

# FORTH VALLEY & LOMOND LEADER LOCAL ACTION GROUP MEETING

## Bannockburn House

4 March 2020

10 am

### Minutes

#### **Present:**

Douglas Johnston	Community, Stirlingshire (Chair - Community)
Steve MacDonald	Stirling Council - Agency
Fiona Jackson	Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park Authority - Agency
Jim Livingstone	Clackmannanshire Council - Agency
Brian McColgan	West Dunbartonshire Council - Agency
Simon Orr	Community and Business, STEP
Mike Ewart	Community, Central Scotland Green Network Trust
Bridget Clark	Community, Stirlingshire
Rory McLeod	Community and Business
Julie Haslam	Community, Clackmannanshire TSI

#### **Apologies:**

Lynn Hamilton	VisitScotland – Agency
Sue Wyllie	Community, Stirlingshire
Theresa Correia	Scottish Enterprise - Agency
Jason Clark	LEADER Cycle Tourism Officer
Ashley Robinson	FVL Local Food & Drink Co-ordinator

#### **In Attendance:**

Anne-Michelle Ketteridge	LEADER Programme Manager
Carolyn McGill	LEADER Development Officer
Nikki Kenn	LEADER Development Officer
Shaun Marley	LEADER Community Broadband Officer
Caroline Paterson	LEADER Claims Officer and Minute Taker

	ACTIONS
<p><b>1. Welcome and Introduction to Today's Meeting</b></p> <p>Penny Ellis, Chair of Bannockburn House Trust welcomed the LAG to Bannockburn House. She advised that 4 years ago Bannockburn House went up for sale and the community came together and bought the house. Running as a charity for 3 years with over 200 volunteers, 50 regular volunteers and over 450 members. Grateful for all funding received including FVL LEADER funding and recently awarded funding from Scottish Government to fund part time positions. Now looking to Heritage Funding and William Grant funding. She advised that the masterplan – funded by LEADER - is now complete.</p> <p>DJ thanked Penny for the introduction. DJ noted apologies as noted above.</p> <p>DJ asked AMK if the meeting was quorate. She confirmed the LAG meeting was quorate.</p>	

<p><b>2. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising</b></p> <p>DJ asked if anyone had any comments in relation to the accuracy of the Minutes of the meeting on 4 December 2019. No comments received the minute was proposed by Steven MacDonald and seconded by Bridget Clark.</p>	
<p><b>3. LEADER Programme Update</b></p> <p>AMK advised that there was not as much to update on as she had hoped about the future of LEADER, and what will happen next. She noted DJ and herself attended a workshop last week where Fergus Ewing, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy spoke and told the audience that he's supportive of future funding but awaits more detail about the UK Shared prosperity Fund. AMK advised she received an invite to attend a workshop in Brussels about the future of LEADER in Europe, but thought it wasn't the best use of time as we are no longer in the EU and so whilst it would be interesting, was unlikely to affect what would be happening here. She added that she and DJ had submitted a response to The Replacement of European Structural Funds In Scotland Post EU-Exit consultation on behalf of the LAG, although LEADER wasn't explicitly listed as being included, LAGs had been asked to respond based on their experience.</p> <p>AMK also advised Scottish Government are looking for funds to cover staff costs January - March 2021. AMK circulated updated budget allocation sheet which showed approximately £12k currently unallocated.</p>	
<p><b>4. LEADER Projects Requesting Changes</b></p> <p>AMK noted that FVL LEADER were successful in securing extra funding for projects last year. Currently we have £12,322 of unallocated funds through declared underspends since December. The LAG cannot approve new projects but can reallocate funds to existing projects where costs have come in higher. AMK noted underspends can be moved between existing projects however change requests should not alter the overall project aims/objectives contained in the original application which the LAG approve, so cannot be used to fund additional activities.</p> <p>AMK gave some examples of the type of activity the LAG could reallocated funds towards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Legacy video - using £550 to fund an additional shorter version of the video and for some local music to accompany the video.</li> <li>- Strathard Business Development Officer, an existing project who might need to extend the contract of the consultant to finish some activities that have taken longer than expected.</li> <li>- Wild Wonders project looking to provide a bus from Stirling Train Station to the venue</li> <li>- Cycle Tourism - scope within project</li> <li>- Flexibility within all LAG led projects - do the LAG have ideas?</li> </ul> <p>LAG member suggested contacting Kenny and Tara in the Tolbooth for local music contacts. AMK advised that is where she got the contacts for the live music for the Smart Villages event. NK noted she is also looking for music for WW/FF videos.</p>	

<p>AMK asked the LAG how do we decide - delegated authority or bring the LAG (written procedure) in between LAG meetings for decisions? LAG member queried how do you make it fair - first come first served or most in need? AMK responded that we don't really have much choice because of timescale, at present it comes to light at claim stage when projects inform that costs have risen more than budget. After some discussions agreed to decision capped at 10% delegated to AMK, with any she is unsure about to be discussed with DJ and more than 10% referred back to the LAG by written procedure. AMK to provide a monthly updates.</p> <p>LAG member queried if there are any large de-commitments? AMK advised no but noted concerns with Bowling and Leny Falls projects due to tight timescales.</p> <p>DJ reminded the LAG that as the programme was past its awarding stage, this meeting would be focussing on hearing about the projects the LAG itself had instigated – the LAG led projects.</p>	<p><u>Approved:</u> Delegated authority to AMK to increase grants by up to 10% to projects that demonstrate need due to increased costs</p>
<p><b>5. LAG Cycle Tourism</b></p> <p>AMK noted that Jason is unable to attend today due to a personal appointment but advised that he has prepared a presentation to update the LAG. AMK ran through the presentation with the LAG:</p> <p>Aberfoyle Cycle route map - JC co-ordinated with the Cycle Shop to produce A3 tear off maps which AMK circulated.</p> <p>'Gravelfoyle' trails development - Jan/Feb drive 3 proposed routes/H&amp;S sign off by Forestry and Land Scotland. March sign of Memo of understanding (FLS &amp; Bike Trossachs). March/April procurement of signage/trail infrastructure. April/June installation of route signage/markers, brand design development and marketing materials. Soft launch end of June.</p> <p>e-biking: fast chargers and map - A3 Trossachs/NCN7 leaflet and map being produced showing routes around Drymen, Aberfoyle, Callander and Strathyre. Bosch fast chargers at key businesses on NCN7 - Bowling (Magic Cycles), Balloch, Drymen, Balmaha (Oak Tree Inn), Gartmore (Balck Bull), Aberfoyle (Bike Hire), Loch Katrine (Trossachs Pier Cafe), Stronalacher (Pier Cafe), Callander (McLaren Leisure), Strathyre (Broch Cafe), Kinghouse (Mhor 84), Killin (TBC).</p> <p>#ebikesmile campaign - JC secured a feature in the Times (copy circulated at meeting) on the merits of Ebiking in the Trossachs. April 2020 launch of route map and charging points, along with promotion of e-biking with focus on social media, blogging.</p> <p>Visitscotland/Sustrans website - JC writing content on various routes.</p> <p>Business engagement - JC working on business engagement leaflet.</p> <p>Improving all ability access - NCN7 Callander - South Strathyre (Forest Lodges Cafe) has great potential. Ties into Accessible Callander Landscape Partnership work. Sustrans engineers looking at costs for improvements.</p>	

Learning journey (Eurobike) - Planned for 2-5 September 2020 but may be cancelled due to Corona Virus - JC helping Sustrans design plans B and C.

Infrastructure Developments - AMK noted Smiddy is back on the agenda due to the Council's You Decide money being made available as part of a proposed cycle network between Stirling and Aberfoyle. By doing this, it means the Carse road can become a quiet road, as the rules require a destination, and the Smiddy would be a destination.

LAG member queried if maps are available on the website? AMK advised once the VisitScotland website goes live it would be, but thought could be given to where else, maybe some of the local destination websites. LAG member then queried if GPS version of map available? AMK to raise with JC. LAG member queried sustainability of the Dukes Weekender and noted potential for social enterprise.

#### **6. LAG Local Food and Drink Co-ordinator**

As AR was on sick leave, CMcG had agreed to give the LAG an update as she had attended the recent Food and Drink Business network meetings. She reminded the LAG that AR's contract finishes on 31 March 2020. The Local Food Business Network (LFBN) held its second meeting on 28 January 2020. There does appear to be an appetite to see this Network come together but unfortunately on the day due to inclement weather there were a number of apologies. The meeting was very positive, with much discussion across two working groups as to identify priorities. AR had secured funding of £4,950 from Connect Local to support the establishment and development of the food network, which must be spent within a year (50% in advance and 50% at the end - March 2021). Governance help was being provided by Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise. The LEADER project still has some funds available for consultancy/technical/marketing activity but not for salary costs. If the project is extended beyond March then the network can commission a promotional website for the area, using the project's as yet unspent website budget.

AR has also been co-chairing the Regional Food Partnership meetings of agency representatives with Lisa Hanley from Stirling Council's policy team. The partnership was set up to help Stirling become a Sustainable Food City or Place. Sustainable food cities are looking at additional branding for Sustainable Food Places due to the interest from wider areas. Delivering positive change through 3P's - partnership, policy and plan. NHS Forth Valley is also keen to be part of the Regional Food Partnership from a health perspective and Stirling Council has Bronze status as a priority but who is taking this forward after AR has still to be established. Sustainable Food Places to be developed (as opposed to only Cities). Aberdeen and Edinburgh have already achieved Bronze status and Glasgow are on schedule to be awarded this year. Alive with Local Food has become the Economic Strategy for the food and drink sector, a first draft of a Stirling Food Framework has been developed by the Inclusion Team of the Council with a focus on health & income inequality and healthy, affordable & sustainable food. The framework is a starting point, and this will be developed into a tangible action plan to address these issues.

LAG member queries when AR will return. AMK advised that AR was expecting to come back in two to three weeks time. The LAG thanked CMcG for stepping in.

**7. LAG Wildwonders and Foraging Fortnight**

NK played a video made from last September's event which has just been produced as part of this year's marketing and ran through some of the pictures and PR/marketing from event. She advised that there had been lots to learn after the first festival and lots of useful feedback to consider for next festival. NK reported new Wildwonders website is almost complete and is already live. She noted website links to Foraging Fortnight website. NK queried if money is available she suggests transport shuttle from Stirling Train Station to the event. LAG members queried the possibility of hiring E-bikes and providing fast chargers at the next festival. NK noted increased ticket cost to make festival more sustainable.

NK reported only 1 application received for taking on the festival in the future, which is made up of WW graduates and Tir nan Og. She noted group are committed to continued learning and already collaborating.

NK reported she's working on who should attend the Latvia trip - legacy people? All travel arrangements are on hold due to Corona Virus.

NK advised Foraging Fortnight has been nominated as a finalist in the Best Rural Tourism category at the Scottish Rural Awards.

**8. Community Broadband & Smart Villages**

SM reported new projects he is working on - Bannockburn House - wi-fi for the full area including gardens and local farms will also benefit; Port of Menteith - fibre helping small businesses and contract awarded at Stronachlachar/inversnaid, talks ongoing with 20 week lead time - opportunities for other side of the water.

SM noted Stirling Broadband Forum is coming back and helping other areas. Scottish Government R100 programme lot 1 (North) - the contract award for the North lot, is now subject to a legal challenge. Until that challenge is heard and resolved, SG are unable to award contract as planned or to comment on the litigation process itself. Lot 2 (Central) - Will see over 86% of eligible premises connected via the contract with the vast majority of those premises connected via fibre. Around half of these premises are expected to be connected by the end of 2021, with the majority connected by the end of 2023. SM noted proposed voucher scheme will launch later this year and will provide grants to both residential and business properties, as well as offering support to access a range of technologies and suppliers.

LAG member queried if SM had contacted Highland Management Group? SM advised no but has been in contact with Kenny who is on the group.

SM advised the smart villages programme will enable rural communities to investigate how rural services, such as health, social services, education and retail can be improved and made more sustainable through the deployment of broadband. SM reported example Internet of Things (IoT) Scotland in Gartness to track footfall. LAG member queried IoT and will contact SM after meeting to discuss further.

<p><b>9. LAG Crowdfunding Coaches</b></p> <p>AMK circulated Crowdfund Scotland progress report for February 2020 for the coaching project. Within our FVL LEADER area she noted 2 projects are currently running campaigns - Bannockburn House and Sir Walter Scott steamship. Currently 6 members of staff have been working across 9 LEADER areas with 473 projects, which is ahead of target. They have delivered 47 workshops/training the trainer events, with another 11 scheduled. Project is due to end in September 2020, although there might be an option to extend it if the demand for it continues. Good feedback has been received from the projects and businesses benefiting from the coaching – although Mhairi who is the coach for the FVL area is always on the look out for new projects. AMK handed out recently produced business cards come-leaflets for Mhairi.</p>	
<p><b>10. LAG Legacy Project</b></p> <p>AMK played the latest version of the video produced as part of the project to the LAG. The LAG liked the video but were not keen on the background music which some found off-putting. As mentioned earlier in the meeting, there had been a suggestion of commissioning some local music to accompany the video, but this would require approval of additional funds. AMK suggested using the change request process to invest £550 for new music and shorter version of video. LAG agreed on change request. AMK advised case studies are almost complete and will go into the celebration brochure. Workshops are due to take place April time which will feed into the high level strategy based on the Sustainable Development Goals.</p> <p>Chair noted he helped scribe the letter sent to Fergus Ewing on behalf of the Chairs Group advising LEADER already has infrastructure so don't let it go.</p> <p>NK queried how the video and legacy work is being promoted. AMK noted at Climate Change event on 18 March. LAG member also noted a press release has gone out.</p>	
<p><b>11. AOCB</b></p> <p>None</p>	
<p><b>12. Date of next Meeting</b></p> <p>Date of next meeting will be in early June 2020. Date and venue TBC.</p>	