

## **HIGHLAND LEADER 2014 – 2020 PROGRAMME**

**SKYE LAP MEETING: 4:00 – 6:00PM, 23 NOVEMBER 2016, TIGH NA SGIRE, PORTREE**

**Public Voting Members Present:** Sarah McGrory, Annie Davidson, Jennifer Macpherson

**Private/Community Voting Members Present:** Lachie Macdonald, Donald Macdonald, Jo Ford, Nick Duffill, Aonghas Mehan, Stephen Varwell, Roger Liley,

**Advisory/Non-Voting Members Present:** Willie Mackinnon, John Gordon,

**In Attendance:** Liz Whiteford (Highland LEADER Development Officer)

**Apologies:** Roddy Murray, Calum Macleod, Beth Kennedy,

**WELCOME AND APOLOGIES:** Lachie Macdonald welcomed everybody and the above apologies were intimated. Sarah McGrory has taken over from Stephen Varwell as the SNH representative and Stephen Varwell has volunteered to remain as a private/community voting LAP member. John Gordon has volunteered to change his status to a public non-voting advisory LAP member. The above changes were unanimously supported. See appendix for updated LAP Member list. LAP members were reminded that any nominated deputy LAP members must complete Register of Interest and Code of Conduct forms.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST / REGISTER OF INTEREST FORMS:** No declarations of interest notified but members were reminded that they should declare an interest as soon as one became apparent whether this is at the outset of a meeting or during it.

**NOTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING:** Note of 24 August 2016 meeting (previously circulated) was accepted as an accurate record. Proposed by: Donald Macdonald / Seconded by: Annie Davidson

**MATTERS ARISING and not arising elsewhere:** Nothing further to report on whether the THC interest free loan service for LEADER projects will be reintroduced but bridging loans for LEADER projects might be available from Social Investment Scotland - <http://www.socialinvestmentscotland.com/index.php?cID=571>

### **DEVELOPMENT OFFICER UPDATE:**

- Total of 14 EOI's received to date (see appendix for further details)
  - 1 full application form released – aiming for March 2017 deadline/May LAP meeting – seeking and estimated LEADER £38,126
  - 2 projects developing/seeking match funding but LEADER application form not issued
  - 1 EOI withdrawn
  - 3 EOIs where grant requests exceeded 50% maximum – one forwarded to EMFF
  - 1 Other EOI forwarded to EMFF
  - 1 Project known to have stalled due to rejected match funding application
  - 5 EOIs referred to RE/FD
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- Pre-application Form in Highland has now been done away with and applicants, whose projects have been deemed LEADER eligible at EOI stage and with match funding in place, can now progress direct from EOI to a full LEADER application form.
  - LEADER Development Officers complete an initial short eligibility check of EOIs and undertake a much more detailed technical check of full applications which LAP members were shown.
  - LAG/LAP members assess/score full applications in line with assessment/scoring template which LAP members were shown.

- Currently the deadline for receipt of Full Applications is 2 months prior to LAP/LAG meeting at which the application will be considered. The full application process currently involves applicants completing a paper application form, a project plan, an activity plan, a project cashflow spreadsheet, a costed milestones spreadsheet, and a project evaluation framework prior to being registered for access to the online LEADER application. Given the work involved in the full application process it is recommended that applicants should start the process several weeks ahead of the deadline so as to allow sufficient time to complete everything including submitting initial drafts of everything to the development officer for feedback. The work involved makes LEADER less attractive to applicants seeking small grant amounts.
- Following the result of the EU Referendum and an impending BREXIT, Highland LEADER was initially working on information from the Scottish Government that only LEADER grants issued/accepted before 23 November 2016 would be guaranteed by Scottish Government. However, further information just released suggests that the Scottish Government will be passing on in full the guarantees on EU funding that the UK Government has provided which cover the period between now and the point that the UK proposes to leave the EU – full information awaited.
- Highland LAG has approved all the proposed changes to the Highland LEADER Business Plan which has now been submitted to Scottish Government for approval. Main change is to allow for the removal of the pre application phase of the approval process.
- Highland LAG has approved the finalised version of Rural Enterprise/Farm Diversification paper which has been sent to Scottish Government for approval. If/when SG approve what is being proposed, this paper will be used to produce material that can be sent out in response to existing RE/FD enquiries and through other networks.
- In order to use LARCS (the new online LEADER application system) all LAG/LAP members require training. Highland has requested approval of a workaround system which would allow Highland LAG/LAP members to continue to consider/score paper applications rather than LAG/LAP members using LARCS. Scottish Government has confirmed that what has been proposed is acceptable with a number of caveats but overall we can take from this that the process Highland is currently using is acceptable (for the time being anyway).

**APPLICATION ASSESSMENT/SCORING:** There were no full applications to assess/score at this meeting but LAP Members were provided with the Technical Assessment form completed by the Development Officer and the LAP Assessment/Scoring form to be individually completed by LAP members in advance of a LAP meeting to help to guide their discussion at the LAP meeting when full applications would be collectively assessed/scored by the LAP.

#### **AOCB:**

- LEADER publicity poster compiled to be circulated to LAP members.
- LAP members remain concerned at the lack of LEADER eligible projects coming forward and discussed possible reasons for this which included difficulties in securing match funding, the complexity and amount of work involved in the LEADER application process, potential project cashflow problems due to LEADER funding being released retrospectively ie on evidence of applicants having paid project costs, and uncertainties about the continuation of LEADER due to BREXIT. Situation to be reviewed again at February LAP meeting.
- LAP members to encourage organisations with projects at an advanced stage to consider completing a LEADER Expression of Interest to check out whether LEADER might be a potential final source of funding.
- LEADER applicants in Skye must have at least 50% match funding in place before a LEADER grant application can be approved.

#### **● FUTURE SKYE LAP MEETINGS**

Wednesday 15 February 2017 4-6pm – Council Chamber, Portree

Thursday 25 May 2017 4-6pm – Council Chamber, Portree

Thursday 31 August 2017 4-6pm – Council Chamber, Portree

Thursday 30 November 2017 4-6pm – Council Chamber, Portree

**SKYE LAP MEMBERSHIP:**

<b>LAP Member</b>	<b>Organisation/Sector</b>	<b>Public or Private/Community</b>	<b>Voting or Non-Voting</b>
Willie Mackinnon	The Highland Council	Public	Non-voting
John Gordon	The Highland Council	Public	Non-voting
Sarah McGrory	Scottish Natural Heritage	Public	Voting
Jennifer Macpherson	Highland & Islands Enterprise	Public	Voting
Calum Macleod	Broadford & Strath Community Council	Public	Voting
Roddy Murray	Sleat Community Council	Public	Voting
Annie Davidson	High Life Highland	Public	Voting
Lachie Macdonald	Lochalsh & Skye Housing Association	Private/Community	Voting
Donald Macdonald	Staffin Community Trust	Private/Community	Voting
Jo Ford	Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisation	Private/Community	Voting
Roger Liley	Portree Area Community Trust (Nominated by Portree & Braes Community Council)	Private/Community	Voting
Nick Duffill	Minginish Community Hall Association	Private/Community	Voting
Stephen Varwell	Kilmuir Village Hall	Private/Community	Voting
Aonghas Mehan	Isle of Skye Youth Forum Representative	Private/Community	Voting
Beth Kennedy	Youth Representative	Private/Community	Voting

Currently the Skye LAP comprises of 8 private/community voting members, 5 public voting members, plus 2 non-voting advisory members.