

**North Pennine Dales Leader LAG - Minutes of Meeting
Wednesday 9th February 2011
UTASS, Middleton-in-Teesdale
CHAIRMAN: David Fruin**

Attendance:

Andrew Walker, Charlotte Hursey, Cliff Brown, David Fruin, Graeme Gill, Fiona Green, Ian Forbes, Jeremy Ancketill, John Atkinson, Ken Hazelwood, Lucy Wearne, Michael Patterson, Pam Forbes, Peter Samsom, Shaun Stuart, Rebecca Ashmore, Rosemary Thompson, Sue Ellwood, Sue Kelly, Catherine Pearson

1. Apologies:

Cameron Scott, Hazel Coppack, Natalie Connor, Richard Betton, Robyn Peat, Colin Grayson

DF welcomed Charlotte Hursey to the group as a new LAG Member, CH works for Durham County Council in Teesdale House as the Programme Development Officer, she is from the Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership.

2. Minutes Of Previous Meeting

DF asked members if they felt the minutes were a true reflection and could be signed as agreed, all agreed, David Fruin signed the minutes.

SS informed the group that SDEA had submitted the Regional Growth Fund Bid, a bid of £11.7M, he explained they had a number of supporters, Charity Bank, DCC Barnard Castle Vision, SDBN etc. he also said the private sector had an investment of £6.5M and there would be 767 jobs created and jobs safeguarded. They will find out if it has been successful by end of March, SS personally thanked the LAG members for their support in this application.

3. Declaration Conflict Of Interest

PS declared a conflict of interest in NPD122 as he works for the AONB.

4. Spend Profile

SE presented the Spend Profile figures:

£1,019,830 LEADER allocation

£1,052,285 Approved projects (GOL issued) of which currently claimed to date £617,463.82

£108,295 EOI's approved by LAG – full applications currently in development

£17,800 New EOI's for consideration by LAG at this meeting (9th Feb)

£0 Full Applications for consideration by LAG at this meeting (9th Feb)

£0 Full Applications currently with ONE for Technical Appraisal

£126,095Total allocated to projects not yet approved

-£252,838

LEADER over programmed as at 07th Feb 2011.

NB Includes Cybermoor Broadband project £75,000 and Broadband in Weardale project £100,000

4. Spend Profile

SE said we are still open for projects subject to future funding allocation. Amount claimed to date to ONE £617,463.82, this does not include project claims which have not been processed by DCC. DF asked CP if there are to be any problems in the next financial year, CP said that there is lots to spend still from the £1M but they are not in a position as to what the spends are for next year, MP agreed, he said next year's budget is unknown but an indicative budget is £350,000, he said that negotiations are ongoing for future budgets. MP reassured the group that Adrian Sherwood of ONE is certainly giving the message back to Defra that North Pennine Dales LEADER has achieved positive outputs. PF asked if we going to get the Broadband money back, SE replied not this financial year. CP said she had been in discussions with ONE and this money should be reimbursed in the next financial year. DF said he was not happy about this and it is not a good example to set for future requests. PF asked for an update on the Broadband projects. SE explained that Connecting Northumberland had delivered but Weardale Net had issues with state aide which she believes are resolved and match funding was needed to be in confirmed. AW said that the match funding, £50K is from Weardale Area Action Partnership and that he was aware of the state aid issue and agreed they had been resolved. SE said the applicant had reassured her the money would be spent by the end of March, CP confirmed Connecting Northumberland had spent £60K and had reached retention level. CP said Weardale NET and not spent anything yet. CP offered to send a spend profile to all LAG members.

Action: CP to send a spend profile to LAG Members

5. Expression Of Interest Submitted

SE expressed to the group, although we had not received confirmation of future budgets, we are still open for projects, but managing expectations informing the projects approval will only be granted subject to confirmed funding. AS future allocations could potentially be less than previous years, SE asked if it was prudent to consider a scoring system for projects based on outputs and prioritised against the LAG priorities.

NPD121

SE explained that this EOI is requesting funding to set up a breakfast club in a rural community school, it will give opportunity to parents to go back to work or into training etc., it would run 8am-8.55am daily, the children would be given a healthy breakfast and have play/social activities available, two staff would be employed to provide the food and supervise the activities. They would also like to be able to offer an after school club facility and want to see sustainability within 18 months. The total project is £7400 and they are asking LEADER for £4,800, their match funding is coming from private sector parents contribution to the fees. The project fits within Sustainable community under measure 312 Basic Services. DF asked for any comments. GG commented a concern that this could then be open to all rural schools, SE replied that would be up to the LAG to decide when an application was received. GG stated that it had just been said we need be careful in prioritising and asked if this project is a priority. SE the outcomes enable parents to take on employment or training. SS asked about the geographical area the catchment of the school. JAnc asked if the applicant had done an assessment on the amount of children they could expect. SE said she had asked the applicant this and was informed they had asked parents but hadn't actually done a formal questionnaire, she said the head teacher would be more than happy to do this. PS said there would need to be at least 11 people there and this would need to be identified in a full application, he said this sort of club could potentially be an advantage to the school. PF asked how adaptable they would be willing to be, e.g. 1 off days in club. SE said she had spoken with the applicant who is the Extended Services Co-ordinator and she said the Head Teacher is very supportive of this project. DF said

assuming children will be registered in this club and prior arranged would need to be made. IF gave his support for this project but insisted it must be sustainable after 18mths. SS said they should be encouraged about being adaptive in their full application. DF noted that parents will assumingly already have childcare in place for this year. CB asked if it had been cleared with the Education Authority. DF asked if the school governors had approved it and mentioned the staff being CRB checked, SE said that it will be the teachers that are running it so all CRB checks will be complete. PS said he would like to see a link with the Love Food Project if they are providing breakfast. DF said he felt some members were a little sceptical about this application and asked if it was to be supported. CB said he thinks it is a good idea, but asks what happens if it folds and parents rely on this facility having got a job.

Action: SE to invite applicant for a Full Application

NPD122

PS left the room

SE explained to the group that we had supported an original application from Highlights for the development of the SWARD haymeadows play. AONB and Rima Berry from Yorkshire Dales LEADER, Millennium Trust are looking to develop a next stage to leave a legacy by producing a DVD of the play which can be used in future years. Through the haymeadows project they have forged links with representatives from the Eastern Carpathian area who use their haymeadows to develop community cohesion and tourism, the project would facilitate knowledge transfer between the farmers, suppliers and individuals who could benefit from this resource. A transnational visit would allow the groups to share best practices and gain more understanding of different management approaches SE went on to say, that we don't have any transnational budget and that we are allowed to use core capacity costs, but asked which priority and which measure. MP said that he had come across a similar project with the Northumberland Uplands LAG also based on their previous projects, he said that there is no transnational budget for project activity but there is for LAG to visit LAG, it could slot in to 331 even though it would not sit direct but could be put under a different measure. SE asked if there was an intervention rate, MP said 80%. KH suggested the farmers go on the LAG!! SE said that it stated in Cooperation Guide it did cover work on projects. MP asked SE where she had got this information from and could he have a copy. DF asked if there could be a way for this project or is it a non-starter, MP replied there is a way, he said that Northumberland Uplands had supported LAG members on a transnational visit. CB said he liked the idea of the dvd and leaving a legacy, but felt the visit for 8 people could be seen as a 'jolly' which would give bad publicity. GG agreed with CB, DF noted that there is such a fine-line for this sort of activity. SS said it was good that we are all aware of this but wouldn't like to see it stand in the way of this project, and suggested maybe a personal contribution from the participants for the trip, he said it would need to be handled very carefully, he felt it would be great for the LAG, an opportunity with a local interest and said he would like to see it further investigated. MP said that the Northumberland & Uplands LAG insists on a 20% personal contribution for their projects, he then asked if the Haymeadows project was complete, SE replied no, it is up until June 2011.

IF said he would like to defend the concept of European trips, he said it is very beneficial assessing other areas and certainly is not a 'jolly' in anyway! Through his own experience of visits, he said they have always been asked to give 50% private time as personal contributions, he felt this was two projects and asked what the linkage is between the dvd and trip, are they having equal input. SE said that the Millennium Trust are contributing the match funding. SK said her concern was the cost of production and asked was the marketing included. SE said that she had raised the same query with the applicant about the high cost and was informed that the nature of this project is expensive, they would need to comply with procurement rules to demonstrate value for money. CH queried who's application is this, and asked is this

particular project for the LAG, she suggested that there are other sources funding that could support this type of project, DF asked who could be the other funders, CH said possibly Arkleton Trust, SE to liaise with CH to explore alternative funding. SE said she also raised the point with the applicant about having two projects, but she said they were very keen to keep it as one project, it will just have two outcomes. SE said she understood the groups concerns regarding a transnational visit and it should be judged on the outcome, it's not the LAG members part unless they had a specific knowledge or would benefit from the visit. DF suggested maybe a matter for the project applicant could be a special condition that a LAG member would be involved in the visit. CB asked why 8 people to visit. MP asked if there was a demand. DF commented that this wouldn't be possible to happen in this financial year anyway and as CH said, we need to prioritise. SE said it is the outcome that matters. MP said he thinks its two projects and he is experiencing the same difficulties with his other project and asked if there are any sources of funding for the DVD? He suggested Heritage Lottery Funding. DF asked would they be happy to fund something that had already been started though. MP agreed and also noted that personal contribution would be required. CP suggested looking at the underspend of the Highlight projects to see if this could fund the DVD. SS suggested if there is Heritage links they look at County Durham foundation. DF rounded up the discussion stating that the members queries are; technical, process, outcome queries, their expectations and own contributions, he welcomed SE to work with the applicant in these concerns and invited for a full application.

Action: SE to work with applicant in queries and invite for full application

6. Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

SE informed the group that the Chairman and Vice Chairman nominations had been received and recorded, no vote required as all members had voted the same, RB to stay as Chairman which RB expressed he was happy to carry on this role and PS to become the Vice Chairman of which he had agreed he was willing to accept thus being nominated. PS said he wanted to make all LAG members aware that in the draft constitution it states that the Chairman & Vice Chairman should not be a public representative as he is employed by DCC he felt it appropriate to advise the members. PF asked PS if he would be taking this role on as an individual or as a DCC employee. DF commented that he felt all LAG members are here as an individual whatever your work background. DF stood down as Vice Chairman and SE thanked him for his role and support over the last 3 years.

7. Under-spend of capacity costs

SE explained to the group that they are aware the NPD Leader contract is up for review on 31st March 2011, because of under spends DCC has allowed to role this up until 31st October 2011, so NPD Leader can continue, she informed the group that Adrian Sherwood had contacted her to ask her to ensure the LAG members are aware that ONE are working with Defra to get budget answers and that SE and the LAG will be informed as soon as they have answers as to future allocation. MP said that the message from Defra is that despite changes to the programme, farming and LEADER are still priority areas for RDPE and will continue to receive investment.

SE concluded that the pressure is on projects to get spending to maximise this contracts allocation, and spend after March will come from next years allocation and this will have an impact on future projects.

Know Your North Pennines has asked for an extension to their project due to the weather which restricted the events held, this has been agreed but again will be from future funding, agreed £1,500 to be profiled beyond March 11.

8. AOB

SE informed the group she is in the process of arranging the LAG annual event and she asked members if they could recommend any good guest speakers that could attend the annual event. CB asked on what topics, SE suggested, LEADER, Community, micro-enterprise etc. SS asked SE if she had a budget on this and suggested Tim Smith from the Eden Project. SE asked all LAG members to let her know as soon as possible if they had any suggestions.

IF feels we need to be more selective, (specially if we are to prioritise) at the EOI stage, which he thinks is difficult given only the information requested in the EOI application, he said we just generally put most EOI's through to the next stage as there is not enough information given on the application, he asked could there be a change in the process or some additional requests at this stage. SE said she will look into this and look at outputs. MP said that the other LAGs are doing the same and using a system to prioritise them. SS added this would be a good way of stimulating new applications too.

DF asked if there is going to be some replacement body when ONE goes, MP stated that Defra is the successor body. DF said he feels there is not enough done regionally and felt an event bringing together the LAGs within the region will be beneficial. MP said that the delivery mechanism has not been sorted yet and suggested maybe then would be the time to put that forward. SE suggested it would be worthwhile for all LAG members to get together to discuss issues, CP said that Victoria Catesby, ONE had looked into this previously and thought it was just on hold until a clear way forward was established. DF closed the meeting 5.35pm.

Date of next meeting – Wednesday 09th March 2011, DRCC, Park House, Lanchester, 4.30pm-6.30pm

These minutes are a reasonable reflection of what was said and agreed.

Date -----

David Fruin
North Pennine Dales LEADER Vice Chairman