that the Interns are to prepare a portfolio of work experience to keep for themselves, the contact with colleges is to include West Dunbartonshire Colleges (Clydebank College and West College), the applicant must have confirmation of match funding prior to starting this project but if the applicant is unsuccessful with either of the other match funders, the LAG agreed to increase the grant award to cover the shortfall. In addition, a Festival Survey must be carried out for the volunteers.

**LH came back to the meeting**

**KB arrived at the meeting**

**Gartmore Glamping**

AR presented this Application to the Members reminding them they first heard about this Project at the March 2016 LAG meeting. At that time, the accommodation resembled wooden chalets and the LAG did not think they met the description of 'glamping'. Since then, the Applicant has been working with an architect and has designed bespoke accommodation which looks much more suitable than previously proposed.

This application is for one cabin and two safari tents. The eco-safari tents will sleep 4 - 6 and would have solar-powered lights, a drinking water tap, wood heating, a composting toilet and a gas-powered shower per tent to use rain water collection for the showers (grey water).

The cabin is to sleep 4 people have mains water, electric lights, wood heating, a kitchen with appliances and utensils, beds, bedding, soft furnishings and outside furniture with a barbeque.

AR explained that the business is still in the early stages of forming but want to forge links with other local businesses; to promote these businesses and attractions to guests and to purchase welcome packs - simple food/drink/firewood - from Gartmore Shop.

Other project costs include site preparation and landscaping, ponds and planting, car park, soak-aways and drainage, rain water collection, paths and access, however these would be undertaken by the Applicant who had an existing landscaping business. The Applicant also wishes to include additional activities such as an educational element including work experience opportunities for high school children with 5 educational sessions with 20 children per session.

DJ thanked AR and asked if Members had any questions. The Members asked where the Project was with its planning permission. AR advised that the Applicant had submitted their planning application last November, but had then withdrawn it after receiving some initial planning advice and hadn't yet re-submitted it.

The Members discussed and agreed that this Application has the potential to be a good project and they liked the integration of the business with the community as there is a need for different types of accommodation, but highlighted a few concerns they had which should be relayed back to the Applicant.

They advised that the Applicant should be encouraged as the area needs good quality but basic accommodation and tourist facilities within the National Park area.

The LAG decided to defer this project as more detail was required. The LAG agreed that planning application and other required regulations need to be applied for.

The applicant's business plan needs to be more realistic and robust, their marketing budget and plan needs to be more detailed and evidence of demand (market demand, realistic economic impact, what the eco elements are and are they logistically possible. The LAG suggested that the Applicants research or visit similar ventures elsewhere.

The LAG unanimously agreed that this Application should be deferred subject to the greater detail discussed above and subject to the planning permission being in place or at least very far down the line.

**PROJECT  
DEFERRED**

**Mugdock Park Courtyard Covering**

**KB left the room.**

SP presented this Project to the LAG advising that this Project is a reincarnation of the previously deferred project to the LAG as the Application to HLFs Parks for the People Programme had been unsuccessful. However, the consultation which had been carried out as part of this exercise showed that the park had a lack of indoor areas and that there was public support for a covering to make the courtyard wind and water tight.

The courtyard is very close to the main car park and is a central point for visitors to access information about the park and access services such as toilets and activities. This application is to procure a design team (architect/structural engineer/quantity surveyor) who will appraise different options for a retractable covering for the courtyard area and to ensure the proposed designs will work with the fabric of the building. This will bring in extra income for the Park and the businesses located around the Courtyard.

The traders are unanimously in agreement for the courtyard to have covering. There are two cafés in the courtyard who would utilise the outside space with prospects of being able to use the courtyard for event hire - weddings, Christmas and the like.

DJ thanked SP and asked the Members for any questions.

The Members discussed this application and it was noted that it had scored highly on its business plan and thought it was a strong fit with the LDS objectives, and as it was essentially a feasibility study, was pretty straight forward and could lead to a very innovative project.

The project was approved with standard conditions.

**KB returned to the room**

**4. Feedback from Subgroups**

**Strategic Activity Group**

The main focus to date has been on the food and drink project which now has its own steering group. At the last meeting the Group went through the new Expressions of Interest and discussed some possible new LAG leg projects, including a cycling tourism project. Also discussed was now to engage more with communities in West Dunbartonshire with SP having met with

**PROJECT  
APPROVED WITH  
STANDARD  
CONDITIONS**

various organisations there including the CVS, although all projects there seems to be at a very early stage.

### **Local Food & Drink Group**

The LAG-led Local Food & Drink Project has moved on apace, with the recruitment of a food and drink co-ordinator now having taken place.

AMK informed the LAG that this would be AR's last LAG meeting as a LEADER Development Officer as she had been successful in her application for the Food and Drinks Co-Ordinator post, starting on 3.4.17. The first six months will be focussed on producing a local food and drink strategy for the area. The LAG congratulated AR and looked forward to seeing her in her new capacity at future meetings.

KB advised that a study into premises for food and drink businesses had been carried out by 'Frontline' on behalf of Stirling Council, which he wasn't very impressed with but said that it would assist AR in her new role.

### **Cycle Tourism Group**

SP displayed some maps on screen and informed the LAG that the Group has been exploring a possible cycle tourism project with a view to raising the profile of the area as a place to come to for cycling. SP is due to meet with Cycle Stirling, Cycle Clackmannanshire and VisitScotland soon to help scope out a possible project. FCS is also developing paths in the Kilpatrick Hills, linking with the John Muir Way.

BC added that the Borders have set up a website and cycle tourism strategy supported by LEADER which is a good model and very readable. Yorkshire and Perth & Kinross were noted as competitors to the Borders however Stirling, Trossachs and the Lowlands are not mentioned. Cycle Stirling at this moment do not have a website and SP suggested that discussions could take place for ideas and what could become a good LEADER project.

The Group could look at this with a view to FVL doing the same or similar, or maybe pick up on some of the proposed actions if appropriate. MS advised that Perth & Kinross and Angus Councils share a cycle route from Arbroath to Iona and it would be good to look at regional connections.

## 5. Project Allocations Update

AMK displayed the Project Allocations Update on screen and talked the Members through the different areas of it, highlighting that prior to today's meeting there was £835,764 left in the main fund, £197,200 in the Rural Enterprise fund, £228,301 in the Farm Diversification fund and £278,301 in the Co-operation fund. She went on to run through the hold-ups and changes of previously approved projects.

The **Japanese Garden project** is still not ready to start due to not having their match funding in place. She asked the LAG if it was willing for the offer of grant still being on the table. The LAG agreed and advised the project now has until June 2017 to secure its match funding.

AMK informed the LAG that the **Dounans project** is still waiting on their match funding being confirmed. She asked if the LAG it was willing for this project to still go ahead. The LAG agreed to extend their offer of grant until June 2017.

AMK informed the LAG that **Loch Katrine Eco-pods project** has had their planning approved for the eco-pods element however they split their planning into two separate applications for the eco-pods and the motorhome area, and the eco-pods area has not yet been approved as they had to make a number of changes to the layout to meet planning requirements, including where the electricity feed will come in from. This has increased costs but the Applicant proposes to do some of the dig work themselves to keep the cost down. AMK passed round the new layout plan for the LAG to approve. This was noted and approved.

Planning permission for **Brenachoile Pier** has been applied for but not yet secured.

AMK informed the LAG that the **Balmaha Pontoon project** is still waiting on the legal situation with the landowners to be sorted out. AMK asked the LAG if it was acceptable for the funding for this Project to continue to be ring-fenced. The LAG agreed an extension for a further three months and stressed that there needs to be a conclusion of landowner's permission by June 2017.

The **Central Scotland's School of Jewellery project** is underway. Jo Pudelko, the Applicant has extended an invitation to the LAG to join her in a jewellery making class and AMK asked if the LAG would be interested to do this to let her know.

AMK informed the LAG that the planning permission for the **Arnprior Glamping & Pool project** has been submitted but as yet has not been approved. AMK will be able to update the LAG more at the next meeting.

AMK informed the LAG that due to price increases in poly tunnels, the **Fordhead Tea Planation project** has been slightly delayed and the applicant is proposing to buy fewer poly-tunnels but with the same number of plants. She will update the LAG at the next meeting.

Lastly, AMK advised that there has been a rather long delay in the **Balquhiddier Broadband project** getting started due to the Community Broadband Scotland funding being held up for their part of the project. The LAG noted this delay and look forward to an update at the next LAG meeting in June.

## 6. Updates to LAG Business Plan

AMK distributed updated Business Plan for appraisal highlighting the changes which will also need to be approved by the Scottish Government. She advised that nothing had substantially changed apart from 3 points which were the inclusion of an additional statement and page one suggested by PS, LH and DG.

- (1) Whilst every attempt will be made to follow the details of the delivery as outlined in this Plan, the FVL LAG reserves the right to make reasonable changes to this Plan as required.
- (2) The LAG decision at the last meeting that in the unlikely event of the LAG not having enough community members present at a meeting to be quorate, then the required number of agency members will withdraw from the decision-making to allow quorum to be maintained, and
- (3) Explicitly stating that the staff from the old Programme will continue to support the LAG for the new Programme which had previously been approved but was not written in the business plan which is now a requirement.

LAG APPROVED  
UPDATES

## 7. Local Area Update - Killearn and surrounds

The LAG welcomed Doug Ashworth to the meeting. Doug is one of the Broadband Delivery Group champions for the area and also sits on the community council.

A map of the area was displayed on screen showing also the core paths which emphasised that Killearn is well connected close to the WHW and JMW. Killearn Village Hall where this meeting is being held today is an excellent facility for different perspectives and run as a business enterprise with income and a successful café business. The Hall was one of the last projects of EU rural priorities before the fund was transferred to LEADER.

KB said that the Council's Economic Development Team had recently met with the community council who highlighted that there are economic development challenges in Killearn, with an ageing population, the closure of the Black Bull Hotel and other shops. As Killearn is close to Milngavie, Killearn misses out on walkers on the WHW, whereas Drymen does well on the first day for walkers. Killearn, unfortunately does not have an individual selling point to encourage visitors and is a dormitory village for Glasgow. Killearn would benefit greatly for events to come to the village.

Doug added that there is a monthly market aimed at the local community along with an annual beer festival. Drumgoyne Distillery visitors come to the distillery then go home. Unfortunately, there is no cycle path from Milngavie to the Distillery, so the road can at times be dangerous.

The LAG discussed with Doug about the public transport options which were better than some communities but not great. To go to Glasgow for an evening out means you cannot return on public transport as the timetable is inadequate.

Doug gave an outline of some of the broadband issues in the area. Things are finally happening however there is a long way to go. Contact was made by Stirling Council Broadband Advisory Group several years ago and Strathblane, Rowerdennan, Fintry etc were to be monitored.

Killearn now has three cabinets in the local area but half the village still cannot access broadband.

Doug advised that it all comes down to the distance from the boxes, where residents more than a mile from the box by wire length means no benefits from broadband fibre.

Residents living close to the boxes are getting 20 megs, residents living 500m from the box are getting 13 meg, which proves that more boxes in the infrastructure are essential. Further away, the signal is often worse than before.

Wireless technology was probably the best solution with the Council planning on building a mast on Ben Gullipan, but would have to be sent by microwave from Alloa and would work for Strathyre and Brig o' Turk. If successful, another mast may be built for Fintry and Killearn area.

The LAG asked Doug in what way the LAG could assist in improving Broadband in the area but Doug was not sure.

DJ thanked Doug for taking time to come to the meeting and talk to the Members.

DJ spoke on behalf of the LAG congratulating AR on her new job, thanking her for all her work to date on LEADER as a Development Officer. The LAG also congratulated SP on expecting her first baby.

As this means vacancies for Development Officers, AMK asked who would be willing to join her in the interview panel. DJ and CMcG volunteered.

## **8. AOCB**

AMK pre-warned the LAG that a lot of projects are expected to come to the next LAG meeting, if all the projects submit their applications who have said the would.

## **9. Date of Next Meeting**

The next LAG Meeting is scheduled for 28 June 2017 10am - 12:30pm and asked the Members to ensure this date was in their diaries. IW is to let the Members know of the location of the meeting once arrangements have been made.