

**Rural Community Led Local Development (RCLLD) Fund
Local Action Group (LAG) Meeting
Conference Video Call via Microsoft Teams
Tuesday 24th September 2024 1pm**

Present:

| | | |
|----------------|----------------------------------|-----------|
| Justine Tough | Buchan Development Partnership | (Private) |
| Gina Ford | Fintray Community Council | (Private) |
| David Hekelaar | Formartine Community Councils | (Private) |
| Bill Slee | Marr Area Partnership | (Private) |
| Gerald Banks | National Farmers' Union Scotland | (Private) |
| Amanda Roe | Aberdeenshire Council | (Public) |
| Duncan Leece | Banffshire Partnership | (Private) |
| John Loder | Formartine Partnership | (Private) |
| Dawn Tuckwood | NHS Grampian | (Public) |

Officers in Attendance:

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Moira Beverley | Investments and Projects Executive |
| Claire Mackintosh | Project Officer |
| Catriona Nicolson | Investments and Projects Officer / Project Officer |
| Martin Brebner | Team Manager |

Apologies:

| | | |
|----------------|----------------------------------|-----------|
| Aileen Longino | Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action | (Private) |
| Mike Duncan | Federation of Small Businesses | (Private) |
| Lorna Paterson | National Farmers' Union Scotland | (Private) |
| David Fyffe | Scottish Land & Estates | (Private) |
| David Jackson | Visit Scotland | (Public) |

1 Welcome & Apologies

1.1 The Chair welcomed those present and apologies were noted as above.

2 Declarations of Interest (DOI)

2.1 Gerald Banks made a declaration of interest regarding application CLLD016 Strichen Community Park RCLLD 2024.

2.2 Gerald Banks made a second declaration of interest regarding application CLLD019 Strichen Town House Upper Hall Finish Out.

2.3 Duncan Leece made a declaration of interest regarding application CLLD018 Boyndie Visitor Centre Retrofit Implementation.

2.4 Dawn Tuckwood made a declaration of interest regarding the commissioned project proposal for rural transport access pilot in the Banff and Buchan area, as NHS are a partner in the pilot. Dawn Tuckwood will not take part in any votes regarding this proposal.

2.5 Duncan Leece will not discuss or vote on any project due to conflicts of interest.

3 Minute of LAG Meeting (25 June 2024)

3.1 The LAG approved the minute from the LAG meeting on 25 June 2024. This was proposed by Duncan Leece and seconded by Dawn Tuckwood and Gerald Banks.

4 Minute of PAC Meeting (11 September 2024)

4.1 The LAG approved the minute of the PAC meeting on 11 September 2024. This was proposed by Bill Slee and seconded by Gerald Banks.

5 Paper 1 – Rural Communities Challenge Fund 2024/25 Project Assessment Report

5.1 Moira Beverley reported back to the LAG on applications for the challenge fund.

5.2 Dawn Tuckwood suggested she make contact with the applicants for project CLLD017 Midmar Men's Shed regarding some outstanding information, specifically on VAT.

5.3 Applicants were advised that match funding is not mandatory to apply for the fund, although it may be desirable. LAG members were advised to take into consideration that some applications may not have access to suitable funds to put forward as match funding.

5.4 It was also highlighted that, realistically, the LAG will have to make some decisions and approve projects that are deliverable within the timescale outlined in the fund. Unfortunately supporting projects that require more time to deliver, at this stage in the programme, presents a significant risk.

5.5 It was noted that several project applications for the challenge fund have also applied for the Just Transition Fund delivered by Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action (AVA).

5.6 Members discussed several other challenges in delivering the funding programme and aspects relating to these.

5.7 The LAG discussed various aspects of the proposed projects.

5.8 **CLLD016 Strichen Community Park RCLLD 2024**

5.8.1 Gerald Banks left the meeting while the LAG discussed project CLLD016 Strichen Community Park RCLLD 2024.

5.8.2 Individual equipment costs (in total come to £13,812) are below the Scottish Government (SG) level of £5K, are therefore are not eligible and are to be removed from the application. This would therefore reduce the overall costs of the application. Eligible costs would include the retrofit design suggested improvements and capital works. Confirmation will be sought regarding match funding and whether this is a percentage or exact value contribution.

5.8.3 The LAG voted as follows:

| Approve | Reject | Defer | Abstain | DOI |
|---------|--------|-------|---------|-----|
| 5 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 |

The LAG voted to approve project CLLD016 Strichen Community Park RCLLD 2024, with an adjusted figure based on the removal of equipment costs.

5.9 **CLLD019 Strichen Town House Upper Hall Finish Out**

The LAG voted as follows:

| Approve | Reject | Defer | Abstain | DOI |
|---------|--------|-------|---------|-----|
| 6 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 |

The LAG voted to approve project CLLD019 Strichen Town House Upper Hall Finish Out.

5.10 **CLLD008 Boyndie Visitor Centre Retrofit Implementation**

The LAG voted as follows:

| Approve | Reject | Defer | Abstain | DOI |
|---------|--------|-------|---------|-----|
| 6 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |

The LAG voted to approve project CLLD008 Boyndie Visitor Centre Retrofit Implementation.

5.11 **CLLD018 Project Windows 2024**

The LAG voted as follows:

| Approve | Reject | Defer | Abstain | DOI |
|---------|--------|-------|---------|-----|
| 4 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 |

The LAG voted to approve project CLLD018 Project Windows 2024.

5.12 CLLD006 Aboyne Games New Grandstand

The LAG voted as follows:

| Approve | Reject | Defer | Abstain | DOI |
|---------|--------|-------|---------|-----|
| 6 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 |

The LAG voted to approve project CLLD006 Aboyne Games New Grandstand.

5.13 CLLD001 Apex Centre Thermal Efficiency Enhancement Project

The LAG voted as follows, after further discussions regarding the project:

| Approve | Reject | Defer | Abstain | DOI |
|---------|--------|-------|---------|-----|
| 4 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 |

The LAG voted to approve project CLLD001 Apex Centre Thermal Efficiency Enhancement Project, with a recommendation that an energy audit be carried out on the building.

5.14 CLLD005 MERCHAT: Storm Resilience Project Tangleha to Johnshaven

The LAG voted as follows:

| Approve | Reject | Defer | Abstain | DOI |
|---------|--------|-------|---------|-----|
| 5 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 |

The LAG voted to approve project MERCHAT: Storm Resilience Project Tangleha to Johnshaven.

5.15 CLLD011 To replace degrading Foyer Window, rear window and leak

The LAG voted as follows:

| Approve | Reject | Defer | Abstain | DOI |
|---------|--------|-------|---------|-----|
| 3 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 0 |

The LAG voted to approve project CLLD011 To replace degrading Foyer Window, rear window and leak.

5.16 CLLD013 Redevelopment of Gordon Rural Actions Community Support Hub and Charity Shop Phase 3 – Masonry Works

The LAG voted as follows:

| Approve | Reject | Defer | Abstain | DOI |
|---------|--------|-------|---------|-----|
| 0 | 5 | 0 | 4 | 0 |

At this stage of the meeting the LAG voted against approving this specific application for masonry work . This is a complicated project with other match funders supporting. The LAG had concerns regarding the deliverability of the project, with regards to the masonry work element , within the timeline of the programme and outstanding queries regarding VAT and partial exemption.

However, the LAG enquired if it would be possible to split the application and concentrate on supporting Phase 3 internal works which could be completed within the timeframe . Of all the projects that were unsupported at the end of the meeting the LAG considered that this would provide most value for money.

Moira Beverley and Martin Brebner will follow up on the outstanding issues and VAT status and feedback any required decisions to the LAG via written procedure.

5.17 CLLD003 Corsee Woods Paths Upgrade

The LAG voted as follows:

| Approve | Reject | Defer | Abstain | DOI |
|---------|--------|-------|---------|-----|
| 5 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 |

The LAG voted to approve the project in principle, subject to the implementation of a suitable formal agreement (for example a lease covering permission for relevant works, access and use of land and timeline) between the forestry commission and applicant to safe guard project works.

5.18 CLLD004 Beannachar Community Space and Sensory Respite Room

The LAG voted as follows:

| Approve | Reject | Defer | Abstain | DOI |
|---------|--------|-------|---------|-----|
| 0 | 7 | 0 | 2 | 0 |

The LAG voted against approving the project at this stage.

5.19 CLLD014 The Forge Banff

The LAG voted as follows:

| Approve | Reject | Defer | Abstain | DOI |
|---------|--------|-------|---------|-----|
| 0 | 7 | 0 | 2 | 0 |

The LAG voted against approving project CLLD014 The Forge Banff at this stage, as the project needs further development.

5.20 CLLD017 Midmar Men's Shed

The LAG voted as follows:

| Approve | Reject | Defer | Abstain | DOI |
|---------|--------|-------|---------|-----|
| 0 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 0 |

The LAG voted against approving project CLLD017 Midmar Men's Shed at this stage.

5.21 CLLD002 All Weather Mitigation

The LAG voted as follows:

| Approve | Reject | Defer | Abstain | DOI |
|---------|--------|-------|---------|-----|
| 0 | 7 | 0 | 2 | 0 |

The LAG voted against approving project CLLD002 All Weather Mitigation at this stage.

5.20 Dawn Tuckwood left the meeting.

6 Paper 2 - Update on Commissioned Projects

6.18 Moira Beverley reported back to the LAG on Paper 2 Update on Commissioned Projects.

6.19 Duncan Leece reported to the LAG on the community transport project. The project will work with several partners, such as AVA and NHS, as a pilot that will be running in Banff and Buchan.

Statistics show that Wards 1 and 2, within Banff and Buchan, have the worst scores within Aberdeenshire for access to services. The overall pilot will run for approximately 2 years and aims to inform the transport transformation change that is taking place throughout Aberdeenshire Council. Laura Stewart is the project manager for the project. The Boyndie Trust has been asked to take the lead in operating the pilot, as a third sector organisation. The overall project was originally made up of two components. The first comprised of access to services and crisis support for families. This crisis support section has been removed from the application to the LAG for funds. The second component, that the LAG is requested to consider and support, encompasses access to services and facilities via transport. The project aims to improve the issues by complementing and working with existing support (for example prenatal and nutrient clinics) by supporting affordable targeting transport. The proposal will look to take lessons learned from year one and assess these throughout year two. This will feed into the wider Aberdeenshire transport transformation changes. Core budget has been confirmed for the project and therefore the project is already confirmed as going ahead. The core budget will not cover all the proposed aims and activities of the project for year one.

6.20 Duncan Leece left the meeting while discussions took place regarding the proposal.

6.21 The LAG discussed various aspects of the proposal. The project is to be considered under the Active and Connected Communities priority (which has an overall allocation of £49,999). Any funds awarded by the LAG to the community transport project will be deducted from the overall allocation and subsequently to other projects under the priority. It was felt the learning from the pilot could potentially be very valuable and would move forward, and complement, previous work on transport carried out during the 2023-24 programme. A progress update was suggested for the project to ensure reporting was produced and progress captured.

6.22 The LAG voted to support the community transport project.

6.23 Regarding Rural Youth Support proposals, suggestion was made to invite the TP&I Youth Engagement Worker to relevant officer discussions as a strong link with connected groups in relation to tackling poverty. The proposals were looked upon favourably and that support should be provided for these initiatives. In relation to pathways support, several strong paths groups already exist and suggestion was made to link these with the Aberdeenshire

Trail Association. A list of contacts is expected from Lilimar Simpson (Team Leader Youth & Communities). Any further information and decisions will be fed back to the LAG in due course (for example in a subgroup). The importance of communicating that support and funding will be given by the LAG specifically in relation to building volunteer capacity was highlighted.

6.24 The LAG agreed to accept the recommendations as outlined in Paper 2 and as follows:

- a) To offer support for the project “The Project Proposal for rural transport access pilot in the Banff and Buchan area” with an award to support up to five months of the project.
- b) To accept the suggestions from Community Learning and Development on how to support rural youth projects and agree for that the officers continue to work with CLD (£49,999)
- c) To accept the offer of support from the Tackling Poverties Group (£38,324.)

7 AOCB

7.18 A review of direction of the LAG and how this will look moving forward will be on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting. Concern was raised that a meeting in December is too late in the calendar year and should be actioned sooner.

7.19 It was highlighted that a stronger focus on outcomes for Community Led Local Development (CLLD) would be beneficial.

7.20 It was suggested to raise the topic of CLLD with the relevant rural policy group, coordinated by Scotland’s Rural College (SRUC), which feeds into the Scottish Parliament forum. Bill Slee will forward on relevant personnel contact details.

8 Date of Next Meeting

8.1 The next meeting is the full LAG meeting scheduled for Tuesday 17th December 2024.

Minute Taker

Catriona Nicolson