



**Scottish Rural
Development
Programme**

**Angus LAG Meeting
14 June 2017
Guthrie Hall, Guthrie
Draft Minute of Meeting**

Present:

Private Sector:

Douglas Pond (DP) (Chair) - Friockheim & District Community Council
Charles Goodall (CG) (Vice Chair) - Care about Angus
Graham Galloway (GG) - DD8 Music
Gill Lawrie (GL) – Rural Leadership Group & Angus LAG
Jeremy Parker (JP) - NFU
Hugh Campbell Adamson (HCA) - Scottish Land & Estates
Jenny Adamson (JA) – Individual (previously Angus Glens Community
Broadband Cooperative)
Mark Cessford (MC) - Montrose Community Council

Public Sector:

Alison Smith, Service Manager (AS) (Vice Chair) (Economic Development) -
Angus Council
Graham Hewitson (GH) Service Manager (Communities) - Angus Council
Gina Ford (GF) - Scottish Enterprise
Mike Strachan (MS) - Forestry Commission Scotland

Attending:

Public Sector:

In Attendance:

David Tollick (DT) Angus LEADER/EMFF Coordinator
Kim Ritchie (KR) Angus LEADER/EMFF Assistant Coordinator
Bruce Thomson (BT) Angus LEADER/EMFF Financial Officer

Apologies:

Private Sector:

Bill Sturrock (BS) Brechin & Area Partnership
David Valentine (DV) - Dundee & Angus Chamber of Commerce
Veronica Lynch (VL) - Dundee & Angus College

Public Sector:

Jim Clarkson (JC) - Visit Scotland
Shelley Hague (SH) Business Manager (Funding, Policy & Projects) – Angus
Council

1 Welcome & Apologies

DP Welcomed everyone to the meeting

Apologies

Apologies from DV, SH, JC, AMcM.

2 Minutes of last meeting and Matters Arising

Minutes of previous meeting approved, proposed HCA and seconded CG.

No matters arising.

3 Budget

DT advised that the September meeting would review budget allocations in detail. LAG accepted.

Allocated budget – cooperation budget may cause some concern due to the difficulties in cooperation projects being developed. Other budget issues are picked up in LDS Implementation review agenda item below.

4 LDS Review

DT gave a brief overview of the paper. By March 2019 the full project budget should be fully contracted with applicants. This reflects the two-year period from when we leave the EU, 21 months from now. MC drew attention to the timing of meetings, which might need to be revised for approving projects for the March 2019 deadline. DT advised therefore that a meeting would be scheduled for February 2019. JP asked about the possibility of any of the Angus budget being reallocated to other LAG areas. DP advised that some other areas have spent 90% of budget allocation already. DP would like to hold on to Angus budget as our programme has a lot of activity coming through the pipeline. AS had previous experience of last programme contract dates, end spend dates etc. Staff were needed be retained beyond programme end dates to close off projects and to allow the usual audit process following completion. AS advised that staff could only be employed to close projects if the programme was extended. DP asked DT and AS to discuss and come up with a programme end review. MS asked about using over allocations to cope with unexpected underspends and what percentage intervention rates could we go over. LAG agreed staff would work on an application-by-application basis and not agree, at this time in the programme, any policy on over intervention rates.

DP did, however, raise the issue around intervention rates in relation to Community Projects. Some areas have a 90% intervention rate for community projects. GL stated that a higher intervention rate for community projects made a significant difference. AS indicated that the LAG may have no option other than to increase intervention rates as did the previous programme. AS advised that the previous programme advised 90% intervention rates to increase applications and it had worked well. MC asked if intervention rates for business

grants should be reduced accordingly, but this was not agreed. HCA requested flexibility in setting intervention rates for applications. It was agreed to offer a 90% intervention rate for community group applications based on need and the match available.

It was agreed the starting point for enterprise applications would remain at 50/50.

It was agreed to publish a version of the mid-term review for circulation.

5 State Aid

Report approved.

6 Awards

Ashbrook update. Several problems have been encountered with wastewater, incorrect engineers report, SEPA not being happy with plans etc. DT reported that the applicant had made reasonable attempts to solve these problems and was not yet at a stage of submitting a project change. The shop development part of the project is underway and there is still hope that the rest of the project can be achieved. It was agreed to let the project run until the next LAG and then review.

Alinco update. Jeremy advised that SEPA issues are also delaying some other projects.

GL asked if anything could be done with SEPA induced delays. DP was happy for a letter to be sent to SEPA outlining the issues; the LAG agreed. It was advised to address the letter Colin Anderson, senior SEPA Officer. The LAG team would draft the letter for DP's signature.

FriockHub Update. DP advised of the appointment process for consultants through the S1jobs site and other advertisers. No appointment has been made yet. He indicated a poor response from the Angus area and although a member of staff from one local college applied there had been no more applications from local colleges or universities.

7 Assessments

Peel farm

DP asked those who previously assessed to speak first, followed by a discussion and the completion of assessment forms. GL raised concern over the order of applications on the agenda suggesting that the Berryhill discussion may influence members decisions on Peel Farm, however it was agreed to proceed with Peel Farm first. The chosen assessors were JP, HCA, VL, DV, NC. Only JP and HCA were in attendance to speak. A number of other members discussed the project.

Significant differences of opinion remained about the figures in the business plan shown for outgoings and income, the possibility of alternative funding, the nature and extent of any community benefit and whether the accommodation should

be classed as 'budget'. It was agreed that the staff team would review the figures with Peel Farm and ask for clear evidence that funding is not available from alternative sources. Based on responses from Peel Farm, the project will be re-assessed and approved by written procedure before the September LAG meeting.

Berryhill Holiday Lets

DT ran through the process for assessment. It was felt that the cost breakdown of the project needed more detail. The LEADER conditions state that the Grantee must keep the asset the as a holiday facility for a period of 5 years. Change of use can be reviewed with council after the 5-year period.

MC noted that the service costs included in the project might be used for other aspects of the business. DT confirmed there was no displacement issue based on Visit Scotland assessment, showing a significant market for this level of quality accommodation.

HCA proposed a lower intervention rate based on the short period of time that the building is secured for LEADER purposes, leaving the applicant with a substantial disposable capital asset.

The LAG voted not to approve at a 50% intervention but agreed a 15% max intervention rate conditional on further detail over service costs and the applicant increasing their match funding.

8 Governance & Operational Issues

An Invitation has been sent to the FSB sent in connection with Bill McLeod's resignation but nothing has come back. CG is happy to report back to the FSB, and any FSB issues can be raised through him. Bill Sturrock's absence was again discussed and it was agreed that he should be contacted and his situation clarified. The LAG was asked to put forward any further suggestions for new members.

Match funding

Projects have 60 days to confirm match funds. There is no regulatory requirement for this. It was proposed that after the 60-day period, the staff team and chair could agree to extend the period to confirm match funds beyond the 60 days. If after 6 months no match has still not been confirmed, the project will come back to the full LAG for discussion.

Press call attendance

DP advised that mileage would be paid to LAG members attending press calls. Claim forms can be obtained from AMcM.

9 Monitoring and Evaluation

DT advised that there was as yet no comparison at SG level for LAG's to use locally.

10 Animation

KR advised that staff were attending the Royal Highland Show national leader stand to promote the programme. JP noted he would be there with NFU.

Enterprise event

DT advised of the forthcoming enterprise event. This will include presentations on LEADER, crowd funding and Growbiz. The event will be informal, and the date agreed is 18th July, in Kirriemuir. It was requested that the date be circulated by LAG members to their own networks.

11 LARC's

Angus LEADER will continue to use LARC's with careful monitoring and the system will be reviewed at the next LAG.

12 NESFLAG

MC advised the group of the opportunity to increase the Angus allocation from the Aberdeenshire pot. AS advised of potential projects: Montrose Port, Tay adventures which ties in with cities deal, the further expansion of Arbroath harbour, promoting the visitor potential of the area and the quality local food.

13 AOCB

Broadband update

AS advised that the commissioned survey report is now finalised. The report will be shared as soon as it is available.

Work placement student

DT advised the arrival of a work placement student from Sweden in September for 3 months. JP indicated that there is a Swedish farming family in Kilry for a possible contact.

DT informed the meeting of an Estonian LEADER delegation visiting w/c 23 October including at present visits to Cairngorms and Fife. He is currently working with contact to plan trip.

Date of next meeting

6th September 2017 – Venue TBC