

**HIGHLAND LEADER 2014 – 2020 PROGRAMME
WESTER ROSS, STRATHPEFFER AND LOCHALSH (WRSL) LAP MEETING
10:30AM – 12:30PM, 21 FEBRUARY 2017, ACHNASHEEN HALL**

Public Voting Members Present: Mary Gibson, Roddie MacKenzie,

Private/Community Voting Members Present: Fran Cree, Kristine Mackenzie, Amy MacDonald, Clara Hickey, Tristan Southall, Norma Ross

Advisory/Non-Voting Members Present: Robbie Bain, Lindsay Simpson

In Attendance: Liz Whiteford (LEADER Development Officer);

Apologies: Richard Greene, Biz Campbell, Ian Cockburn, Carla Lees

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS: AM welcomed everyone

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: No declarations of interest notified. Members were reminded that they should declare an interest as soon as one became apparent whether this is at the outset of a meeting or during it when the chairman would decide whether withdrawal from the room was necessary

NOTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING: Note of 9 November 2016 meeting (previously circulated) was accepted as an accurate record. Proposed by: Fran Cree / Seconded by: Clara Hickey

MATTERS ARISING and not arising elsewhere: discussed under other agenda items

DEVELOPMENT OFFICER UPDATE:

- EOI's received to date x 28 (see list)
 - Full applications approved to date x 1
 - Full application submitted/decision pending x 1
 - Other full applications released/in progress x 5
 - Potentially eligible LEADER community projects but not yet at application stage x 1
 - EOIs with outstanding LEADER queries and/or no recent contact following feedback x 11
 - EOIs withdrawn x 3
 - EOIs referred to Rural Enterprise x 6
 - Recent LEADER enquiries/no EOI as yet x 1
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- Members were notified that an enquiry about whether a community council (which was not operating when the LAP was established) could now nominate a representative to join the LAP. DO had responded indicating that any nomination should be submitted along with a biography of nominee's skills for consideration by the LAP. Members considered that joining the LAP at this late stage of the LEADER Programme might not be easy unless the proposed member had previous LEADER/LAP experience but that any nominations would be considered.
 - Because Highland LEADER grants are released on bank statement evidence of payment of project expenditure the Highland Council has recently agreed to make £250k available in cashflow finance to help support delivery of LEADER funded projects although it is expected that demand for this cashflow facility will be oversubscribed and that not all applicants who require cashflow support will be successful in securing it from this fund. It

is envisaged that finance will be available to successful applicants for certain “crunch” points in the project rather than being used to cashflow a whole project from start to finish.

- BREXIT will result in the Highland LEADER Programme coming to an end following the UK’s exit from the EU and the current best guess for the date of BREXIT is March 2019.
- LEADER applicants should therefore be aware that all Highland LEADER funded project activities should be completed by March 2019. Applicants intending to apply to the Highland LEADER Programme for grant funding should also do so as soon as possible.
- Prior to submitting a LEADER application, an Expression of Interest form detailing an outline of the project and its estimated project costs, LEADER grant request, etc must be completed/submitted to enable the LEADER eligibility of the project to be assessed. (<http://www.ruralnetwork.scot/funding/leader/expression-interest-form>).
- If LEADER eligibility is confirmed at Expression of Interest stage, an applicant would be invited to progress to a full application as soon as clearly defined project costs, project match funding and any required permissions/consents and security of tenure, etc, are in place.
- LEADER applicants should be aware that evidence of clearly defined project costs and match funding and, for capital projects, evidence of any required project permissions/consents and security of tenure should be in place **before** any LEADER application can be considered.
- The WRSL LAP are currently considering LEADER applications every 3 months with the deadline for receipt of applications currently set at 2 months before the relevant meeting date at which an application will be considered. The WRSL LAP’s remaining 2017 meeting and application deadline dates are as below.

FULL APPLICATION Deadlines	WRSL LAP MEETING Dates
23 March 2017 deadline	23 May 2017 meeting
29 June 2017 deadline	29 August 2017 meeting
28 September 2017 deadline	28 November 2017 meeting

- LAP Members agreed that applying to LEADER was not a simple process and that, for some community groups, successfully getting through the application process and claiming the funding would often be reliant on involving professional advisory support which was disappointing

PROJECT ASSESSMENT/SCORING:

- 11/P00011: Glenelg and Arnisdale Development Trust (GADT)
Glenelg Community Park application - £34,997.50

The Glenelg and Arnisdale Development Trust’s Glenelg Community Park application was assessed/scored and a LEADER grant request for £34,997.50 was approved – see appendix for assessment/scoring.

AOCB: No other business considered and AM reminded members of the next meeting date

FUTURE WRSL LAP MEETING DATES, VENUE AND TIMINGS:

- Tuesday 23 May 2017 - 10:30 to 12:30 – Achnasheen
- Tuesday 29 August - 10:30 to 12:30 – Achnasheen
- Tuesday 28 November - 10:30 to 12:30 - Achnasheen

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