

HIGHLAND LEADER 2014 – 2020 PROGRAMME
SKYE STEERING GROUP MEETING
6:00 – 8:00 PM, 15 SEPTEMBER 2015, COUNCIL CHAMBER, PORTREE

Members Present:

Public – Stephen Varwell (SNH), Jennifer Macpherson (HIE), John Gordon (THC), Willie MacKinnon (THC – advisory/non-voting)

Private/Community – Meg Gillies (SLCVO), Roger Liley (PACT), Annie Davidson (Highlife Highland), Lachie MacDonald (L&SHA), Donald MacDonald (Staffin Community Trust)

Apologies:

Roddy Murray – Sleat Community Council

Calum Macleod – Broadford & Strath Community Council

In Attendance:

Liz Whiteford (Highland LEADER Development Officer)

Fiona Cameron (Highland LEADER Programme Manager)

WELCOME:

Stephen Varwell (chair) welcomed everyone and invited those present to introduce themselves.

NOTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

Unanimously accepted by those present.

SKYE LAP MEMBERSHIP:

Liz Whiteford explained the need for community council nominees to confirm whether they represented their community council or another organisation/sector so that she could correctly assess/record their LAP membership as public or private/community. To meet EU regulations, it is essential that the Skye LAP comprises of more private/community than public voting members.

No response yet to invitations for nominations from West Skye or the 16-29 year old age group. Jennifer Macpherson to pursue with any nominees invited to attend the next steering group meeting.

Annie Davidson to try to identify up to two youth representatives and to invite them to attend the next steering group meeting.

LOCAL AREA ACTION PLAN:

It was agreed to initially focus on 5 prioritised outcomes and to initially retain all the project types included in the draft LAAP under these 5 outcomes but to review this decision after 2 application/expression of interest cycles when it is better known what applications are coming forward.

Jennifer Macpherson to provide more information on what funding is already available for Broadband improvements in Skye and whether there are any Skye communities likely not to benefit from this funding and/or who will continue to experience poor/no internet access for which small scale investment might assist.

Indicative budget for Skye confirmed as £313,745.

The challenges associated with attracting and retaining young people and serving the needs of an increasing older population were noted but it was decided not to initially prioritise any specific target groups but to monitor and review this decision.

Further information awaited about Highland LEADER Strategic LAG's maximum grant intervention rates (which the Skye LAP hope will not be lower than 50%), and the regulations relating to State Aid, and given the requirements associated with applying for and administering LEADER grants, the Skye LAP would prefer not to consider LEADER applications for grant requests of less than £5,000 but this decision will be subject to review.

It was agreed not to initially set an upper limit to LEADER grant funding.

It was agreed not to differentiate between Public and Private/Community sector applications with LEADER grant support determined by the strength of individual applications including community support/legacy, etc.

It was agreed not to initially geographically target LEADER funding to any specific area of Skye.

It was agreed to offer 'in principle' grant offers limited to a maximum period of 3 months when they would lapse.

Liz Whiteford to amend the Skye LAAP to reflect decisions/amendments agreed.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting of the Skye Steering Group is to be held on Tuesday 3rd November from 6.00 to 8.00pm in the Council Chamber, Portree (or in the HIE Office, Portree if Council Chamber not available).

The agenda for this meeting will hopefully be to consider final Skye LAP Membership and what will hopefully be the final draft of the Skye LAAP with a target to submit it to the 25th November Highland LEADER Strategic LAG meeting for consideration.