

FORTH VALLEY & LOMOND LEADER LOCAL ACTION GROUP MEETING

Gargunock Community Centre, Gargunock

20 June 2018

10 am – 1 pm

Minutes

Present:

Douglas Johnston	Community, Stirlingshire (Chair - Community)
Steve MacDonald	Stirling Council - Agency
Fiona Jackson	Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Authority - Agency
Lynn Hamilton	VisitScotland – Agency
Lynne Cooper	Scottish Enterprise - Agency
Bridget Clark	Community, Stirlingshire
Mike Ewart	Community, Central Scotland Green Network Trust
Julie McGrath	Community, Clackmannanshire TSI
Sue Wyllie	Community, Stirlingshire

Apologies:

Mike Strachan	Forestry Commission Scotland – Agency
Janice Kennedy	Scottish Enterprise - Agency
Colin Tennant	Historic Environment Scotland - Agency
Jim Livingstone	Clackmannanshire Council - Agency
Jason Clark	Community and Business
Brian McColgan	West Dunbartonshire Council - Agency
Ashley Robinson	FVL Local Food & Drink Co-ordinator

In Attendance:

Anne-Michelle Ketteridge	LEADER Programme Manager
Rachel Sedman	LEADER Development Officer
Nikki Kenn	LEADER Development Officer
Caroline Paterson	Claims Officer and Minute Taker
Jane Beaton	Cycle Tourism Officer
Shaun Marley	Community Broadband Officer
Carolyn McGill	New LEADER Development Officer

	ACTIONS
<p>1. Welcome and Sederunt</p> <p>DJ welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies from MS, JK, CT, JL, JC, SB, BMcC & AR.</p> <p>DJ noted Gargunock Community Centre was a previous LEADER project. Five years ago the building was transferred into community ownership and with funding from LEADER, along with other funders, the Trust was able to turn an underused community centre into a flexible space, accessible to all, that is self-sustaining.</p> <p>DJ requested a round of introductions due to new faces around the table.</p>	

	ACTIONS
DJ ran through housekeeping procedures and noted no testing of fire alarm so if you hear the alarm to make your way out of the building.	
<p>2. Quorum and Conflicts of Interest</p> <p>AMK reported a few conflicts of interest in today's projects for assessment:</p> <p>Bonniebunks – BMcG from WDC as an advisor to the project. Our Little Outdoor Classroom – no conflicts Falls of Leny Visitor Destination – FJ (applicant), MS (landowner of part of project), SMacD (match funder) & LH (potential funder) Regional Food Assemblies – no conflicts</p> <p>AMK confirmed we have the correct balance of community/agency and that the meeting was quorate.</p>	
<p>3. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising</p> <p>DJ asked if anyone had any comments in relation to the accuracy of the Minutes of the meeting in March 2017. No-one had any issues and the Minutes were proposed by BC and seconded by SMacD.</p> <p>Matters Arising</p> <p>AMK advised Hanna has now finished her internship with the LEADER team. During her time here she worked on the food and drink and cycling projects as well as producing great case studies which can be found on the FVL website. AMK felt both Hanna and LEADER got a lot out of the internship and would be keen to do it again.</p>	MINUTE APPROVED
<p>4. Projects for discussion and decision</p> <p>4.1 Bonniebunks</p> <p>RS presented this project to the LAG stating that Rhonda and Ian Fraser have bought this large property in Balloch as their newest business venture. Both run their own businesses already and they have seen an opportunity and a concept in this property. The house itself sits in a very central location behind the Tullie Inn, across the road from the Tourist Information and between the River Leven and Balloch station. Despite this sounding like a busy location, the plot itself is large and being in the grounds you would never guess you were this close to all these other features.</p> <p>The project's first phase is to refurbish a 7 bedroom house to provide affordable, quality accommodation in the National Park. Refurbishing the property will include 2 dorm rooms for individuals and groups (e.g. cyclists) and 2 en-suite family rooms, as well as big guest lounge, kitchen and dining area and facilities for cyclists. The project will also deliver a comprehensive marketing campaign.</p>	

	ACTIONS
<p>RS added that since the technical check that planning permission has been confirmed and a letter of support from local MP in relation to applicant's championing of local businesses has been provided.</p> <p>RS noted that LAG's comments were positive, with a few Members commenting on accessible accommodation not coming into play until year 3. RS advised it's due to first phase being on the upper floor. There was some discussion about whether a fire assessment had been done given there didn't seem to be many exits. It was noted that fire regulations are administered by Building Control at the Council and would be checked at a later stage than planning which is the responsibility of the National Park Authority. AMK queried with LAG if this should be a specific condition in the offer letter, LAG agreed.</p> <p>The proximity to the John Muir Way and NCN 7 was noted as two strategic routes across the area which the LAG was keen to see businesses develop alongside. For this reason the LAG requested the Applicant's involvement with the John Muir Way Business Engagement survey when it comes out as it would be a benefit to the applicant to be involved with the previously LEADER funded John Muir Way project.</p> <p>LAG agreed to approve project with specific conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Applicant takes advice from Building Control at the Council regarding fire regulations <p>There was also a request that the applicant participates in the John Muir Way Business Engagement survey when it comes out.</p>	<p>APPROVED WITH SPECIFIC CONDITION</p>
<p>4.2 Our Little Outdoor Classroom in Killearn</p> <p>RS presented this project to the LAG and advised that the project was coming to us under our Rural Enterprise strand.</p> <p>The applicant, Susie Henderson had identified a need in her local area for wrap-around childcare in her local area. She will be leaving her employment as a teacher to deliver her business idea and is ready to sign the lease of the old SPAR shop in Killearn that has been vacant for a few years, once the Planning Permission is approved. She is ambitiously hoping to redevelop the big carpark out the back into a stimulating outdoor space with play equipment, a wooden gazebo for doing homework outside, a weather station and various small animals like guinea pigs and chickens, providing the children with the opportunity to learn and care for them.</p> <p>RS noted process with Care Inspectorate has gone as far as it can. Stage One was checking out Susie – her qualification, references, PVG registration and her business plan and whether they thought she was able to run such a facility. She has passed this stage. The second stage is to do with the building and Care Inspectorate have been out to do 2 site visits and their feedback, along with that from Environmental Health has been fed back to the architect and the plans have been adjusted accordingly. The Care Inspectorate will then come and inspect the building with a view to signing it off AFTER the work (which is LEADER funded) has been done. In regards to timescales, the Inspector has said she will be willing to move as swiftly as she can once the works are complete. Also, Planning, although submitted in good</p>	

	ACTIONS
<p>time, has not come back yet although Susie has been told the hold ups are to do with short staffing not because there are issues or the project is not supported. She hopes to have a decision this week.</p> <p>DJ thanked RS and invited questions. LAG member queried if it's the ground floor of building only. RS confirmed it's just the ground floor as there is a private flat upstairs. LAG then queried where the kitchen space would be. RS advised the kitchen is located in area called staff room on the plans. The LAG discussed the business plan which they thought was strong, and the risks of funding the project before it's approved by the Care Inspectorate. RS reminded LAG that Applicant leaving her job and is also investing her own money. A LAG member advised he had met with Applicant and found her very proactive. It was also noted that this project would have multiple benefits as it was also bringing a disused building back into use, which gave it an even stronger fit with the LDS. It was also noted that this was the first childcare project to come to the LAG despite this being identified as needed in the LDS.</p> <p>The LAG agreed to approve with specific conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning permission being granted 2. Match funding in place 3. Keeping the LEADER team up to date with progress with the Care Inspectorate 	<p>APPROVED WITH SPECIFIC CONDITIONS</p>
<p>4.3 Falls of Leny Destination Project (resubmission)</p> <p>SMacD, LH & FJ left the room</p> <p>NK presented the project to the LAG advising that after discussion with the LEADER team, the resubmission is now only for the Victorian walkway with viewing areas, carpark, road crossing and the paths linking these areas. This can be a standalone project as a visitor attraction although work will continue on fundraising for the bridge. She noted the feasibility work by iKM has provided more evidence and accurate costings of the project than before.</p> <p>Since the technical check we have received confirmation from LLTNP that they will have control of asset for 5 years post project, evidence of support from local businesses supplied (the topic was discussed at a recent Callander Enterprise meeting and 15 surveys returned in support of project) and provided maps showing paths, walkway and viewing platform in relation to site.</p> <p>NK acknowledged positive comments received from the scoring including that previous conditions were met, accessibility issues have been researched, it restores an important tourism attraction which will encourage people to stay longer in the area, and it directly creates jobs and training opportunities. The project highlights the community as a priority and is supported by 15 local organisations and business. It improves access for all to the falls and will be sustainable providing a positive legacy beyond the LEADER funding.</p> <p>DJ thanked NK and invited LAG to discuss. LAG member queried if people can walk from car park back to Callander in a circular route, NK advised that until the bridge</p>	

	ACTIONS
<p>is built they can't as that section of the A84 is too dangerous to walk along. LAG member queried crowdfunding, NK advised that the project plans to do this for the bridge itself. RS added that the bridge is more crowd-fundable than a path. LAG noted they would have liked to have seen wheelchair access to the viewing platform. NK answered that the geology of the gorge at certain points meant the path would be too narrow for wheelchairs, although wheelchairs would be able to access the top viewing point and the bottom viewing point would be accessible from the bridge once in place.</p> <p>LAG decided to approve with standard conditions with the request that accessibility be maximised for the whole project wherever possible.</p> <p>SMacD, LH & FJ returned.</p>	<p>APPROVED WITH STANDARD CONDITIONS</p>
<p>4.4 Regional Food Assemblies</p> <p>NK presented the project to the LAG advising it's a co-operation project for 10 new Food Assemblies in 5 LEADER areas, with FVL LEADER leading. The project is being led by Forth Environment Link (FEL) who want to roll out their existing Food Assembly model to smaller towns in rural Scotland in order to support their surrounding local food producers, improve access to local food and strengthen food networks.</p> <p>Food Assembly is an online local food buying platform with a face to face weekly collection which works out well for small food producers as customers pay the food producer directly, who keep 80% of the price paid (in comparison to 15-25% through supermarkets). Currently there are 1100 Food Assemblies across Europe, 87 in the UK, 10 of which are in Scotland. Stirling Food Assembly, compared to the other UK FAs, consistently does double the sales weekly than the national average.</p> <p>NK noted that the other LAG areas are Lanarkshire, Perth and Kinross, Fife and Scottish Borders. She added Transport Scotland is supporting active travel for food journeys and will fund the ineligible project costs of £30,000. The project will fund 10 part time food assembly host roles, 2 full time and 1 part time delivery staff roles. A marketing and PR budget is included. FEL will provide regular 1:1 support through the first six months of trading then reduces support gradually as the host becomes autonomous.</p> <p>DJ thanked NK and invited member questions. LAG queried what happens if they generate more income. NK advised they will continue to reinvest in development work and run additional activities i.e. food demos. LAG queried the proposed urban/rural split. The project is proposing that 80% of customers will come from rural area based on the current Stirling Food Assembly experience. It was noted though that the main beneficiaries will be the food businesses, the majority of whom will be rural based. The LAG then asked if an annual report could be produced to monitor supplier/customer locations? AMK noted that it can be added as a condition. It was also suggested that existing food businesses like cafés and farm shops could act as hosts – it doesn't have to be a producer. It was also noted that the Food Assemblies will need to make themselves very visible and promote</p>	

	ACTIONS
LAG approved the project preparatory costs with standard conditions.	
<p>6. Update from LAG Strategic Projects</p> <p>6.1 Local Food and Drink Strategy</p> <p>AMK noted that AR was due to attend meeting this morning but unfortunately her flight was delayed. SMacD advised he and AMK had a good meeting with AR before her holiday and noted that the Local Food and Drink Strategy will go to Finance and Economy Committee in September 2018. AMK advised the Farm Hop Festival which AR is organising will start small for the first year and looking to build in future years with date still to be confirmed.</p> <p>6.2 Cycle Tourism</p> <p>JB introduced herself to the LAG and advised she has been busy gathering information and sharing this with the steering group. She noted 3 key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Infrastructure: new photos, route guides, etc using a whole community approach. - Food and drink trail Callander to Killin (NCN7) with several award winning businesses on the trail combined with a Digital marketing campaign using social media for sustainable projects. - Cycle loop days – JB to develop route guides for people coming by rail from Alloa, Glasgow and Edinburgh and for new E-bikes at train stations to be launched next year. JB noted £1.3m of funding available for e-bikes which must be spent before the end of the financial year. <p>LAG suggested JB make contact with Sarah Carmichael, Marketing Officer for Stirling Council and Charlie and Kenny at the National Park, as well as linking in the with John Muir Way.</p> <p>6.3 Community Broadband</p> <p>SM introduced himself to the LAG advising he has started working with communities across the LAG area to explore community solutions to broadband issues as it was expected that the R100 would take a number of years to be completely rolled out (R100 = Reaching 100%). The Balquhiddy project has received good press both local and national with 25 connections so far. 10 communities have applied for a council fund to pay for feasibility work on broadband solutions for their communities. SM advised of a new booster for broadband, the first of its kind in Scotland. SM asked the LAG to advise him of any communities having problems with their broadband.</p>	
<p>7. Project Allocations & Projects Requiring LAG Attention</p> <p>AMK stated she circulated budget allocation document before the meeting showing that community pot (now that applications were approved today) only has just over £1k left, rural enterprise pot £51,551, along with quite a lot left in the farm diversification and co-operation pots, £190,727 and £165,384 respectively. The LAG members noted that the Accountable Bodies were meeting at the end of the month</p>	

	ACTIONS
<p>to discuss reallocating some of the co-operation pot into the community pot. AMK advised the LEADER team are developing a reserve list if this does happen.</p> <p>AMK noted that CP has been contacting applicants who are falling behind with their milestones and submission of claims.</p> <p>The LAG asked if the Arnprior Glamping & Pool Project had started yet? AMK advised she is worried that they are very far behind and have £50k tied up. AMK to bring back to next LAG meeting.</p> <p>AMK presented the LAG budget allocation and project commitment as at 18 May 2018 for all the LEADER areas which is a document produced by the Scottish Government but taken from LARCS.</p> <p>Projects requiring LAG attention:</p> <p>RS displayed pictures of the Dreamcatcher Cabins (previously known as Gartmore Glamping) advising that the project is yet to be completed but is already very successful and has nearly 8,000 followers on Facebook. LAG agreed the cabins look amazing.</p> <p>AMK noted Strathfillan Bike Park Feasibility Study were unsuccessful in Awards for All funding. She asked the LAG if they would consider covering the shortfall. The LAG said they would want to the project to secure the match funding from elsewhere to show buy in for the project. Possibly Crowdfunding.</p> <p>She added that RS (KVF LEADER) have agreed for Rachel to continue to lead on developing the Crowdfunding Coaches cooperation project once she has moved to KVF. So far the project has been approved by 8 areas, declined by 1 and 1 area still to be decided.</p> <p>AMK confirmed Bowling Viaduct have been told they have been awarded their match funding from Sustrans but confirmation of control of land is still outstanding.</p> <p>AMK advised the John Muir Way Marketing and Business Engagement officer has now been appointed and if anyone would like to speak to him before a proposed business survey is sent out in early July please contact him direct at gavin.morton@csgnt.co.uk. LAG member noted that the website doesn't show links to Kelpies or Sustrans routes – AMK to feed this back. CSGNT LAG member noted that they are making use of website inherited from SNH.</p> <p>AMK advised there have been 2 project launches recently - the Balmaha Pontoon and Eco-pods at Loch Katrine. She noted that the Ecopods are currently at 90% occupancy this month and 100% next month. A LAG member queried if new ferry routes are scheduled for the pontoon? AMK confirmed yes and any boat provider can now use it and that the season will run longer – from March to October, possibly all year round.</p> <p>Another project which has been delayed but it now progressing is the Japanese Garden, it has an open day on 3 June but will be opening in July.</p>	<p>AMK</p> <p>AMK</p>

	ACTIONS
<p>8. NCRA Consultation on Future of Rural Scotland Post Brexit</p> <p>AMK stated that she has already sent the LAG members the link to the consultation to produce a Rural Strategy for Scotland. She noted that it doesn't make much mention of Brexit.</p> <p>AMK suggested the LAG do not debate it just now but to get an initial views on the themes covered to her. The LAG felt a response should be made as many of the themes covered issues included in the FVL Local Development Strategy and were important to the future of the rural economy. The Consultation closes in just over 4 weeks' time and it would be appreciated if LAG members could provide any feedback to AMK as soon as possible. AMK and SMacD will draft a response and email to the LAG before submitting response.</p>	AMK/SMacD
<p>9. AOCB</p> <p>DJ thanked RS and wished her all the best for the future at KVF. He then welcomed CMcG as the new FVL Development Officer who would be starting in her role at the beginning of July.</p>	
<p>10. Date of next Meeting</p> <p>The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 3 October 2018 at 10am – venue now confirmed as Gartocharn Millenium Hall.</p> <p>The following meeting will be on December 12th 2018 followed by March 6th 2019. Please put these dates in your diaries.</p>	