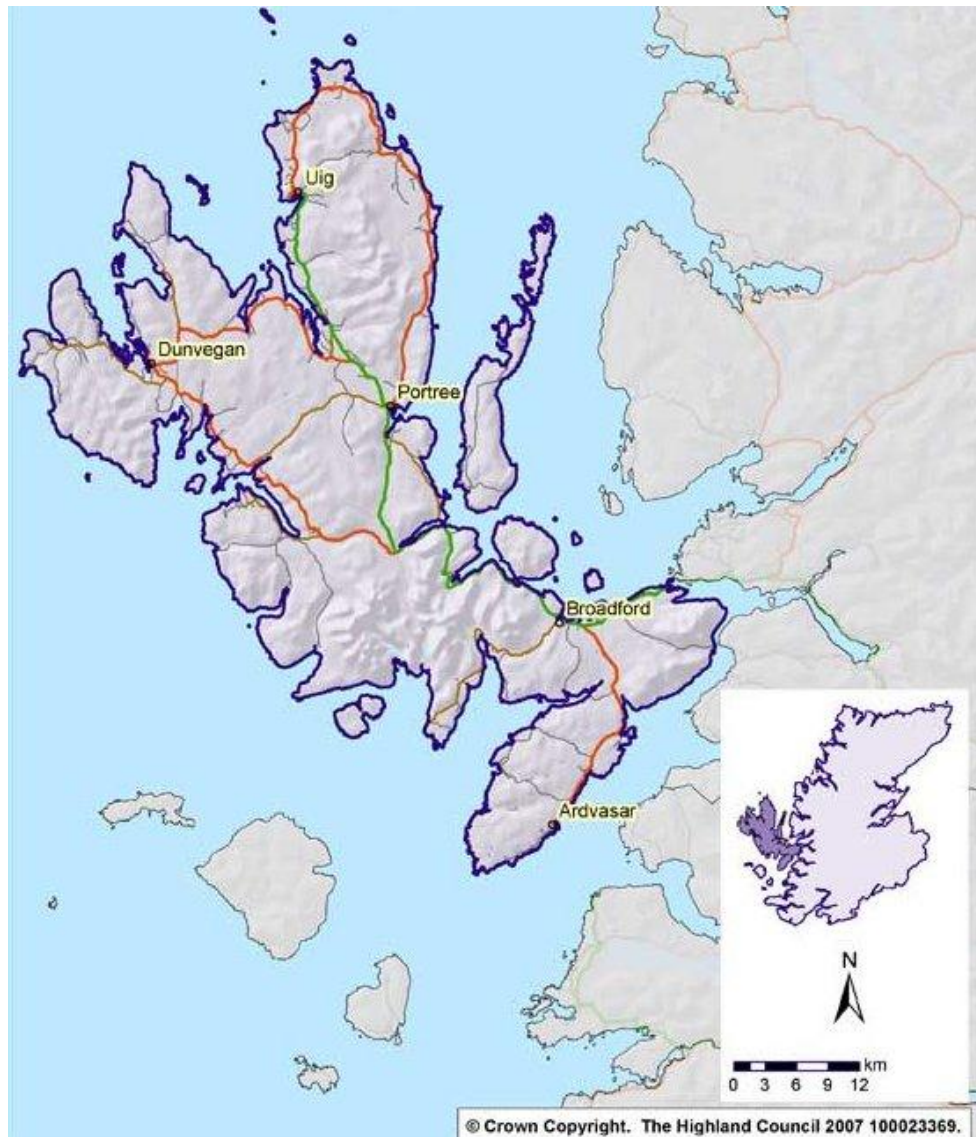


SKYE LOCAL AREA PARTNERSHIP

Local Area Action Plan



Version 1.4 (February 2017)

Version	Date	Revision
1.0	December 2015	
1.1	April 2016	To reflect LAG/LAP comments/changes
1.2	August 2016	Reviewed by LAP
1.3	November 2016	SKYE LAP Member Update
1.4	February 2017	Max Grant Intervention Rate amendment



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INTRODUCTION

This Local Area Action Plan (LAAP) is designed to help the Skye Local Area Partnership (LAP) determine where LEADER funding be focused, based on local priorities.

It pulls together key demographic data, together with feedback and information gathered from community consultations and questionnaires in 2014 including a SWOT analysis of the area which have helped to outline what types of projects to fund and to understand if there are any groups in the area which should be specifically targeted.

Eligibility for LEADER is still defined as per the Highland LEADER Local Development Strategy (LDS) but the Skye Local Area Action Plan (LAAP) gives a local focus to the project activities required to deliver local priorities for the Skye LAP area.



AREA OVERVIEW AND DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Physical Features

The Skye LAP area (also identified as Highland Council Ward 11 / Eilean a' Cheò – see cover map) is a collection of inhabited and uninhabited islands including Skye, Raasay, Soay, Longay, Scalpay, and Pabbay. It is a predominantly mountainous area of about 1745 square kilometres which is deeply indented by sea lochs.

Much of the land area is used for agriculture and/or is of a valuable environmental or scenic nature. Land usage also includes forestry. It is an area of diverse landscape character and natural scenic beauty, large parts of which are designated as SSSIs.



Photograph courtesy of Iain Smith, Skye Photo Centre

Settlement Pattern

Skye is the largest island in Highland on which the majority of the population are dispersed over a range of small crofting townships. The town of Portree is the largest settlement on the island of Skye and home to approximately a quarter of the island's population, with Broadford and Kyleakin in the south also being significant service centres. Also part of the Skye LAP area, and a short ferry trip to the east, is the island of Raasay whose current population is about 180.



Demographic Profile

All figures in this section are based on 2011 Census data, unless specified otherwise.

Population

The Skye LAP area has a population of 10,177 which has risen from 9,458 in 2001. This is an increase of 7.6%, compared to the population increase in Highland of 11.1%.

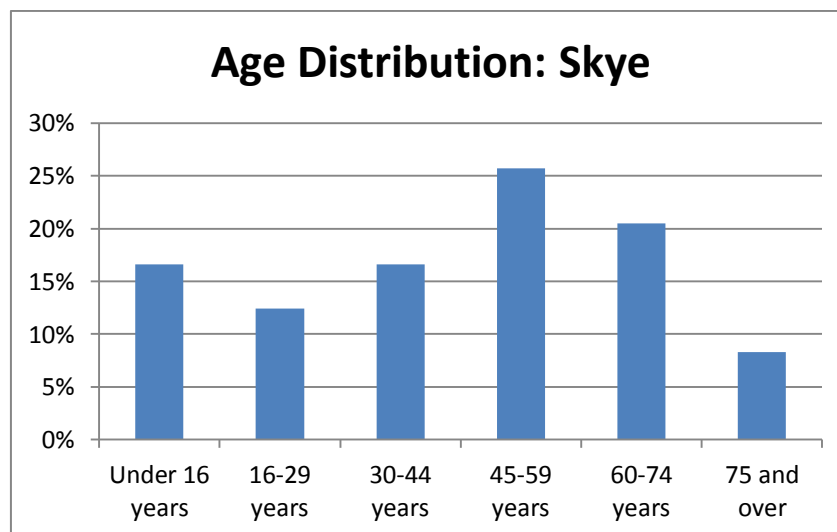
In 2001, 19% of the population were aged 15 years or younger but by 2011, the 16-29 year old age group of this area made up 12.4% of the population. Whilst these figures are not directly comparable they do suggest an increasing trend towards outmigration of young people leaving the island.

In Highland as a whole the trend was similar but not quite so marked with the 2001 population figure for the under 16's recorded as 20% of the population and the 2011 figure for 16-29 year olds recorded as 15% showing a lower decrease of 5% over the same period.

In 2001, the 16-44 years age group made up 34% of the population of this area but by 2011 only 28.9% of the population were recorded in this age group; a drop of 5.1%. In Highland as a whole this age group made up 37% of the population in 2001 but only 34.7% in 2011; a less marked drop of 2.3%.

Generally the population of Skye is ageing at a faster rate than Highland overall: in 2001, 47% of the island's population were over the age of 45 years but by 2011 this had risen to 54.4%; an increase of 7.4%.

A similar but less marked trend can be seen across Highland where 44% of the population of the area was over 45 years in 2001 but by 2011 this had risen to 48.5%; an increase of 4.5%.



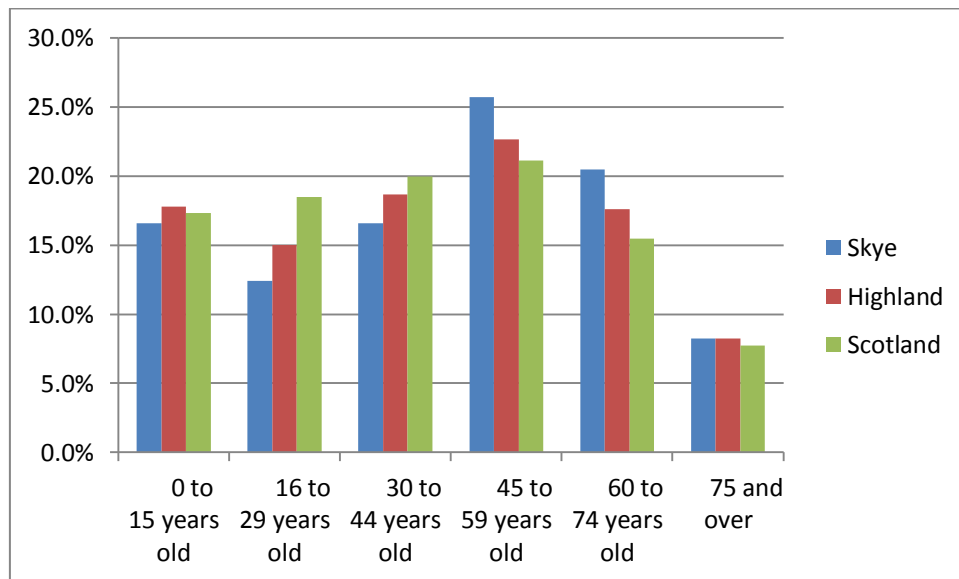
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Conversely there is a lower percentage of people in each of the lower age groups than both Highland and Scotland. The greatest variance is in the 16 - 29 age group which represents just 12.4% of the population of Skye whereas this age group represents 15% of the population of Highland and 18.5% of the population of Scotland.



Ethnicity

98.9% of the Skye population are 'White', with 0.2% 'White Polish'. 0.4% of the population are 'Asian', and 0.7% are 'Other ethnic groups'. There is a higher percentage of 'White - Other British' people living in Skye (21.9%) than in Highland (14.7%) and Scotland (7.9%).

	Skye	Highland	Scotland
White - Scottish	74.2%	79.9%	84.0%
White - Other British	21.9%	14.7%	7.9%
White - Irish	0.5%	0.6%	1.0%
White - Polish	0.2%	1.5%	1.2%
White - Other	2.2%	1.9%	1.9%
Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British	0.4%	0.8%	2.7%
Other ethnic groups	0.7%	0.7%	1.4%

Health

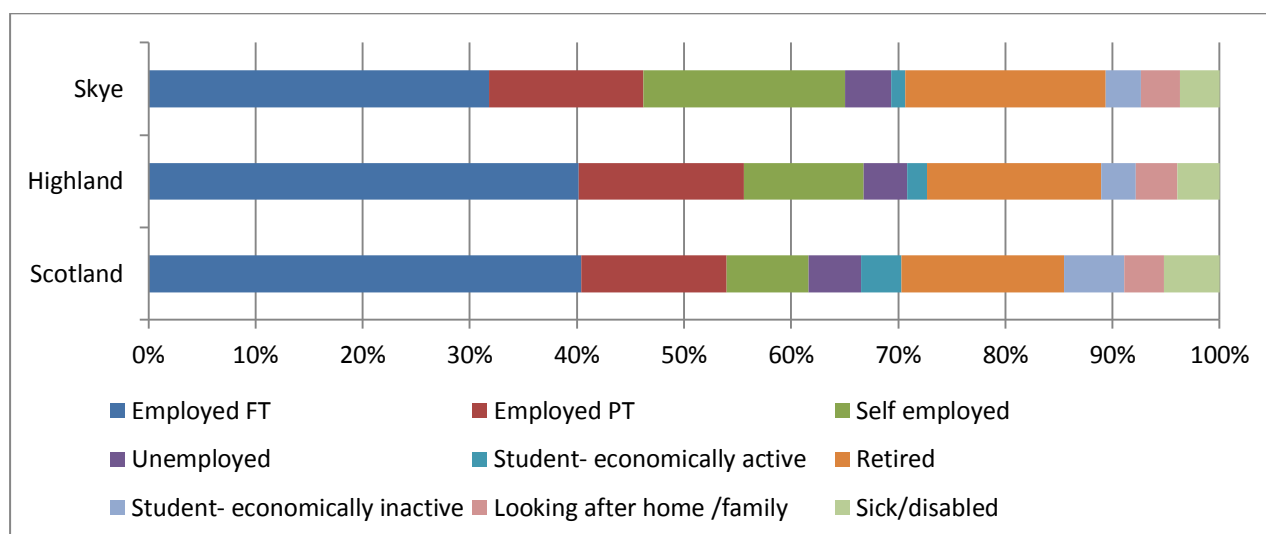
83.9% of the population in Skye rate their health as good or very good. This is comparable to the figures in Highland (84%) and Scotland (82.3%).

19.8% have a long-term health condition that limits their day to day activities

9.5% of the population provide some unpaid care each week, with 2.4% providing 50 or more hours each week. Similar figures can be seen in Highland and Scotland



Economic Activity



In 2011, 69.3% of the population of Skye aged 16-74 years were economically active which is slightly below the Highland average of 71.5%.

Skye's percentage of students is 4.4% compared to a Highland average of 5% and a Scotland average of 9.2%. 18.4% of the population in Skye are retired, compared to a Highland average of 16% and a Scottish average of 14.9%.

22.8% of unemployed people living on the island are aged 16-24 years. Only 4.0% of unemployed people in Skye have never worked which compares favourably with the Highland average of 9.3% and the Scotland average of 13.9%. In the 50-74 years age group, 27.5% are recorded as unemployed in Skye compared to an average of 22.9% in Highland and 18.4% in Scotland.

Unemployment		Skye	Highland	Scotland
% Unemployed people in 16-74 year old age group		4.2%	4.0%	4.77%
Persons aged 16-74 who are unemployed	Aged 16 to 24	22.8%	28.5%	30.2%
	Aged 25 to 49	49.7%	48.6%	51.4%
	Aged 50 to 74	27.5%	22.9%	18.4%

Benefits

2.9% of the working age population claimed job seekers allowance* in the year November 2012 - October 2013. This is higher than the Highland average of 2.6% and lower than the Scottish average of 4%. (*Not all unemployed people claim job seekers allowance). There can be seasonal changes to this figure as many people work in seasonal jobs in Highland.

The 2012/2013 figure has been used as this is the 12 months running up to the introduction of Universal Credit. It can be difficult to make comparisons using Universal Credit as this has not been introduced nationally and it is not clear what benefits are being claimed in the Universal Credit payment.

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

Using the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), there is one data zone area in the Skye LAP area ranked in the 15% most deprived in Highland, although all the data zone areas in Skye, with the exception of those relating to Broadford and Portree, are in the 5% most remote in terms of the Geographical indicator.

It should be noted that the SIMD is designed to identify deprived communities and cannot identify deprivation at the household-level. In rural areas it is more common for deprived households to be scattered throughout the wider community and these families are consequently more difficult to identify by any statistical process. Furthermore in areas of low population density, data zones have to be much larger with a consequent amalgamation of affluent and deprived households into a single averaged output. While the mixed nature of rural populations may have some benefits for deprived households, support services that are visible and easily accessed in urban settings can be difficult to access or not known to people living in more remote communities.

Data Zones (areas that have populations of between 500 and 1,000 household residents) in LAP Area with Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation ranks in Scotland / Highland

Zones in 15% most deprived shaded dark blue

Data Zone	Data Zone Name	Overall SIMD 2012 Rank in Scotland	Overall SIMD 2012 Rank in Highland
S01003911	Skye North East	1,991	44
S01003800	Portree West	2,206	55
S01003914	Uig	2,374	63
S01003763	Broadford	2,406	65
S01003761	Skye South East	2,487	70
S01003808	Portree North	2,547	77
S01003841	Duirinish	2,597	80
S01003826	Portree East & Rural	2,910	101
S01003871	Dunvegan & Waternish	3,334	130
S01003866	Skye Central North	3,402	136
S01003752	Sleat	3,423	138
S01003768	Skye West	3,484	141
S01003779	Skye East & Raasay	3,848	172



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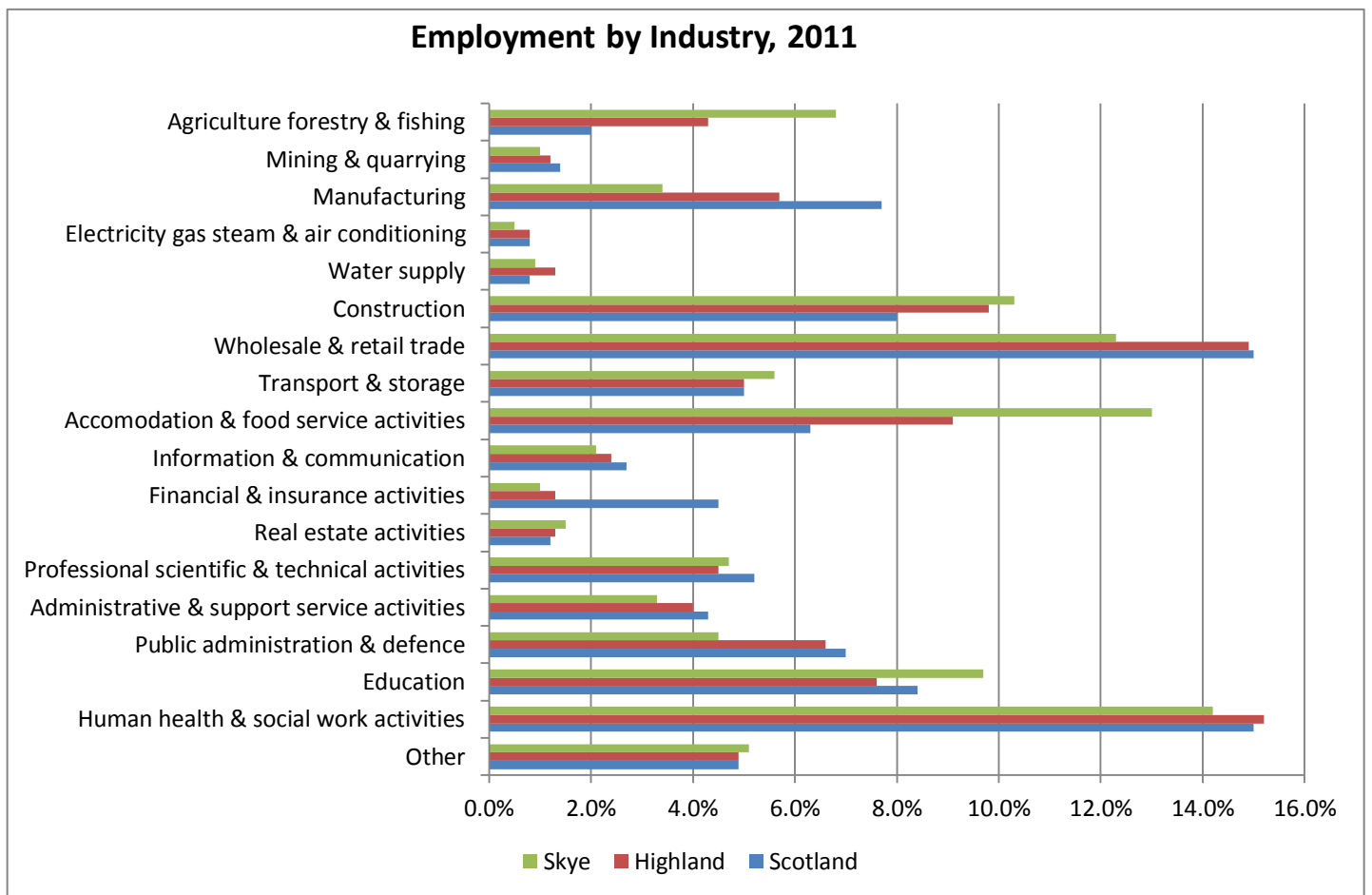
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Employment



Looking at employment by industry and compared to Highland overall, Skye has a higher percentage of people working in agriculture, accommodation and food services and education, and a lower percentage of people working in manufacturing, financial and insurance activities and public administration and defence.

A higher percentage of the population work in accommodation and food service activities in Skye (13%) than in Highland (9.1%) which implies many people are involved in the tourist industry.

In 2011, 20.1% of people in employment in Skye worked 49 hours or more a week, which is higher than the Scottish figure of 11.7%.

Education

23.3% of people in Skye have no qualifications, compared to 25.5% in Highland and 26.8% in Scotland. A larger percentage hold Level 4 or above qualifications (31.1%) than in Highland (26.4%) and Scotland (26.1%)

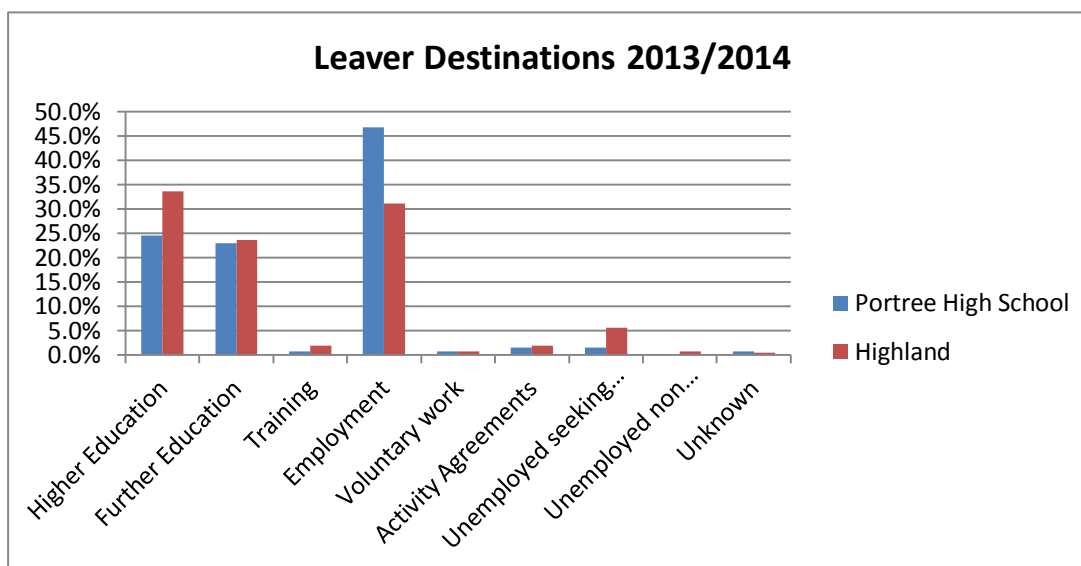
	Skye	Highland	Scotland
No qualifications	23.3%	25.5%	26.8%
Level 1*	21.7%	24.5%	23.1%
Level 2**	15.5%	14.1%	14.3%
Level 3***	8.4%	9.2%	9.7%
Level 4 and above****	31.1%	26.4%	26.1%

*O Grade, Standard Grade, Access 3 Cluster, Intermediate 1 or 2, GCSE, CSE, Senior Certification or equivalent, GSVQ Foundation or Intermediate, SVQ level 1 or 2, SCOTVEC Module, City and Guilds Craft or equivalent; Other school qualifications not already mentioned (including foreign qualifications)

**SCE Higher Grade, Higher, Advanced Higher, CSYS, A Level, AS Level, Advanced Senior Certificate or equivalent, GSVQ Advanced, SVQ Level 3, ONC, OND, SCOTVEC National Diploma, City and Guilds Advanced Craft or equivalent

***HNC, HND, SVQ Level 4 or equivalent; Other post-school but pre-Higher Education qualifications not already mentioned (including foreign qualifications)

****Degree, Postgraduate qualifications, Masters, PhD, SVQ Level 5 or equivalent, Professional qualifications (for example, teaching, nursing, accountancy), other Higher Educations qualifications not already mentioned (including foreign qualifications)



In Skye, 47.5% of school leavers in 2014 carried on to further or higher education. The 24.6% of Portree High School leavers going on to Higher Education are likely to leave the Skye area to do so. 46.8% of Portree High School leavers go on to employment, which is higher than the Highland average of 31.2%. This is also reflected in the very small numbers of school leavers who are unemployed and seeking work. However, it is important to consider the types of jobs these schools leavers go into as these may be low-paid, seasonal jobs.



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COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

The process of preparing a community led local development strategy for the Skye LAP area included community consultation and information gathered during 2014/2015 which included:

- Two facilitated public meetings held in June 2014, undertaking a SWOT analysis of the area and testing the initial draft themes and outcomes from the Highland local development strategy.
- An electronic survey available for anyone who could not attend these consultation meetings and which was also widely circulated to previous applicants, Highland councillors, Ward Manager, community councils, etc.

From the information gathered at the public meetings and the electronic survey, a SWOT analysis was produced for the Skye area which was circulated to all who attended the public events for comments and feedback.

Invitations to form a Skye Steering Group were issued in May 2015 to:

- All the Skye LAP area community councils inviting nominations of individuals interested in community development
- Previous Skye LAP members, including HIE and SNH
- Ward Manager for Skye Ward
- Highland Councillors for the Skye Ward
- Local Skye Youth Development Officer

The Steering Group was responsible for starting the process of developing the Local Area Action Plan for Skye and determining local priorities, and for determining the membership requirements for the Skye Local Area Partnership.

The Skye Local Area Partnership (LAP) was responsible for completing the process of developing the Local Area Action Plan (LAAP) for Skye and is responsible for undertaking periodic reviews of the SKYE LAAP.

The Skye LAP is also responsible for ensuring the input of young people (and/or their representatives). To date there has been contact with the Highland Youth Convenor, the local youth development officer, and a survey was circulated to a Youth Conference held in Skye asking for their views about projects and how best to engage with them. Skye attendees of this event were also invited to attend a Skye Steering Group meeting. Ongoing contact with young people will differ from area to area and will be further guided by the local youth development officer who was initially a member of the Skye LEADER steering group and is now a member of the Skye LAP. The Skye LAP accepts that the formal round table setting of a LAP meeting is often not conducive to encouraging young people to put their views across and, if this turns out to be the case, the Skye LAP will look at alternative ways of securing the input of young people to the LAP's decision making process.



SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

- ▶ Skye is the largest island in Highland, with Portree the largest settlement and Broadford and Kyleakin also significant service centres. There is a pool of talented and enthusiastic people to draw upon.
- ▶ There is a high degree of community activity with lots of volunteers, several community trusts and good levels of co-operation amongst community organisations. Working relationships between voluntary organisations and public sector partners are reported as strong.
- ▶ There are three Community Account Managed (CAM) communities supported by Highlands and Islands Enterprise on the island of Raasay, and in the communities of Glendale and Staffin.
- ▶ Economically there are pockets of growth in terms of arts, craft and food production and there is also a pro-active social enterprise sub-sector.
- ▶ Quality of life is considered very high with many people attracted into the area because of that.
- ▶ Further and higher education options in Skye are improving with the development of West Highland College and online learning opportunities. The community aspect of the local schools is also recognised and valued.
- ▶ Transport links to the mainland are reported as much stronger than previously was the case.
- ▶ There is a considerable range of outdoor activities.
- ▶ Skye has a strong international identity and it is rich in natural heritage and landscape with lots of biodiversity to offer.
- ▶ There is a continuing, distinctive Gaelic heritage. It offers history and culture and also modern opportunities in arts and crafts.



Weaknesses

- ▶ Generally the population in Skye is ageing more than Highland overall. A decrease in Skye's 16-29 year old population shows that younger people are increasingly leaving the island. Skye North East is ranked in 15% most deprived areas of Highland.
- ▶ Tourism and the public sector are key employers in Skye. The local tourism economy is highly seasonal and of a low wage nature.
- ▶ There is a limited availability of indoor or wet weather activities.
- ▶ Qualification levels tend to be low amongst local young people.
- ▶ Barriers to improving quality of life include fuel poverty, poor public transport, and distance for key services resulting in pockets of rural disadvantage. Isolation is exacerbated by limited public sector transport infrastructure.
- ▶ Housing supply is limited and existing stock prices increased by the operation of a significant second home/letting/retirement market which, together with the low wage, seasonal economy, creates a significant affordable housing issue.
- ▶ Some concern was expressed at the development of separate schooling for Gaelic and English speakers.
- ▶ Lack of funding and/or willing and able lead partners might weaken and/or delay/prevent the development and delivery of sustainable heritage projects that have been identified as priorities.

Opportunities

- ▶ There is scope to engage and enthuse the community through aspirational projects which would help to overcome the risk of apathy and reliance on a limited number of activists in the community.
- ▶ Both a key challenge and opportunity is to develop an all year round economy with increased opportunities for younger people which needs to be built around key growth sectors in renewable energies, arts and crafts, and food production. Limited availability of indoor or wet weather activities, if addressed, could further extend the tourist season.
- ▶ Social enterprise offers an opportunity to fill gaps which might be left by the shrinking of the public sector.
- ▶ There are local development/growth plans already in place which provide an opportunity to capture and build on community proposals including: The Raasay Community Development Plan; the Glendale Community Growth Plan; the Staffin Community Development Plan; the Sleat Community Plan.
- ▶ Improving local transport infrastructure would help support the growth and sustainability of many of the smaller communities.
- ▶ Potential for the development of heritage related projects including development and marketing of heritage destinations and heritage trails (digital and physical) mapping the island's cultural and natural heritage sites/attractions and linking destinations.
- ▶ Development, promotion and maintenance of path networks for cyclists and walkers.
- ▶ Improved interpretation and showcasing of Skye's cultural and natural heritage
- ▶ Conservation and restoration of the island's natural and cultural heritage assets
- ▶ Development and promotion of Gaelic courses



Threats

- ▶ There are concerns about threats to the community and voluntary sector which include a fear of burn out amongst those involved.
- ▶ Insecurity of employment resulting from seasonality of the tourism sector impairs the capacity of individuals to save and plan for the future
- ▶ There is concern that the bottom up approach to local planning and service provision is at risk from budget cuts and more strategic planning approaches.
- ▶ Skye is heavily reliant upon the public sector and the budget cuts pose a significant threat to the island's continuing wellbeing.
- ▶ Lack of funding and/or willing and able lead partners might threaten and/or delay/prevent the development and delivery of sustainable heritage projects that have been identified as priorities.
- ▶ Trying to sensitively and successfully balance the need for sustainable economic development/job creation with preserving/conserving the natural landscape from over-development.

KEY CHALLENGES/OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED

The suggested key challenges/opportunities are based on the most recent demographic data available and the results of the SWOT analysis of Skye undertaken in 2014.

Access

The majority of the population in Skye are dispersed over a range of small crofting townships across the island with approximately a quarter of the population living in the town of Portree. In the SWOT analysis, it was noted that improving the local transport infrastructure would reduce isolation and help support the growth and sustainability of many of the smaller communities.

Outmigration of young people

Despite a 7.6% rise in the population of Skye from 2001 to 2011, the demographic profile of the area shows that 19% of the population in Skye were aged 15 years or younger in 2001, whereas in 2011, the 16-29 year old population had dropped to 12.4% compared to a Highland average of 15% and a Scottish average of 18.5%. Whilst some of these figures are not directly comparable they do suggest an increasing trend towards outmigration of young people leaving the island and confirmation that young people are leaving Skye in greater numbers than Highland and Scotland as a whole.

Increasing population of older people

Generally the population of Skye is ageing more than Highland overall. The demographic data reveals that people over 45 in Skye comprise well over half of the population at 54.4%, which is higher than the Highland average of 48.5% and more than 10% higher than for the whole of Scotland which is 44.3%. 18.4% of the population in Skye are retired compared to a Scottish average of 14.9%.

Seasonal and low paid employment

Whilst qualification levels tend to be low amongst young people, a higher percentage of school leavers in Skye go on to employment than in Highland overall (46.8% in Skye and 31.2% in Highland). Although only a small percentage of school leavers are unemployed and seeking work (1.6%), the SWOT analysis highlighted concerns that employment in Skye is often seasonal and low paid and focussed on the tourism industry where a higher percentage of the population (13%) work in accommodation and food service activities than in Highland overall (9.1%). The SWOT analysis highlighted the opportunity for Skye to develop an all year round economy with increased opportunities for younger people and possibly built around key growth sectors in renewable energies, arts and crafts, and food production.

Improving access to Cultural, Natural and Heritage Sites/Assets

The SWOT and subsequent discussions have highlighted lack of funding and/or willing and able lead partners to develop and deliver sustainable heritage projects that have been identified including the development, promotion and maintenance of path networks for cyclists and walkers. Other opportunities/challenges highlighted have been the need to build on Skye's strong national/international identity/brand and its rich heritage and landscape, the need for improved tourist information services, the need for improved interpretation and showcasing of Skye's cultural and natural heritage; the need for



improved parking, picnic areas, viewpoints, etc at popular sites, the need for the development and marketing of heritage destinations and heritage trails (digital and physical) mapping the island's cultural and natural heritage sites/attractions and linking destinations.

Broadband and Mobile Phone Services

Both services now seen as essential to attracting/retaining young people/young families and business but current provision in Skye does not always support this leaving some communities disadvantaged and vulnerable to further de-population due to lack of/poor service provision.

Tourism

Limited availability of indoor or wet weather activities has been highlighted as a weakness in the SWOT. Any activities/facilities which attract visitors, extend the tourist season or encourage visitors to extend their stay in Skye and spend more will help the local tourist economy which is currently highly seasonal.

Housing

Existing housing stock prices increased by the operation of a significant second home/letting/retirement market, together with a low wage/seasonal economy creates a significant affordable housing issue on the island.

Community Trusts/Companies and Social Enterprises

The SWOT analysis and subsequent discussions have highlighted such organisations as offering opportunities for communities to acquire/develop assets and to fill gaps in the provision of local services and activities and build on community aspirations.



HIGHLAND CROSS CUTTING THEMES

▶ Fairer Highland – advancing equality (addresses equality issues or benefits people in groups that are under-represented or disadvantaged)
▶ Innovation (a new or different approach is proposed within the area)
▶ Sustainability/Legacy (the project outcomes will continue beyond the life of the project)
▶ Carbon Clever (the project can demonstrate a positive impact on the environment)
▶ Skills Development (the project aims to expand the skills of those involved in implementing the project and/or on its participants)

There may be challenges for projects impacting on all five cross cutting themes and there is therefore an emphasis on projects demonstrating how they can meet a number of these themes efficiently rather than all of them to a weaker extent.

Therefore **all** projects will have to demonstrate how they meet the Fairer Highland, Innovation, and Sustainability/Legacy cross cutting themes and that the remaining cross cutting themes of Carbon Clever and Skills Development will be delivered by projects only where a direct link can be made.



PRIORITISING OF HIGHLAND THEMES FOR SKYE

The Highland LEADER programme themes are ranked in order of priority to Skye, based on the results of an online survey in September 2014 and the collective rankings of the Skye Steering Group/LAP.

THEME	COLLECTIVE RANKING
▶ Stronger and More Resilient Communities	1
▶ A Growing and Diversified Economy that Promotes Sustainability	2=
▶ Increased and Sustained Local Services and Activities	2=
▶ Enhanced Cultural and Natural Assets	4

The theme ranking exercise is considered a guide only as it is expected that Skye projects will individually deliver against more than 1 theme and collectively deliver against all 4 themes.

PRIORITISING OF HIGHLAND OUTCOMES FOR SKYE

The Highland Local Development Strategy is committed to contributing to ten outcomes.

However, given the indicative Skye budget allocation of £313,745 and based on the SWOT analysis and various consultations undertaken over 2014 and 2015, the Skye Steering Group/LAP undertook a ranking exercise and has decided to initially focus their LEADER budget on fewer outcomes which they have identified as being of particular importance to Skye:

PRIORITY OUTCOMES FOR SKYE	COLLECTIVE PRIORITISATION RANKING
▶ People have better access to local services and activities	1
▶ Increased community ownership/control of assets and services/activities	2
▶ Increased employment opportunities locally through new business start-ups and existing business diversification/development	3
▶ Improved access for residents and visitors (physical and knowledge based) to cultural, natural and heritage assets	4
▶ Increased partnership working between groups (within and across areas, including intergenerational partnerships)	5

Whilst the Skye LAP wishes to focus on projects that will deliver the prioritised outcomes, it also notes that there is some overlap between outcome headings and eligible activity and it wishes, if possible, to initially retain the discretion to consider applications that deliver against non-prioritised outcomes and the wider Highland Local Development Strategy if the applicant can provide evidence to support substantial community impact/legacy/benefit.

The Skye LAP would also welcome applications for consideration that fit with existing local economic development/growth plans and also applications that could lead to potential employment opportunities.

Where Skye based projects are eligible for funding under the 'ring-fenced' Rural Enterprise or Farm Diversification LEADER budgets or under the European Maritime



and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), the Skye LAP expect that these sources of funding will be considered by applicants in the first instance.

It is also expected that projects relating to partnership working with other LAP/LAG areas will explore the sourcing of funding through the LEADER 'ring fenced' Co-operation budget.

Applicants will also be expected to explore the availability/eligibility of other Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) funding sources for their projects before approaching LEADER.

It is felt that the prioritised outcomes agreed on produce some clarity for potential applicants and will hopefully attract projects that will, within the constraints of the Skye budget allocation, help to address **some** of the challenges/opportunities identified in the consultation process and help to deliver impact and legacy leading to stronger communities with an improved quality of life and the growth and diversification of the local economy.

In summary, the Skye LAP will consider funding projects that meet one or more of the Highland themes and all the relevant cross cutting themes.

All project applications will be assessed by the Skye LAP against agreed scoring criteria and priority will be given to the types of projects identified as best delivering the five Skye priority outcomes.

The project types initially listed as worthy of support have been identified in broad terms to stimulate interest but applicants will also need to ensure that their projects align with the LEADER eligible activities listed under each outcome in the Highland LDS.

The priority outcomes and project types listed will be reviewed/re-assessed by the Skye LAP as appropriate and to enable the Skye LAP to identify, if necessary, more specific projects/types that it considers will maximise the benefits of LEADER funding to communities in Skye.



PRIORITISED OUTCOME 1:

People have better access to local services and activities

Local people are keen to have access to a range of local services and activities, from more affordable housing through to leisure pursuits. In some instances this may be about developing such services/activities in others it is about improving access to those which already exist. Transport is a key issue in relation to access in some local areas, in others it is about basic information sharing, improved internet access (available to residents and visitors alike) and improved websites. During final consultation in September 2014, 95% of Highland survey respondents agreed with this outcome.

LEADER Eligible Project Activity: Examples of projects eligible to achieve this outcome include: feasibility studies and development costs for new services/activities identified as a need within the community; local solutions for community transport issues, including ways of integrating transport schemes; feasibility and development of local internet/WiFi centres for use by residents and visitors; wider initiatives to tackle increased broadband provision and access; improved information-sharing locally including local website improvement; feasibility and development of projects that address access to housing and improved access to job opportunities; projects that promote inclusion and well-being; health activities across age groups; local solutions to address the needs of an ageing population; services for vulnerable individuals and families including piloting initiatives; services that tackle re-offending, youth disengagement and substance misuse; community re-use and recycle IT schemes; training for basic repairs and maintenance. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate how new initiatives can become sustainable.

In order to support the delivery of people having better access to local services and activities and where they relate to LEADER eligible activities which are unlikely to be eligible for other SRDP funding sources, the Skye LAP will consider applications for the delivery of:

- Projects that remove or minimise barriers or disadvantage particularly for the younger or older population age groups
- Improved broadband or mobile connectivity
- Health and wellbeing projects especially for the younger and older age groups
- Community transport initiatives especially for those who can't access the main transport service
- Projects that address the limited availability of indoor or wet weather activities
- Projects that increase the accessibility of activities and services especially for younger and older people
- Projects which investigate and deliver innovative and sustainable local solutions to services and activities
- Service/facilities eg toilets, picnic areas, parking especially those linked to popular visitor sites
- Projects that provide tourist information services
- Projects that identify and prepare sustainable service/activity proposals for re-generating vacant/dilapidated sites and facilities

NOTES: It was felt that projects delivering against this outcome might also deliver against other outcomes eg increased employment opportunities, increased partnership working, improvements to the visitor experience.

The SKYE LAP have included for an early re-assessment of their outcome and project priorities to be considered in light of the actual applications/expressions of interest coming forward.



PRIORITISED OUTCOME 2:

Increased community ownership/control of assets and services/activities

“In many cases, the key to effective community led action may be ownership or control of land or buildings. This can be about protecting or enhancing local facilities, creating new spaces and new uses, generating income for community activity or providing alternative stewardship for heritage and environmental assets. It can increase community confidence and cohesion, allowing communities to realise their aspirations and control their destinies. Whether it is retaining the local shop, renovating a derelict site or providing a hub for community activities, control of assets can be a key factor in making a community more attractive to live in, supporting economic regeneration and sustainable development.”

(Scottish Government, Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill, Policy Memorandum p.13)

The Bill which is currently going through Parliament seeks to extend the community right to buy and make asset transfer requests easier. During final consultation in September 2014, 91% of survey respondents agreed with this outcome.

LEADER Eligible Project Activity: Eligible projects will include all aspects of community ownership from feasibility through to acquisition; support for future planning and developments to existing community owned and led services; projects which increase community engagement with community development and planning; projects that aim to put income earning opportunities within the hands of local communities. Initiatives under this outcome will take account of the potential for displacement and there should be engagement with the business sector to protect businesses that use the asset the community is acquiring. It should also be possible for business in a community to be supported to work together and acquire an asset.

In order to support the delivery of increased community ownership/control of assets and services/ activities and where they relate to LEADER eligible activities which are unlikely to be eligible for other SRDP funding sources, the Skye LAP will consider applications for the delivery of:

- Projects that enable communities to take over and sustainably develop community assets, services and activities
- Projects that identify potential assets for acquisition and sustainable development
- Projects that help to secure assets and facilities for sustainable community development
- Projects that support training and partnership working related to community ownership/control of assets and services/activities

NOTES: It was felt that projects delivering against this outcome might also deliver against other outcomes eg increased employment opportunities, increased partnership working, improvements to the visitor experience.

The SKYE LAP have included for an early re-assessment of their outcome and project priorities to be considered in light of the actual applications/expressions of interest coming forward.



PRIORITISED OUTCOME 3:

Increased employment opportunities locally through new business start-ups and existing business diversification/ development

It is recognised that a strong local economy is essential in creating a strong and resilient community. There is a tradition of self-employment in Highland and a higher rate of business start-ups than most other areas of Scotland. The impact of jobs being available locally in order to sustain rural communities is a key message that has been highlighted in the consultation. During final consultation in September 2014, 93% of survey respondents agreed with this outcome.

LEADER Eligible Project Activity: Feasibility and development of new and existing businesses in terms of capital and revenue; support for social enterprises; projects that promote partnership within and across sectors; support for new businesses; training and employability skills; business infrastructure (e.g. business units, chilling facilities); support to introduce more efficient processes including in the wider supply chain.

In order to support the delivery of increased employment opportunities locally through new business start-ups and existing business diversification/ activities and where they relate to LEADER eligible activities which are unlikely to be eligible for other SRDP funding sources, the Skye LAP will consider applications for the delivery of:

- Projects which support the development and growth of sustainable social enterprises to develop employment opportunities that could help sustain communities
- Projects which help to address the reliance on seasonal employment
- Projects which create employment opportunities especially for young people/young families that would encourage them not to leave the island or to return to the island to live/work
- Projects which create year round employment opportunities
- Projects which create employment opportunities by marketing Skye as a location of choice
- Projects which create employment opportunities by adding value to local produce
- Projects which create employment opportunities in the identified growth sectors of renewable energy, arts, crafts, and food production
- Projects which create employment opportunities by promoting and developing local markets
- Projects which create employment opportunities through the development of local services, activities and facilities
- Projects which create employment opportunities through all year round tourism or which extend the tourist season
- Projects which support farmers and crofters to diversify and create employment opportunities
- Projects which create new employment opportunities with clearly defined and measurable outputs and are directly linked to the delivery of the other prioritised outcomes for Skye and, if ongoing beyond the duration of the LEADER funded project, that have a clear grant funding exit strategy evidencing future sustainability.

NOTES: It was felt that projects delivering against this outcome might also deliver against other outcomes eg better access to local services/activities, increased ownership/control of assets and services/activities.

The SKYE LAP have included for an early re-assessment of their outcome and project priorities to be considered in light of the actual applications/expressions of interest coming forward.



PRIORITISED OUTCOME 4:

Improved access for residents and visitors (physical and knowledge based) to cultural, natural and heritage assets

Cultural, natural and heritage assets in Highland have been highlighted throughout the consultation period and in existing policy documents as a key strength of the area. Local people see that improved access can be of benefit both for them and for visitors (health and economic gains). Access can take different forms: it can relate to physical access (better pathways and cycle paths; better linkages between adjacent sites), it can relate to the feasibility and development of new sites, and it can also relate to better awareness and knowledge about what is available through information boards, newsletters, websites, marketing and promotion. During final consultation in September 2014, 95% of respondents agreed with this outcome.

LEADER Eligible Project Activity: Projects that would contribute to this outcome could include: new pathways and cycle paths, particularly where they link up to other existing paths/cycle routes or create linkages between local villages and sites or have health related benefits; improved access for disabled people to sites; feasibility studies/development of new sites; information products, websites, marketing and promotion initiatives; projects which promote safe access and appropriate signage; projects which promote the opportunities for cultural activities to be accessed locally, opportunities to improve biodiversity and habitats around paths and tracks; improved access to archaeological sites; projects which promote the Gaelic language and culture.

In order to support the delivery of improved access for residents and visitors (physical and knowledge based) to cultural, natural and heritage activities and where they relate to LEADER eligible activities which are unlikely to be eligible for other SRDP funding sources, the Skye LAP will consider applications for the delivery of:

- Projects which build on the existing strengths of the island relating to the natural landscape and cultural and heritage assets
- Projects which improve access to the island's cultural, natural and heritage assets eg paths, viewpoints, small bridges, signage, etc
- Projects which improve the understanding of cultural, natural and heritage assets
- Projects which improve access to archaeological sites
- Marketing and promotion initiatives improving access and understanding of the island's cultural, natural and heritage assets
- Projects which promote Gaelic culture and language
- Better integrated interpretation/promotion of sites/features and better use of trails and Skye badging/branding
- Cultural/natural/heritage access improvement projects improving the visitor experience
- Projects which co-ordinate visitor management at popular cultural/natural/heritage sites
- Projects which support community led management of heritage assets/sites with integrated support from agencies
- Projects which preserve the integrity of cultural, natural and heritage assets by using CCTV for viewing where appropriate

NOTES: It was felt that projects delivering against this outcome might also deliver against other outcomes eg increased partnership working, improvements to the visitor experience.

The SKYE LAP have included for an early re-assessment of their outcome and project priorities to be considered in light of the actual applications/expressions of interest coming forward.



PRIORITISED OUTCOME 5:

Increased partnership working between groups (within and across areas, including intergenerational partnerships)

The local consultations have identified the need to further support partnership working within and between communities with the Highlands and further afield. To do this effectively requires resource and this can be partly supported by the role of the Development Officers. However communities/businesses may identify capacity development issues and/or communication and knowledge sharing issues that require a further resource or may simply require resource to allow them to visit their partner area. This outcome will also include projects that are classed as co-operation projects. During final consultation in September 2014, 93% of survey respondents agreed with this outcome.

LEADER Eligible Project Activity: Eligible projects may include funding for partnership events; visits between partner areas; one-off facilitation for capacity building around new project ideas; communication/information/networking tools, preparatory and other costs for co-operation projects; development of networks at local and Highland wide level; shared learning events; mentoring programmes.

In order to support the delivery of increased partnership working between groups (within and across areas, including intergenerational partnerships activities and where they relate to LEADER eligible activities which are unlikely to be eligible for other SRDP funding sources, the Skye LAP will consider applications for the delivery of:

- Support for partnership events/working leading to improving the community's capacity to develop sustainable community facilities, services, activities and employment opportunities
- Support for local communities/organisations to work with other communities/organisations to share ideas and help to develop and deliver better planned projects
- Support for partnership working and the development of networks between communities and other LAP/LAG areas
- Support for partnership working leading to the shared delivery of services and activities and the shared use of facilities
- Support for partnership working leading to improved tourist opportunities
- Support for partnership working promoting and developing tourist opportunities linked to cultural, natural and heritage assets
- Support for partnership working leading to employment and training opportunities
- Support for food production and marketing partnerships
- Support for intergenerational partnership working and the transfer/sharing of local knowledge

NOTES: It was felt that projects delivering against this outcome might also deliver against other outcomes eg better access to local services/activities, and improvements in visitor experience.

It is expected that projects relating to partnership working with other LAP/LAG areas will explore the sourcing of funding through the LEADER 'ring fenced' Co-operation budget.

The SKYE LAP have included for an early re-assessment of their outcome and project priorities to be considered in light of the actual applications/expressions of interest coming forward.



The remaining outcomes included in the Highland Local Development Strategy but not included in Skye’s priority outcomes are:

- ◀ Improvements in the visitor experience (the Skye LAP felt that by prioritising the outcome relating to improved access to cultural, natural and heritage assets it would also help to deliver this outcome)
- ◀ Improved management/conservation/sustainability of cultural, natural and heritage assets (the Skye LAP felt that, with limited budget, it should target its funds at improving access to its cultural, natural and heritage assets which might of course in some instances overlap with this outcome)
- ◀ Impact of funded projects can be better demonstrated leading to increased capacity to secure future funds (the Skye LAP felt that this was more of a crosscutting outcome anticipated for all projects)
- ◀ Increased income from local produce through adding value (the Skye LAP felt that some projects delivering against this outcome could be considered under the increased employment opportunities through business development outcome which the Skye LAP has prioritised)
- ◀ People feel better supported to undertake volunteering opportunities (the Skye LAP felt that prioritising the outcome relating to the delivery of increased partnership working between groups would also help contribute to the delivery of this outcome)



REVIEW CYCLE:

Based on the constraints of the indicative LEADER budget allocation for the Skye area and currently unaware of the actual projects/applications that are expected to come forward for LEADER funding, the Skye LAP recognize that they might not be able to deliver against all five prioritised outcomes.

The Skye LAP will therefore review its Local Area Action Plan as required or annually whichever is sooner which will allow for the re-assessment of the initial outcome priorities and any other funding criteria to be considered in light of the actual applications/expressions of interest coming forward and the budget available to distribute.

Any proposed substantive changes to the priorities and funding criteria identified in the Skye LAAP will be submitted to the Highland LAG for their further consideration/approval.

Potential LEADER applicants should therefore be aware of the possibility of changes to the Skye LAP's priority outcomes, LEADER grant intervention rates and the level of LEADER grants available for the Skye area.



ADDITIONAL FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

LEADER applicants will be expected to have explored alternative/additional sources of funding.

Skye LAP support for projects will largely be determined by the extent of their contribution to the delivery of the LEADER outcomes prioritised for Skye and the benefits being delivered in the Skye area but the level of financial support secured by applicants from other sources will also influence their decision making.

Where Skye based projects are eligible for funding under the 'ring-fenced' Rural Enterprise or Farm Diversification LEADER budgets or under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), the Skye LAP expects that these sources of funding will be considered by applicants in the first instance.

It is also expected that projects relating to partnership working with other LAP/LAG areas will explore the sourcing of funding through the LEADER 'ring fenced' Co-operation budget.

LEADER is one of several schemes included in the Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) and applicants will be expected to have explored the availability/eligibility of other Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) funding sources before approaching LEADER. For further information about all the SRDP schemes refer to <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/farmingrural/SRDP/>. Identifying the most appropriate SRDP funding for a project is essential.

LEADER funding cannot be match funded with other EU funding including any other SRDP funding.

Funding for staff posts will only be considered if they relate to new posts which have clearly defined and measurable outputs relating to the delivery of the prioritised outcomes for Skye. If a LEADER funded staff post is ongoing beyond the duration of the grant funded period, a clear grant funding exit strategy evidencing future sustainability will be required.

The SKYE LAP will currently consider LEADER grant requests up to a maximum of 75% of total LEADER eligible project costs particularly for capital projects which align with the SKYE Local Area Action Plan and the Highland Local Development Strategy, which are responding to clear evidence of need or a gap in provision, and which will deliver sustainable and lasting impact/benefit.

The Skye LAP reserves the right, within the options available to it, to consider varying the maximum grant intervention rate.



Given the requirements associated with applying for and administering LEADER grants, the Skye LAP will initially not normally consider LEADER applications for grant requests of less than £5,000 but, at its discretion and to expedite the delivery of a prioritised outcome, the Skye LAP reserves the right to consider grant applications for less than £5,000.

It has been decided not to initially set a maximum LEADER grant amount or maximum project size but this could change following future LAAP reviews.

Applicants should, however, always seek to secure as much project funding as possible from other sources.

When applying to LEADER, applicants should also be aware of the total LEADER budget available to be allocated by the SKYE LAP and to be realistic in their expectations.

It has been decided not to initially target specific geographical areas.

The Skye LAP does not wish to vary grant intervention rate maximums between public and private/community applicants but will assess applications on their individual benefit and legacy to the area.

The Skye LAP recognises the value of sometimes issuing 'decisions in principle' as a means of possibly leveraging/expediting confirmation of match funding and will therefore consider issuing 'decisions in principle' pending confirmation of any outstanding match funding. The 'decision in principle' is not an offer of grant and will have an expiry date which will be determined by Scottish Government guidance (which is currently expected to be no more than 60 days). If the match funding is not secured before the expiry date, the application will be rejected and the applicant will be required to submit a new application once the match funding has been confirmed.



OUTPUTS

Guidance from the Scottish Government is currently awaited regarding the output categories that will need to be delivered Highland wide.

Outputs will be used to show what progress is being made towards achieving the Programme Outcomes. All projects that are awarded LEADER funding will commit to delivering a number of Outputs selected from a list of Programme Outputs.

Project Applicants that are awarded LEADER funding will be asked to monitor achievement of Outputs.

The Skye LAP will monitor Output achievement across all projects awarded LEADER funding in the Skye LAP Area.

Output achievement will also be monitored as part of the Highland LEADER Monitoring & Evaluation Strategy to ensure each LAP is on track to deliver its Local Area Action Plan, and Highland is on track to deliver its Local Development Strategy.



EQUALITIES / TARGET GROUPS

During the consultation process in 2014, communities were asked to identify any groups:-

- ▶ that would benefit from removing/ minimising barriers or disadvantage,
- ▶ that have particular needs,
- ▶ where under-representation or prejudice could be tackled or understanding could be promoted.

Across Highland the main groups identified were:

- ▶ Young people
- ▶ Older people
- ▶ Disabled people (including people with mental health issues)

A number of additional groups were identified (for example homeless people/people with housing problems, people suffering from substance abuse/addictions, people from the LGBT community).

There was also widespread reference to remoteness and transport (cost, lack of, exposed bus stops) as being a key barrier to inclusion.

The Skye LAP acknowledges the groups identified in Highland that might benefit from removing/minimising barriers or disadvantage, that have particular needs, and/or where under-representation or prejudice could be tackled or understanding could be promoted and will remain vigilant of such issues and consider any particular recommendations highlighted by the LEADER Equalities Reference Group.

Local demographic data and the SWOT analysis for Skye has highlighted the challenges associated with attracting and retaining the island's young people and serving the needs of an increasing older population and, whilst not specifically prioritising either of these groups for LEADER support, it is committed, when relevant, to consider the needs of these groups, as part of their decision making process.

The Skye LAP membership will also seek to ensure that, where relevant, project applicants consider the views/needs of these groups as part of their project development and, where relevant, that younger and older people provide useful input to the LAP's decision making process.

The monitoring that the Skye LAP undertakes will also pay particular attention to these two groups to determine whether specific targeting is subsequently required.



SKYE LOCAL AREA PARTNERSHIP

The initial approach to setting up the Skye Local Area Partnership (LAP) followed Highland LAG requirements/recommendations and involved setting up a Skye Steering Group comprising:

- Former LAP members
- Community Representatives (each Community Council in Skye was given the opportunity to nominate a representative from the community/business sector) who would bring local knowledge and expertise to facilitate delivery of the Programme
- Skye Ward Manager and Highland Council Elected Members for the Skye Ward

Drawing on their local knowledge and experience the Skye Steering Group initially comprising of 13 members began the task of:

- Developing a Local Area Action Plan prioritising the outcomes for Skye
- identifying the types of projects that would deliver the identified outcome priorities
- identifying the skills, knowledge and experience that would need to be represented on the Skye LAP in order to deliver the LAAP

The collective skills/knowledge/experience of the Skye LAP needs to be sufficient to enable informed assessment of Applications against the themes and prioritised local outcomes for Skye and the wider Highland LEADER strategy.

As part of the process of establishing the membership of the Skye LAP it was agreed that those members of the Steering Group wishing to put their names forward for consideration for Skye LAP membership would complete Skills Checklists to identify whether:

- there were any gaps against key skills, knowledge or experience requirements
- there was a good geographic and demographic mix of members

Whilst the skills, knowledge and experience detailed on the checklists received was extremely varied and identified a good geographic knowledge of the Skye area it was felt that further effort needed to be made to try to attract some representation from:

- West Skye
- the 16-29 years age group.

In the absence of nominations from West Skye community councils, invitations to nominate someone interested in community development were circulated to identified West Skye village hall committees and West Skye community trusts/companies.

Invitations to submit nominations from the 16-29 years age group were circulated to the local Gaelic Community & Learning Development Officer, a trainee careers advisor, and a local youth development officer.



Whilst there is no set limit for the number of members required for each LAP, it is anticipated that the Skye LAP will have between approximately 12-16 voting members supplemented by additional ad hoc advisory input as and when required.

See attached for consolidated skills checklist of final current Skye LAP members.

Currently the Skye LAP nominations comprise 8 private/community voting members, 5 public voting members, and 2 advisory non-voting members.

The required Public/Private voting membership balance of the Skye LAP will be maintained through either reducing the public voting LAP membership and/or increasing the private/community voting LAP membership.

All Skye LAP members will be given the opportunity to provide the name of a substitute from their organisation or sector who can attend LAP meetings and make decisions in their absence.

The Skye LAP will meet as often as required which is expected to be quarterly.

The Skye LAP will assess and address its training needs on an ongoing basis.

The Skye LAP will review and build upon the work undertaken by the Skye Steering Group and ensure that the Skye LAAP meets Highland LAG requirements.



SKYE LAP MEMBERSHIP:

Name of LAP Member Nomination	Organisation/Sector	Public or Private/Community	Voting or Non-Voting
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 / Skye	Private/Community	Voting
Donald Macdonald	Staffin Community Trust / NE Skye	Private/Community	Voting
Jo Ford	Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations / Skye	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

Where a prospective LAP member has involvement with more than one group/organisation/sector, it was necessary, for the purposes of their LEADER LAP involvement, to declare at the outset, just **one** associated group or organisation or sector so that the LAP's public/private member ratio could be determined.

Currently the Skye LAP comprises of 8 private/community voting members, 5 public voting members, plus 2 non-voting advisory members. Additional ad hoc advisory input will be identified/secured as and when required.

SKYE LAP OPERATING GUIDELINES

Where relevant and not otherwise varied in this Local Area Action Plan the SKYE LAP has decided to adopt the Operating Guidelines that have been agreed by the Strategic LAG.



APPENDICES

- Highland LEADER Programme Finance
- Consolidated Skye LAP Member Skills Checklist
- Skye LAP Skills Matrix
- LAP Members Job Description
- Operating Guidelines
- Glossary of Common Terms / Acronyms

HIGHLAND LEADER PROGRAMME FINANCE

The Highland Strategic Local Action Group (LAG) has agreed the following split of its indicative 2014-2020 LEADER Programme budget:

Administration/Animation	£2,201,347 (25%)
Co-operation Projects between two or more LAG areas	£440,269 (5%)
Co-operation Projects between two or more LAP areas in Highland	£440,269 (5%)
Rural Enterprise Projects	£880,538 (10%)
Farm Diversification Projects	£880,538 (10%)
Strategic Pan Highland Projects - across all/most Highland LAP areas	£500,000
Local Area Projects	£3,462,427
Total indicative allocation	£8,805,388

The Strategic LAG has indicated that it would like the local areas to have as much local control over what they are funding as is possible within the parameters set out by the EU/Financial Regulations. As such, and providing it is detailed as part of the approved Local Area Action Plan, Local Area Partnerships should be able to decide the following locally:

- Local intervention (pending any limits set by the LAG during discussions over a Highland wide rate)
- Whether to consider issuing time-limited “decisions in principle”
- Whether to set a limit on maximum grant or project costs
- Whether to increase the Highland wide limit of a minimum of £5,000 project costs
- Setting of annual allocations within initial review period

INDICATIVE BUDGET ALLOCATIONS TO LAPS

- Using the methodology that the Scottish Government have adopted across Scotland for the 2014-2020 Programme, the Highland LAG agreed the following indicative allocations to LAPS

INDICATIVE ALLOCATIONS TO HIGHLAND LAPS	
Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh	£506,688.74
Skye	£313,745.13
Caithness	£497,080.51
Sutherland	£633,673.16
Inner Moray Firth North	£550,574.97
Inner Moray Firth South	£412,683.91
Lochaber	£547,978.15
Total	£3,462,424.57



**Highland LEADER 2014-2020 Programme
Collective Skills/Experience/Knowledge Checklist**

Name	Skye LAP
Name of Organisation/Group being represented (if relevant)	Skye LAP
Is this a Public or Private Organisation (if relevant)?	Mixed

Sectoral	
Farming/Crofting	√√√
Forestry	√√√
Fisheries	√√
Food/drink	√√
Construction/building	√√
Transport	√√
Tourism	√√√
Education (arts)	√√√
Healthcare	√
Socialcare	√√√
Leisure	√√
Youth	√√√√√√√√
Elderly	√√√
Disabilities	√√√
Equalities	√√√
Crofting	√√√
Horticulture	√
Environmental	
Wildlife and ecology	√√
Biodiversity	√√
Natural heritage	√√
Cultural heritage	√√√
Energy conservation	√√
Renewables	√√√
Recycling	√
Pathways/cycleways	√√

Commercial	
Business start-up/development	√√√√√
Business finance	√√√√√√
Business support	√√√
Financial management	√√√
Economic development and analysis	√√√
Communications	√√
Sales	√
Marketing/promotion	√√
Website design/development	√√
IT systems/software	√√
Employment law and advice	√√√√
Training/skills development	√√√√
Mentoring/coaching	√√√
Voluntary/Community	
Voluntary sector	√√√√√√√√√√
Community representative	√√√√√√√√
Social enterprise	√√√√
Partnership working & networking	√√√√√√√
Funding	√√√√√√
Fundraising	√√√
Community ownership	√√√√
Community development	√√√√√√√√√√
Organisation Development	√
Project Development/Management	
Project assessment	√√√√
Project management	√√√√√
Project monitoring/evaluation	√√√√

Other – please give details of any other skills/knowledge/experience or interest that may be called upon to support delivery of the Programme

Gaelic, strategic planning, governance arrangements, H & S legislation, Employment legislation, previous deputy director and vice convenor of local authority, previous manager and chairman of Princes Youth Business Trust, Previous Commissioner Crofters Commission, Previous Member of Scottish Land Fund, Community Council chairman, chartered rural surveyor, active crofter, member of community council and village hall committee and grazing clerk, previous LAP chair, SRDP case officer, experience of community project management, Skye Ward Manager, STB/Visit Scotland experience, Visit Britain and Visit London experience, Skye business/visitor centre owner, previous LEADER/LAP experience, experience of working with European programmes delivered via HIE, access to wealth of Highland knowledge, information, experience through HIE network, personal experience of project development/management, finance, community/social enterprise, partner relationships, funding/fundraising, community and project planning, feasibility/consultancy work experience, land/building acquisition/development and facilitating partnership working experience, careers advisory support, customer employability skills, supporting vulnerable people, project planning, risk management, analysis, writing, governance of voluntary bodies, Isle of Skye Youth Forum member

To ensure that the Strategic Local Area Group meets the requirements set out in our Local Development Strategy, in terms of representing a good geographic and demographic mix of members, could you please provide the following information:

1) How would you prefer to describe your sex – please tick

Male	√√√√√√√√√√
Female	√√√√
Other	
Prefer not to answer	

2) Age Group – please tick

Under 16	
16 - 29	√√
30 - 44	√√√
45 - 59	√√√√√
60 - 74	√√
75+	√√

3) Geographic Area Represented – please enter

North East Skye, Broadford & Strath, Skye-wide, Portree & Braes, Trotternish, Staffin, Sleat, Skye and Raasay, Minginish

4) Do you consider yourself to have a disability? – please tick

Yes	
No	√√√√√√√√√√√√√√
Prefer not to answer	



Skills Matrix for Delivery of Highland LDS VIA SKYE LAP AREA RANKED THEMES AND OUTCOMES

Themes	Key Elements of Theme	Skills/Knowledge/Experience
Stronger and more resilient communities (1)	Higher quality of life Support for volunteers Encourage partnership working Better knowledge of what's available locally Project assessment to assess potential benefits	Voluntary sector Partnership working and networking Project management/assessment Funding Marketing Website development/training Equalities
Growing and diversified economy that promotes sustainability (2=)	More business start-ups Economic diversification Best possible visitor experience Extend tourist season New social enterprises Value added to local produce	Business start-up/finance/planning/development/support Financial management Economic development and analysis Employment law and advice Social enterprise Sectoral knowledge/experience
Increased and sustained local services and activities (2=)	Services and activities that make a difference to visitors and locals Increased community ownership and control Improved access (including transport) to services and activities	Public services (especially Health and welfare, Transport) Care of elderly Community facilities/ownership/broadband Website development Communications Equalities
Enhanced cultural, natural and heritage assets	Best possible access to assets Excellent marketing and websites	Voluntary sector Website development



(4)	Conservation of existing assets Development of new assets	Wildlife and ecology Cultural and built heritage Gaelic language and heritage
Cross Cutting Themes		Additional Skills/Knowledge/Experience not listed above
Fairer Highland – advancing equality (addresses equality issues or benefits people in groups that are underrepresented or disadvantaged)		From or representing underrepresented groups
Innovation (a new or different approach is proposed within the area)	Creativity Adapting	Innovation
Sustainability/legacy (the project outcomes will continue beyond the life of the project)		Project evaluation Voluntary sector
Carbon clever (the project can demonstrate a positive impact on the environment)	Energy efficiency Environmental protection	Energy conservation Renewables
Skills development (the project aims to expand the skills of those involved in implementing the project and/or its participants)	Training and capacity building Mentoring and coaching Collaboration	Training & skills development Mentoring/Coaching Partnership and networking
Outcomes		Skills/Knowledge/Experience
Increased community	Community owned and led services	Community development/ownership/engagement



<p>ownership/control of assets</p> <p>(2)</p>	<p>Increased community engagement with community development</p> <p>Income earning opportunities within the hands of local communities</p> <p>Community 'Right to Buy'</p> <p>Asset transfers</p>	<p>Business development</p> <p>Experience of right to buy/asset transfers</p> <p>Sales</p> <p>Training/Mentoring & coaching</p>
<p>Increased partnership working between groups (within and across areas, including intergenerational partnerships)</p> <p>(5)</p>	<p>Capacity development</p> <p>Communication/knowledge sharing</p> <p>Networking tools/shared learning events</p> <p>Mentoring</p>	<p>Partnership and Collaboration</p> <p>Communication</p> <p>Mentoring/Coaching</p> <p>Community Development</p> <p>Website</p>
<p>Increased employment opportunities locally through new business start-ups and existing business diversification/development</p> <p>(3)</p>	<p>Support for social enterprise</p> <p>Partnership within and across sectors</p> <p>Support for new businesses</p> <p>Training & employability skills</p> <p>Business infrastructure and efficient processes including supply chain</p>	<p>Social enterprise</p> <p>Partnership and Collaboration</p> <p>Business development/support</p> <p>Training and mentoring/coaching</p> <p>Sales</p> <p>Employment law and advice</p>
<p>People have better access to local services and activities</p> <p>(1)</p>	<p>Development of services</p> <p>Improving access to existing services and activities</p> <p>Improved transport – access and integration of transport schemes</p> <p>Improved internet access and websites</p> <p>Information sharing</p> <p>Promotion of inclusion, wellbeing and health activities</p> <p>Services for vulnerable individuals and families</p> <p>Community re-use and recycling</p>	<p>Sectoral experience – healthcare, transport</p> <p>Public services</p> <p>Recycling</p> <p>Website</p> <p>Business development</p> <p>Communication</p> <p>Equalities /From or representing under-represented groups</p> <p>Community development</p>



<p>Improved access for residents and visitors (physical and knowledge based) to cultural, natural and heritage assets</p> <p>(4)</p>	<p>Better pathways/cycle paths and linkages between sites</p> <p>Development of new sites</p> <p>Better knowledge/awareness through newsletters, websites, marketing & promotion</p> <p>Improved access to sites and assets</p> <p>Safe access and appropriate signage</p> <p>Local access to cultural activities</p> <p>Improved biodiversity and habitats</p> <p>Promotion of Gaelic language and culture</p>	<p>Pathways/cycle paths</p> <p>Sectoral experience – tourism</p> <p>Equalities</p> <p>Communication</p> <p>Website</p> <p>Natural and cultural heritage</p> <p>Wildlife and Ecology/Biodiversity</p> <p>Marketing/Promotion</p> <p>Gaelic</p>
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LAP Members Job Description

Members of Local Area Partnerships will be required to deliver agreed outcomes of the Highland Local Development Strategy at local level to ensure that the Highland LEADER 20014 – 2020 Programme delivers on the commitments. Key Responsibilities will be to:

- Develop a Local Area Action Plan (LAAP) which contributes to the themes, outcomes and outputs required to deliver the Highland Local Development Strategy, with focus on local target groups and priorities
- Supported by reports from the Programme Administrative Team, Monitoring & Evaluation Committee and Equalities Review Group, monitor and review delivery of the LAAP
- Make decisions relating to applications for funding
- Identify specific projects to address any gaps in contribution to the themes, outputs and target groups set out in the LAAP
- Promote and reinforce the seven LEADER principles of: area-based local development strategies, bottom-up elaboration and implementation of strategies, Local public-private partnerships (Local Area Groups), integrated and multi-sectoral actions, innovation, co-operation and networking
- Promote and raise awareness and understanding of issues
- Additionally, the LAP Chair will attend Strategic LAG meetings as an advisory representative of the LAP.

Person Specification

- Specific skills/knowledge/experience of at least one of the following sectors: agriculture, forestry, fisheries, tourism, education, small business/enterprise, natural/cultural heritage, community/voluntary, and/or
- Representative of youth organisations, organisations that provide services/support for the elderly or groups of people with protected characteristics
- Keen interest in rural regeneration in the Highlands and willingness to work in co-operation with other LAPs, FLAG, Enterprise Group and members of the Programme Administrative Team to deliver a successful Programme
- Capacity and time to undertake the role. The LAP will meet at least four times a year, in a central location: LAP members will be required to:
 - Read and review all material circulated prior to meetings, to enable be informed decisions to be made at the meetings
 - Attend all meetings, or where this is not possible, ensure that a named substitute attends (travel expenses can be reimbursed for private sector members)
 - Participate in electronic decision making or requests for comment between LAP meetings
 - Act as a two way communication channel between the LAP and local communities, to maximise engagement and interest in the Programme
 - Engage with individual projects which would benefit from the member's specific skills/knowledge/experience.



HIGHLAND LEADER (2014-2020) PROGRAMME

OPERATING GUIDELINES

1. Name of Local Action Group

Highland LEADER Local Action Group (LAG)

2. Objective

In line with the Highland LEADER Local Development Strategy, the Highland LEADER LAG will deliver the Highland LEADER Programme 2014 – 2020 Programme.

The Highland LEADER area will include all of the Highland Council area, except for the Settlement Development Area for Inverness (as given in the 2012 Inverness Local Plan) and the part of the Highland Council area within the Cairngorms National Park.

3. Structure and Composition

The LEADER Programme will be delivered through the Highland LEADER LAG, which consists of a strategic LAG and a suite of seven Local Area Partnerships (LAPs), a Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG) and an Enterprise Group. Local Area Partnerships will cover the following areas: Caithness, Sutherland, Wester Ross, Skye, Lochaber, Inner Moray Firth North and Inner Moray Firth South).

Two sub groups to the strategic LAG will also be established to advise on Monitoring & Evaluation (Monitor & Evaluation (M&E) Committee), and Equalities (Equalities Reference Group (ERG)). .

4. Governance

4.1 The Highland Community Planning Partnership (CPP)

The Highland LEADER Programme is a Highland Community Planning Partnership supported initiative which is central to the partners support for community development across the region and the place communities have in the delivery of the Highland Single Outcome Agreement 2013/14 – 2018/19.

The Board of the Highland Community Planning Partnership therefore have an active interest in the success of the Highland LEADER Programme 2014-2020 and have agreed that while the delivery of the Local Development Strategy (LDS) will be overseen and managed by the Strategic LAG, the Board will receive an annual report on progress. The Board's operational involvement with the Programme will be via the Highland Council, as accountable body.



4.2 The Highland Council

The Highland Council, on behalf of the LEADER strategic LAG, has agreed to be the accountable body for the Highland LEADER Programme 2014-2020. In doing so the Council has accepted delegated responsibility for administering LEADER finances under the terms of a Service Level Agreement that will be entered into with the Scottish Government.

The Council has also accepted that in being the accountable body it will be responsible to the Strategic LAG (including the Local Area Partnerships and the Fisheries and Enterprise Groups) for supporting the operation of the LEADER Programme and supporting the successful implementation of the Local Development Strategy.

4.3 Memorandum of Understanding

In order that all involved in the Highland LEADER Programme 2014-2020 are clear about their respective roles and responsibilities, it is proposed to prepare a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This will build upon the Highland LEADER Programme 2014-2020 Operating Guidelines and the positive and supportive working arrangements already established. The MoU will specifically address the relationships, roles and responsibilities between the:

- Council (as accountable body) and the Strategic LAG;
- Council/Strategic LAG and LAP's and Fisheries and Enterprise Groups

In addition, to aid understanding of the context within which the LEADER Programme operates, the MoU will set out the headline roles and responsibilities contained within the Scottish Government/accountable body Service Level Agreement.

The MoU will be subject to review during the 2014-2020 Programme period.

5. Decision Making

5.1 Application Approval

Local decision-making on local projects based on a local development strategy is the core principle around which the Highland LEADER Programme 2014-2010 will be based. This means essentially, decisions on pan Highland or strategic projects will be taken at the Strategic LAG and decisions on local projects will be taken by the respective LAP. This decision-making approach will be continued and complemented with the Enterprise Group making decisions on enterprise applications and the Fisheries Group making recommendations to Marine Scotland on fisheries applications.

Projects will be considered and assessed as part of a two phased approach, with the first phase being triggered by the submission of an Expression of Interest, allowing early consideration of project proposals by the strategic LAG, LAP's, Fisheries or Enterprise Groups. This will provide the opportunity to identify projects which meet the objectives of the local development strategy and to offer comments during the development of a project and before a formal application is completed and submitted for grant approval.



The Strategic LAG, each of the LAP's and the Enterprise Group will have authority to make grant award decisions on applications that come before them. As per Scottish Government guidance, the FLAG will make recommendations to Marine Scotland on grant award decisions.

Approval of Expressions of Interest and Applications will be assessed against agreed scoring templates

If for any reason any of the LAP's or the Fisheries or Enterprise Groups are unable to determine an request for funding, it will be referred to the Strategic LAG for a final decision.

If the LAP's, Fisheries or Enterprise Groups conclude that a specific project is required to deliver the Local Development Strategy, a partner organisation who is a legal entity, will be invited to develop a project proposal. Such a project will be considered in accordance with the established two phased decision-making process, but amended whereby the decision on grant award (or in the case of EMFF, the recommendation to Marine Scotland) is taken by the Strategic LAG. This division in decision making ensures that the project proposal receives the same level of scrutiny as any other project and cannot receive preferential consideration.

If the Strategic LAG is advocating that a strategic project is developed, a similar process will be followed but amended in that each of the LAP's will be asked to score the application. These scores will be presented to the Strategic LAG to inform their discussion – the final decision on grant award will be made by the strategic LAG. This will help ensure that any strategic project developed will receive local scrutiny and cannot receive preferential consideration.

If a grant award decision is taken by any of the LAP's or the Enterprise Group and the LEADER team have concerns over the propriety of the decision reached, the grant award will not be acted upon and the matter referred to the Strategic LAG Chair to determine whether the decision taken should be reconsidered or referred to the Strategic LAG for determination. This will also apply to recommendations that the FLAG make to Marine Scotland for grant award decisions.

5.2 Appeals/Complaints

Procedures for appeals will follow national guidance issued by the Scottish Government.

Complaints will be dealt with through the Highland Council complaints process:

http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/670/consultations_complaints_and_compliments/368/make_a_complaint

6. Operational Management and Delivery

6.1 Strategic Local Action Group (Strategic LAG)

The Strategic LAG will be responsible for the overall management and strategic direction of the LDS. It will monitor progress in the delivery of the Highland LEADER Programme 2014-2020 and either through direct action itself or through directing others ensure delivery of the LDS.

Membership of the Strategic LAG will reflect the aims of the LEADER Initiative regarding involvement of community representatives while achieving the necessary balance of statutory, private and community representation, i.e. 49% public maximum with the other 51% drawn from private/community representatives.

Initial formal voting members of the Strategic LAG (membership may change over life of the Programme) will be drawn from the following:



NFU

Tourism Sector

Forestry Sector

Federation of Small Businesses

Crofters Federation

Third Sector Interface

FLAG

Highlands & Islands Enterprise

Scottish Natural Heritage

University of Highlands and Islands

The Highland Council

NHS Highland

Initial advisory members of the Strategic LAG (membership may change over the life of the Programme) will **be** drawn from

Accountable Body Advisor

Visit Scotland

Forestry Commission

Enterprise Group

Representative from each LAP

Monitoring & Evaluation Committee

Highland Youth Convener

Highland Council Environment Manager

Equalities Reference Group

Programme Manager and Administrative Team
Members

Ad hoc Advisors, as required



Strategic LAG members will appoint a Chair and Vice Chair for a two year period, and will appoint/re-appoint the Chair and Vice Chair every two years. The Chair will not be a representative of the accountable body. Best practice will be that where possible the Chair and Vice Chair will not represent the public sector.

The Group will also complete a skills matrix to ensure that it includes representation from key sectors, and target groups which should be given priority for LEADER funding, as well as demonstrating a good geographic and demographic mix. Where any gaps are identified, the Group will call on specialist advisors and/or make a public call for additional membership (using the Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies, April 2012). This process will be repeated as required or at least every two years. It may be required if for example consideration of a specific project proposal requires specialist skills or knowledge.

Any requests to join the LAG will be submitted in writing, along with a completed skills matrix, and decided at the next meeting following receipt of the request and in line with the decision making process outlined below.

If a member of the strategic LAG or their substitute does not attend over three consecutive meetings, the presumption is that membership will be terminated at the discretion of the Chair.

The Strategic LAG's role will be to oversee the successful establishment and operation of the Programme throughout the Highland LEADER Programme area. In doing so it will;

- Meet at least 4 times a year (to be reviewed as appropriate)
- Approve, monitor and review as appropriate a financial strategy for the allocation of funding to achieve the aims of the LDS
- Consider reports from the Programme Manager and the Monitoring & Evaluation Committee concerning the delivery of the Programme. This shall include progress on applications received, approved, grant committed, grant claimed and progress on achieving the agreed output targets
- Consider annual reports, which will be forwarded to the Scottish Government as part of their monitoring and evaluation process
- Consider regular financial reports, which will detail expenditure, accrued on the administration and delivery of the Programme and on projects. These will reflect the information submitted to the Scottish Government as quarterly financial claims
- Maintain liaison with the UK/Scottish LEADER Network and ensure representation at its meetings
- Review progress made towards achieving targets set in the business plan and if necessary, issue revised guidance to the LAPs, FLAG and Enterprise Group to address any anomalies
- Advise on communication and publicity strategies

This Strategic LAG will:

- Take the lead on transnational/transregional aspects of the Programme; supported by the Programme Manager and Local Development Officers
- Seek a link to the Highlands & Islands Transitional Committee (HITC) to ensure consistency and added value
- Ensure the horizontal themes of Fairer Highland, Innovation, Sustainability/Legacy, Carbon Clever and Skills Development are adhered to
- Approve Local Area Action Plans which will be prepared by LAPs. The strategic LAG will, after consulting with the relevant LAPs, local groups, or equivalent, assess and approve project applications for individual pan Highland projects or projects that span more than two LAP areas.

Subsidiary groups of the strategic LAG should follow these operating guidelines or establish their own, which should be signed off by the strategic LAG in order to ensure consistency with the LEADER requirements.



As a minimum, operating guidelines for these groups should ensure compliance with LEADER requirements as set out in this document around:

- Membership
- Quorum
- Appeals/complaints
- Chair
- Declarations of Interest
- Decision making
- Delegated authority

And should provide for delivery of the functions as described below:

6.1.1 Monitoring & Evaluation Committee

The main function of the Monitoring & Evaluation Group will be to monitor, assess and report progress against the Monitoring & Evaluation Plan and to ensure that any actions agreed at the Strategic LAG are followed through.

6.1.2 Equalities Reference Group Equalities Reference Group (ERG) - advisory

The main functions of the Equalities Reference Group will be:

- Reviewing applications for projects that have significant equalities issues/impact and providing guidance to applicants, decision making groups and the LEADER Team, including recommendations on project specific conditions to address the issues/impact.
- Providing guidance and support to the LEADER Team in the development of processes, communications and guidance for applicants to ensure equalities issues are considered from the pre-application stage to project completion (for example in relation to Publications & Printed Materials, Websites, Community Engagement, Holding Public Events, Holding Training Events)
- To input to the ongoing EQIA process and monitor actions being taken to address issues arising
- To keep the Strategic LAG updated by reporting on any trends/key issues, and progress against EQIA actions.

6.2 Local Area Partnerships (LAPs)

LAPs will provide the local focus for the new LEADER programme, bringing local knowledge and expertise to determine prioritisation and the allocation of funding to project applications and facilitate delivery of the Programme. A transparent process should be used to establish these groups as agreed by the strategic LAG and the following guiding principle will need to be adhered to: groups must reflect public, private and voluntary sector interest in their area (49% public maximum with the other 51% drawn from private/community representatives) and must be able to demonstrate through the preparation of a local area action plan and its implementation a link with the Highland LEADER Plan.

Local groups will be expected to:

- Co-ordinate the preparation of and implement a local action plan for their area, which meets the aims of the Highland LEADER LDS



- Work with local groups to exploit opportunities offered through LEADER and other funding streams
- Meet on a regular basis (as a minimum 4 times per annum, to be reviewed as appropriate)
- Promote the Programme across area
- Assist and lead as appropriate with the development of local project proposals/plans
- Once the local action plan is approved consider and make decisions on applications seeking grant assistance.
- Ensure wide community involvement in line with the National Standards of Community Engagement
- Comment to the strategic LAG on projects which impact locally but are of a pan Highland or are of wider local area coverage
- Monitor delivery of LEADER funded projects and either through direct action via one of its partner organisations or through the encouragement of others, ensure delivery of the LDS

6.3 Fisheries Local Area Group (FLAG)

The FLAG will oversee the delivery of the European and Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF) funding in line with the integrated vision of the LDS, bringing local sectoral knowledge and expertise to determine prioritisation and the allocation of funding to project applications and facilitate delivery of the Programme. The FLAG will:

- Work with local groups to exploit opportunities offered through EMFF and other funding streams
- Meet on a regular basis (as a minimum 4 times per annum, to be reviewed as appropriate)
- Promote the Programme across area
- Assist and lead as appropriate with the development of local project proposals/plans
- Consider and make recommendations to Marine Scotland on applications seeking grant assistance.
- Ensure wide community involvement in line with the National Standards of Community Engagement
- Monitor delivery of EMFF funded projects and either through direct action via one of its partner organisations or through the encouragement of others, ensure delivery of the LDS

6.4 Enterprise Group

The Enterprise Group will oversee the delivery of the Rural Enterprise funding in line with the integrated vision of the LDS, bringing local sectoral knowledge and expertise to determine prioritisation and the allocation of funding to project applications and facilitate delivery of the Programme. The Enterprise Group will:

- Co-ordinate the preparation of and implement a local action plan , which meets the aims of the Highland LEADER LDS
- Work with local groups to exploit opportunities offered through Rural Enterprise funding and other funding streams
- Meet on a regular basis (as a minimum 4 times per annum to be reviewed as appropriate)
- Promote the Programme across area
- Assist and lead as appropriate with the development of local project proposals/plans
- Once the local action plan is approved consider and make decisions on applications seeking grant assistance.
- Ensure wide community involvement in line with the National Standards of Community Engagement
- Monitor delivery of projects awarded Rural Enterprise funding and either through direct action via one of its partner organisations or through the encouragement of others, ensure delivery of the LDS



6.5 Partners

Partner organisations across the community, business/third sector and public sectors, in addition to submitting representatives to the strategic LAG, LAP's and Fisheries and Enterprise Groups, will provide overall guidance on policy and project matters and, through its emphasis on ensuring a balanced representation of public sector agencies and community and the voluntary sector, to ensure a bottom up approach based on the ideas of local people, encouraging community involvement, partnership and innovation.

It is the responsibility of partners to communicate with other organisations in the sector which they represent. Organisations will be encouraged to appoint substitutes to attend meetings on their behalf if the usual representatives are unable to attend.

If the strategic LAG, LAP's, FLAG or Enterprise Group considers it necessary to encourage or facilitate direct action to deliver aspects of the LDS, the partners, or The Highland Council, may directly deliver a project/activity on their behalf.

7. Delegated Authority

Authority is delegated to the Secretariat, the Chair/Vice Chair of the LAG and the Accountable Body in respect of changes to approved applications. The following is a non-exhaustive list of example situations where this authority might be exercised:

- Where, during the course of an approved project, expenditure exceeds or is less than the indicative budget set, permission to switch budget between one budget head and another (referred to as project virement), may be granted by the Secretariat. Virement should only be considered if the existing purpose of the project is not affected, the change is complimentary to the project and or brings additional value to the project.
- Where the scale of the change exceed 10% of the total project costs the request for approval will be passed to the strategic LAG Chair and Vice Chair for authorisation. Where the changes are deemed to be significant the strategic LAG or LAP views will be sought.
- Where total project costs increase by up to 10% and provided the increase is within the spirit of the approval, the Programme Manager, Chair and Vice Chair will have delegated authority to approve this change. If the change is in excess of 10%, the request is passed to the original decision making authority for a decision.
- Where a project requires an extension to the finish date or a revision of project milestones the Secretariat may approve a change to that date.
- Where alternative, but sufficient, match funding is proposed, relative to the original application, the Secretariat may approve the necessary changes.
- Any matters of ambiguity around delegated authority will be referred to the Chair, Vice Chair and Accountable Body.

8. Additional Rules Of Procedure For The Strategic LAG

8.1 Conduct of Meetings

Meetings of the partnership will be arranged to ensure that they are as accessible as possible to all members of the partnership and that timing, venues and the need for video/ teleconferencing are suitable. Meetings will be arranged with a minimum of one month's notice where possible to avoid conflict with other commitments.

All meetings will be minuted (by the Secretariat) and approved minutes will be freely available and posted on the Highland LEADER website.



8.2 Chair

The Strategic LAG will appoint a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. At all meetings of the LAG, the elected Chairperson, or in their absence, the Vice-Chairperson shall preside over the meeting. The Accountable Body will not be appointed to the Chair or Vice Chair position.

If both are absent, partners will choose a member to preside. Members should respect the authority of the (acting) Chairperson who will decide matters of order, competency, relevancy and urgency.

The Chairperson's duty is to preserve order and ensure that all members/partners are given a fair hearing. Appointment of the Chair and Vice Chair will be reviewed every two years.

8.3 Quorum

The Strategic LAG will be quorate when there are at least 5 voting members present – 3 of which must be either community or private/third sector.

If more than 5 members are present, the required 51%/49% split between community/ business/third sector and public sector voting members must be achieved.

Where the meeting is inquorate due to the balance of public/private representation, but the requirement of 5 voting members has been met, the second vote of the Chair/Vice Chair may be used to count towards the quorum.

If members of the Strategic LAG are unable to attend a meeting, their named substitute should attend.

For purposes of the quorum, participation of partners by video-conferencing links will be considered as present.

Where a large number of LAG members declare an interest in an item, leaving the meeting inquorate for that item, the remaining members of the LAG shall be competent to debate and decide that item at the earliest opportunity, using whichever procedure is expedient.

If the meeting is not quorate no decision can be taken but at the discretion of the Chair/Vice Chair, the meeting can discuss and make recommendations which in turn can be circulated to the wider membership for a decision to be taken by written/electronic procedure.

Where a quorate response cannot be achieved (either at a meeting or by written procedure) then the LAG/LAP can continue to discuss the item and put forward their recommendation to the Chair and Vice Chair to determine. This approach will only be acceptable if the Chair and Vice Chair positions are not dominated by the Public sector, ie as a minimum there must be a 50:50 split between public and community/private representation.

Use of video conference/skype/telecommunications will be encouraged to overcome distance/travel barriers and aid discussions/decision-making by the strategic LAG, LAP's and Fisheries and Enterprise Groups.

The preference will always be to have meetings – be they in person and/or via video conference/skype/telecommunications to encourage dialogue and debate rather than taking decisions by written/electronic procedure; however, decisions taken by written/electronic procedure will be valid.



8.4 Declarations of Interest

REGISTRATION OF INTERESTS GUIDANCE

Conflict of interest is commonly defined as a situation that has the potential to undermine impartiality due to the possibility of conflict between individual or collective self-interest, professional interest or public interest.

The Local Action Group must therefore ensure the following requirements have been met:

The LAG must hold an up-to-date register of interests of LAG members

The LAG must make sure that no close relative of an individual applicant or an employee or representative of an organisation applying for funding can:

- (i) participate in the LAG decision making process
- (ii) score an application from that applicant (which, for the avoidance of doubt, may include the accountable body)
- (iii) be involved in any monitoring activities relating to the applicant

The following paragraphs set out the categories of interests, financial and otherwise, which you have to register. These are "Registrable Interests", and you must ensure that they are registered, when you are elected and whenever your circumstances change. **The register should cover the period commencing from 12 months prior to and including your current term of office.**

It is your personal responsibility to comply with these regulations and you should review regularly and at least once a year your personal circumstances. [Annex A](#) contains key definitions and explanatory notes to help you decide what is required when registering your interests under any particular category. The interests which require to be registered are those set out in the following paragraphs and relate to you.

Remuneration – to be completed IF you fall into one of the categories listed below and you may apply for LEADER funding from the Highland LEADER Programme.

- 1 You have a registrable interest where you receive remuneration by virtue of being:-
 - (i) employed;
 - (ii) self-employed;
 - (iii) the holder of an office;
 - (iv) a director of an undertaking;
 - (v) a partner in a firm; or
 - (vi) undertaking a trade, profession or vocation, or any other work.
- 2 You do not have a registrable interest simply because you are a Strategic LAG/LAP member.
- 3 If a position is not remunerated it does not need to be registered under this category. However, unremunerated directorships may need to be registered under category two "Related Undertakings".
- 4 If you receive any allowances in relation to membership of any organisation the fact that you receive such an allowance must be registered.



- 5 When registering employment, you must give the name of the employer, the nature of its business and the nature of the post held in the organisation.
- 6 When registering self-employment, you must provide the name and give details of the nature of the business. When registering an interest in a partnership, you must give the name of the partnership and the nature of its business.
- 7 Where you otherwise undertake a trade, profession or vocation, or any other work, the detail to be given is the nature of the work and its regularity. For example, if you write for a newspaper, you must give the name of the publication and the frequency of articles for which you are paid.
- 8 When registering a directorship, it is necessary to provide the registered name of the undertaking in which the directorship is held and detail the nature of its business.
- 9 Registration of a pension is not required as this falls outside the scope of the category.

Related Undertakings to be completed IF you fall into one of the categories below and the organisation may apply for LEADER funding from the Highland LEADER Programme.

- 10 You must register any directorships held which are themselves not remunerated but where the company (or other undertaking) in question is a subsidiary of, or a parent of, a company (or other undertaking) in which you hold a remunerated directorship.
- 11 You must register the name of the subsidiary or parent company or other undertaking and the nature of its business, and its relationship to the company or other undertaking in which you are a director and from which you receive remuneration.
- 12 The situations to which the above paragraphs apply are as follows:-
 - (i) you are a director of a board of an undertaking and receive remuneration - declared under Category one; and
 - (ii) you are a director of a parent or subsidiary undertaking but do not receive remuneration in that capacity.

Land and Buildings to be completed IF you own any buildings/land which may be used by an applicant applying for LEADER funding from the Highland LEADER Programme.

- 13 You have a registrable interest where you own or have any other right or interest in land and buildings, such as being an owner or a tenant, including Council tenant.
- 14 You are required to give the address of the property, or otherwise give a description sufficient to identify it.

Interest in Shares and Securities - to be completed IF the company or other body you have a registrable interest may apply for LEADER funding from the Highland LEADER Programme.

- 15 You have a registrable interest where you have an interest in shares comprised in the share capital of a company or other body and the nominal value of the shares is:-
 - (i) greater than 1% of the issued share capital of the company or other body; or



- (ii) greater than £25,000.

Gifts and Hospitality

No LAG member (including representatives or employees of the accountable body) may accept or offer gifts, hospitality or benefits to or from a third party that might be seen to compromise their personal judgement or integrity in carrying out their functions under the LEADER programme.

- 16 You must register the details of any gifts or hospitality received, however it is not necessary to record any gifts or hospitality as described below:

You are personally responsible for all decisions connected with the acceptance of gifts or hospitality offered to you and for avoiding the risk of damage to public confidence in the LAG/LAP. As a general guide, it is usually appropriate to refuse offers except:-

- (i) isolated gifts of a trivial character, the value of which must not exceed £50;
- (ii) normal hospitality associated with your duties and which would reasonably be regarded as appropriate

Non-Financial Interests to be completed IF you are a member of any categories as listed below and may apply for LEADER funding from the Highland LEADER Programme.

- 17 LAG/LAP members may also have significant non-financial interests and it is equally important that relevant interests such as membership or holding office in:

- public bodies,
- companies,
- clubs,
- societies
- organisations such as trades unions and voluntary organisations, are registered and described.

In this context, non-financial interests are those which members of the public might reasonably think could influence your actions on the LAG/LAP which could include any project approvals for other organisations.

Contracts

- 18 You have a registrable interest if any of the above apply to you and you have made a contract with the Highland LEADER Programme or any projects funded by the Highland LEADER Programme under which goods or services are to be provided, or works are to be executed

- 19 You must register a description of the contract, including its duration, but excluding the consideration.



ANNEX A

DEFINITIONS

1. "**Remuneration**" includes any salary, wage, share of profits, fee, expenses, other monetary benefit or benefit in kind. This would include, for example, the provision of a company car or travelling expenses by an employer.
2. "**Undertaking**" means: (i) a body corporate or partnership; or (ii) an unincorporated association carrying on a trade or business, with or without a view to a profit.
3. "**Related Undertaking**" is a parent or subsidiary company of a principal undertaking of which you are also a director. You will receive remuneration for the principal undertaking though you will not receive remuneration as director of the related undertaking.
4. "**Parent Undertaking**" is an undertaking in relation to another undertaking, a subsidiary undertaking, if (i) it holds a majority of the voting rights in the undertaking; or (ii) it is a member of the undertaking and has the right to appoint or remove a majority of its board of directors; or (iii) it has the right to exercise a dominant influence over the undertaking (a) by virtue of provisions contained in the undertaking's memorandum or articles or (b) by virtue of a control contract; or (iv) it is a councillor of the undertaking and controls alone, pursuant to an agreement with other shareholders or councillors, a majority of the voting rights in the undertaking .
5. "**A person**" means a single individual or legal person and includes a group of companies.
6. "**Group of companies**" has the same meaning as "group" in Section 262(1) of the Companies Act 1985. A "group", within s262(1) of the Companies Act 1985, means a parent undertaking and its subsidiary undertakings.
7. "**Any person**" includes individuals, incorporated and unincorporated bodies, trade unions, charities and voluntary organisations.
8. "**Spouse**" does not include a former spouse or a spouse who is living separately and apart from you.
9. "**Cohabitee**" includes a person, whether of the opposite sex or not, who is living with you in a relationship similar to that of husband and wife.
10. "**Chair**" includes Committee Convener or any person discharging similar functions under alternative decision making structures.



8.5 Order of Business

The main business of meetings will be to consider the progress of the LEADER Programme and strategic issues and, if required, to consider grant applications.

Notwithstanding this, the items of business will be considered in the following order:

- Those members present and apologies
- Declarations of interest by members
- Minutes of previous meetings will be considered as a correct record
- Matters arising
- Progress Reports
- Consideration of grant applications, as required
- Urgent business intimated at the start of the meeting
- Any other competent business included on the agenda
- Date, Time and Location of next meeting

8.6 Decision Making and Voting

Subject to compliance with the LEADER guidelines as laid down by the European Commission and the Scottish Government as the Managing Authority, all questions coming or arising before the meeting will be decided on a consensus basis or failing this by a majority of the members present.

Views from LAG members submitted in writing or by e-mail prior to the meeting will be accepted and included as part of the discussion.

While efforts will be made to seek a consensus decision, where this proves not possible a vote may be taken by a show of hands. In the event of a tie, the Chairperson will have a second or casting vote. In the case of subsidiary groups to the LAG, the Chair will also have the discretion to refer the matter to the LAG for a final decision.

In terms of scoring stage one and stage two applications for funding, voting members of the LAG present at the meeting will agree an overall score for each of the criteria laid down in the scoring template and this score will be minuted. Where a consensus score cannot be reached the paragraph above applies.

LAG members will be expected to individually score applications in advance of meetings. Where there are a high number of applications to be considered then scoring members will be paired up and will take the lead on scoring of allocated projects.

The presumption is that decisions on funding applications will be made following discussion at a meeting; however, in exceptional cases decisions on applications can be made by written procedure. In this case, two LAG members (at least one of whom will be from the private sector) will work together to agree scores for the application which will then be circulated to the LAG as a recommendation for a decision by written procedure.

8.7 Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called at any time if the strategic LAG or Secretariat receives a request from partners setting out the purpose of the business to be considered at that meeting.



GLOSSARY OF COMMON TERMS / ACRONYMS

Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) - provides funding for economic, environmental and social measures for the benefit of rural Scotland, as a 'pillar' of the Common Agricultural Policy (the other 'pillar' being to protect farmers' incomes). The SRDP is co-funded by the European Commission and the Scottish Government.

LEADER - LEADER is one of the EU funds under the SRDP aimed at promoting economic and community development, specifically in rural areas. This will include support for non-agricultural small businesses including farm diversification. 'LEADER' is an acronym based on the French Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Economie Rurale (or 'links between actions for the development of the rural economy').

European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) - this is the fund for the EU's maritime and fisheries policies for 2014-2020. It is one of the five European Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds which seek to promote a growth and job based recovery in Europe.

Managing Authority (MA) - is the body in charge of the management of the rural development programmes, whether at National or Regional levels. For the Highland LEADER 2014 – 2020 Programme, The Scottish Government is the Managing Authority.

Accountable Body (AB) - is the Group or Organisation with delegated responsibility for managing the LEADER Programme and administering LEADER finances, under the terms of a Service Level Agreement with the Scottish Government. Highland Council is the Accountable Body for the Highland LEADER 2014 – 2020 Programme.

Strategic Local Action Group (LAG) - is a broad-based local private-public partnership whose aim is to improve the long-term potential of the local area and who has the ability to define and implement a development strategy for the area, which is based on criteria set up at the programme level by the Managing Authority.

Local Area Partnership (LAP) - these are the seven local private-public partnerships across Highland who will develop Local Area Action Plans to set out local priorities for LEADER funding. Once the plans have been approved by the Strategic LAG, the LAP will meet on a regular basis during the LEADER programme to review project applications and determine which will receive LEADER funding in line with the priorities set out in that Plan.

Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG) - the FLAG is a private-public partnership across Highland who will develop a Fisheries Business Plan to set out Highland priorities for EMFF funding. Once the Plan has been approved by Marine Scotland, the FLAG will meet on a regular basis to review project applications and determine which will receive EMFF funding in line with the priorities set out in the Plan.

Enterprise Group (EG) - is a private-public partnership across Highland (and a sub group to the Strategic LAG) who will develop a Plan to set out Highland priorities for the proportion of LEADER funding that is earmarked for non-agricultural small businesses including farm diversification.



Equalities Reference Group (ERG) – is the group that will guide LEADER administrative staff, LAPs and applicants to ensure that plans are developed and implemented in line with the Highland Council’s ‘A Fairer Highland’ policy.

Local Development Strategy (LDS) - is the document drawn up by the Highland Strategic LAG for approval by the MA with a view to achieving objectives of one or more development themes which should contribute to the local development.

Local Area Action Plan (LAAP) - this is the plan that each LAP will need to develop. It will set out priorities for funding in the local area and the rationale for that prioritisation. LAAPs will be reviewed and approved by the Strategic LAG if they are satisfied that collectively the LAAPs for Highland will deliver the Highland LDS.

Service Level Agreement (SLA) - formal agreement between The Scottish Government and The Highland Council, as Accountable Body, setting out the arrangements for and terms of delegated authority in relation to the management and administration of the Highland LEADER 2014 – 2020 Programme.

Operating Guidelines - documents which set out how the Strategic LAG, LAPs, FLAG and Enterprise Group will operate. They will include decision making, operational management, authority levels and the conduct of meetings.

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) - document setting out the respective roles and responsibilities of those involved in the Highland LEADER 2014 – 2020 Programme. It will specifically address the relationships, roles and responsibilities between the:

- Council (as accountable body) and the Strategic LAG;
- Council/Strategic LAG and LAP's and Fisheries and Enterprise Groups

Remote Rural Area - is a settlement of less than 3,000 people AND with a drive time of over 30 minutes to a settlement of 10,000 people or more.

Accessible Remote Small Town - is a settlement of between 3,000 and 10,000 people AND with a drive time of over 30 minutes to a settlement of 10,000 people or more.

Rural Area – is a settlement of less than 3,000 people within 30 minutes’ drive time to a settlement of 10,000 people or more.

Data Zones – the country is split into geographic areas called Data zones. Each data zone has a population of between 500 and 1,000 household residents. Where possible, they have been made to respect physical boundaries and natural communities. As far as possible they contain households with similar social characteristics.

SIMD – this is the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. It is a tool for measuring deprivation. For the purposes of this toolkit, it has been applied to data zones, which have then been ranked from most deprived to most affluent. Identifying the number of data zones in an area, ranked in the lowest 15%, shows the areas with the worst concentrations of deprivation.



SSSI – is a Site of Special Scientific Interest in the UK, for example in terms of nature and geology. They are protected from development by legislation .

Social Enterprise – is a business or organisation with primarily social objectives, which applies commercial strategies to maximise human and environmental wellbeing by reinvesting surpluses in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for external shareholders and owners.

Micro Enterprise – is a business with less than ten employees (which includes self employed individuals) and a turnover or balance sheet total of less than two million Euros.

Community – is a group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic (e.g. interest, social group or nationality) in common and who often have a common cultural or historical heritage.

Farm Diversification – the development of new business activities to traditional farming, though new products or services, for example developing alternative agricultural products (fish farming, livestock or livestock products, crops), farm shops, training and promoting rural crafts such as dry stone waling, opening facilities for craft making and retailing, tourism i.e. offering camping/caravan sites, self catering or B&B.

Participant – a person(s) or organisation(s) participating in a training course or grant project or scheme

Beneficiary – applicant organisation which is the direct recipient of LEADER funding

