



Scottish Borders LEADER

Encouraging innovation in rural areas

SCOTTISH BORDERS LEADER PROGRAMME 2014-2020

Local Action Group meeting

29 June 2015

10.00 Tweed Horizons, Newtown St Boswells

MINUTES

Present:

Heather Batsch, The Bridge (HB)
Claire de Bolle, Youth Borders (CdB)
Carol Byers, AdsVantages (CB)
Luke Comins, Tweed Forum (LC)
John Dougan, Forestry Commission Scotland (JD)
Gordon Harrison, Scottish Borders Community Council Network (GH)
John Henderson, Scottish Borders Food and Drink Network (JHe)
Jules Horne, Borders Creative (JH)
Paula McDonald, VisitScotland (PMcD)
Bryan McGrath, Scottish Borders Council (BMcG)
Andrew Mitchell, Berwickshire Community Councils' Forum (AM)
Andrew Panter, Scottish Natural Heritage (AP)
Jane Rosegrant, Borders Forest Trust (JR)
Ian Tod, The Hippodrome Arts Centre CIC Ltd (IT)
Gary White, Peebles CAN (GW)

Secretariat:

Hugh Williams, Scottish Borders Council (Principal Officer Rural) (HBW)
Joanna Pringle, Scottish Borders Council (European Programme Support Officer) (JP)
Lesley Forsyth, Scottish Borders Council (European Programme Support Officer) (LF)
Bartje Magee, Scottish Borders Council (European Programme Support Officer) (BM)

		Action
1.0	Apologies Frank Beattie, Scottish Enterprise (FB) Will Haegeland, Selkirk Chamber of Trade and Commerce (WH) Hans Waltl, Federation of Small Business (HW)	
2.0	Chair for Meeting John Dougan was nominated to take the role of Chair for the meeting.	



Scottish Borders LEADER

Encouraging innovation in rural areas

<p>3.0</p>	<p>The Accountable Body</p> <p>The role of Scottish Borders Council as Accountable Body for the Scottish Borders LEADER Local Action Group was discussed. JD explained that the Accountable Body is responsible for the financial management of the LEADER programme on behalf of the LAG, and it takes on the compliance and monitoring requirements under Scottish Government and European Union regulations.</p> <p>GH proposed that SBC should continue, HB seconded this proposal and it was agreed by a full show of hands that SBC should act as the Accountable Body for the 2014 – 2020 Scottish Borders LEADER programme.</p>	
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Employment</p> <p>The Group discussed the staffing structure for the new LEADER and EMFF programmes. HBW outlined a proposed staffing structure to include a LEADER Coordinator, a LEADER Facilitator, a EMFF Programme Coordinator (3 vacancies) and 1.2 FTE European Programme Support Officers (EPSO) (currently in post). A review in 2017 may lead to increased EPSO provision if necessary, and this is included in budget projections. Budget for administration and facilitation is 22% of programme funds, within the maximum allowance of 25%. This provision includes project based Enterprise Facilitators, budgeted at 5% of programme funds. Scottish Borders Council’s contribution includes line management and support provided by HR, payroll, legal and finance services, plus workspaces and IT provision for employees. The EPSO also work on other European funding activity, to be funded separately by the Council. It was noted that the current EPSO team had achieved ‘green’ status at Scottish Government audit, at one point one of only 4 LAGs in Scotland to achieve this status. It was noted that this proposal represents an increase in staffing over previous programme levels, but this was based on feedback from the consultation process and previous audit recommendations. On a show of hands the Group approved the increased resource and the proposed staffing structure.</p>	
<p>4.1</p>	<p>European Programmes Support Officer employment contracts</p> <p>3 x EPSO are currently in post, including two who are on rolling one-month employment contracts since the end of the last programme. It is proposed to extend these EPSO employment contracts to 31/12/2020, the end date of the new programme, subject to acceptance of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) which has to be agreed by Scottish Government and the Council as Accountable Body and which will set out the legal framework for the new</p>	



Scottish Borders LEADER

Encouraging innovation in rural areas

	<p>programme. SBC HR Department has advised that it is acceptable to extend the existing employment contracts when funding is confirmed. The Group agreed to extend the EPSO posts to 31/12/2020, and to offer continued employment contracts to that date to the current post holders when the SLA is in place.</p>	
4.2	<p>LEADER Coordinator interview panel</p> <p>The Group agreed to progress recruitment of the LEADER Coordinator when the SLA is in place, on a fixed term contract to 31/12/2020. When the recruitment process commences copies of job description and recruitment advertising to be circulated to the Group, and one or two LAG members should be on the interview and selection panel.</p> <p>The LEADER Facilitator post will be recruited in the autumn, and the Group approved a proposal that this should be a 3-year contract. The EMFF Coordinator position will be considered later, and will be the responsibility of the Fisheries Local Action Group.</p>	
5.0	<p>AOB</p> <p>Travel expenses for LAG members. LAG members who are not able to claim expenses from their employer may claim expenses from the LAG. The LAG Secretariat will provide appropriate forms.</p>	JP/BM
6.0	<p>Dates and times of future meetings</p> <p>The Secretariat to propose dates for a workshop and future meetings. On balance a 10.00 a.m. start was preferred, and Monday was the least favoured weekday.</p>	HBW