

APPROVED Minute of SALAG PAC Meeting
Tuesday, 23rd February 2016 at 2.00pm
Conference Room 2, Gordon House, Inverurie

Present

Belinda Miller	Aberdeenshire Council
David Nelson	Kincardineshire Development Partnership
Dawn Brown	Garioch Area Partnership
Dawn Tuckwood	NHS Grampian
Gavin Clark	Scottish Natural Heritage
Gerald Banks	National Farmers' Union Scotland
Gina Ford	Scottish Enterprise

Officers in Attendance

Martin Brebner	Team Manager – European Programmes & Policy
Alasdair Cunningham	European Programmes Co-ordinator
Flick Ibbotson	European Programmes Co-ordinator
June Jaffrey	European Programmes Claims Officer

Apologies

Moira Beverley	Aberdeenshire Council (Finance)
Neil Christison	Visit Scotland

Welcome & Apologies

Martin welcomed those present and round the table introductions were made.
Apologies were noted as above.

1. Declarations of interest

- 1.1 Forms were circulated in advance of the meeting with PAC members requested to complete these and return. Members who have not yet returned the completed forms are requested to do so.
- 1.2 The following declarations of interest were noted;
 - David Nelson – SALAG/2016/R1/004 – NEAT
SALAG/2016/R1/006 – Ringlink Internship
SALAG/2016/R1/007 – A Day Out At Kintore
SALAG/2016/R1/008 – Conversion to Operations
 - Dawn Tuckwood - SALAG/2016/R1/001 – Deveron Arts
SALAG/2016/R1/002 – Green Travel
SALAG/2016/R1/003 – Nature Kindergarten

- Gerald Banks - SALAG/2016/R1/004 – NEAT
SALAG/2016/R1/005 – Early Years in Nature
SALAG/2016/R1/006 – Ringlink Internship
SALAG/2016/R1/007 – A Day Out At Kintore

2. Introduction, Remit

- 2.1. Alasdair introduced the members to the PAC meeting.
- 2.2. LAG members were advised of the PAC remit in that the PAC purpose is to make recommendations to the LAG. The PAC may seek additional information from applicants in advance of the LAG meeting.
- 2.3. As Flick (North Co-ordinator) undertook the South project assessments she will give comment on each project providing a general overview on each project application, highlighting areas of concern and points for consideration.

3. Election of PAC Chair

- 3.1. Belinda Miller was nominated for PAC Chair by Dawn Tuckwood and seconded by Dawn Brown. The nomination was agreed by the PAC.
- 3.2. Belinda gave an overview on how the PAC will conduct its business and gave clarification on the Scoring (i.e. Scoring will be an individual score based on the knowledge held by PAC members).

4. Projects

- 4.1. The PAC are asked to consider the merits of each application for recommendation to the LAG.
- 4.2. **SALAG/2016/R1/001 – Place/Work/Folk (Deveron Arts)**

This project draws parallels with Ballater born Patrick Geddes's approach to community planning with today's society through this arts and cultural project. The project will consist of four artist-led thematic projects a year. Each comprising of: an artist residency education programme, a flag-ship event, a publication, 2 internships and evaluation. An experienced community artist will lead the programme.

Applicant required to provide information and expand on the following queries;

- Additionality – will the project go ahead without Match Funding
- Creative Scotland funding - evidence of ring-fenced funding required
- Funding sources - evidence of other funding sources requested
- Salary rates - justification for lead artist and local artist disproportionate rates
- Project expenditure - clarification required
- Geddes theory - clarity on the outcome of the Geddes link required
- Engagement - community involvement, demand and engagement with hard to reach groups to be evidenced
- Outcome – clarification on the actual outcome of the project

The PAC were required to score this project.

PAC SUPPORTIVE IN PRINCIPAL BUT RECOMMEND FURTHER INFORMATION BE REQUESTED FOR THE LAG MEETING.

4.3. SALAG/2016/R1/002 – Green Travel (Huntly Development Trust)

The applicant is looking to further fund green travel throughout the Huntly and AB54 area. Electric cars and e-bikes would be rented out promoting tourism, health and well-being and satisfying local transport needs. This project was deemed to be a good fit with the LDS regarding green travel and transport links.

The PAC felt the project application was incomplete. The Co-ordinator view was that there was no assurance of this application being for a separate discreet project but rather it being part of a wider programme and that the project may well have started.

The following were of concern to the PAC;

- Project commencement – it was unclear if the project had started or not
- Core costs - appear to be funded through this application
- Cash flow - figures needed re-working as there appears to be a funding gap
- Equality/Diversity - provision would require clarification i.e. no apparent multiple ability cars identified, powered wheelchairs etc.
- Match funding - is currently unconfirmed

The PAC concluded that the project was incomplete and ineligible therefore no scoring would be recorded.

THE PAC RECOMMENDED THE PROJECT AS INELIGIBLE.

4.4. SALAG/2016/R1/003 – Nature Kindergarten (Mucky Boots)

This project brings forward innovative solutions for funded childcare by providing a child led, outdoor learning environment for children age 3-5. Children would have year round access to woodland with most of the day being spent outdoors. Effort has been done by the applicant with a robust business plan being presented and cash-flow projections being submitted.

Overall, the PAC view was that this was potentially a good project, but there were many unanswered questions and that the applicant should be advised of the upper funding limit, requirement for formal match and registration of a food business.

Applicant required to provide information and expand on the following queries;

- Limited Company – not set up as such as yet, presenting high personal risk to the individual at present
- Match funding – not yet in place
- Projected income – appeared to be match funding necessitating a loan
- Project staff - transparent recruitment process required along with job descriptions
- Cash flow figures – do not add up nor match their funding request

- Amount requested – out with the upper £50k SALAG limit
- Demand – no evidence submitted on potential clients
- Lease of outdoor space – no formal agreement from landowner provided
- Funded places – clarity required on council funded places and clash with potential LEADER funding (conflict of public funding)
- Polices – no policies received on child protection or equalities

The PAC were required to score this project.

THE PAC RECOMMENDED THE APPLICANT BE ADVISED TO REWORK THEIR APPLICATION

4.5. SALAG/2016/R1/004 – NEAT Flick (North East Arts Touring)

NEAT supports community groups to run a subsidy scheme with this touring cinema to show films using community facilities across the Aberdeenshire in remote and semi-remote locations.

The grant required from NEAT is below the £5k lower limit set by the LAG. For comfort Alasdair discussed this application with the Scottish Government who advised it would be likely that the project application would fail the Additionality test.

It was felt by the PAC that as the figure requested was less than a 10% intervention rate it is likely that the project would go ahead without LEADER funding and that this project was possibly a continuation of existing core activities.

The PAC agreed that no scoring would be recorded.

THE PAC AGREED THE APPLICATION WAS INVALID ON THE BASIS OF THE GRANT THRESHOLD AND RECOMMEND REJECTION.

4.6. SALAG/2016/R1/005 – Early Years In Nature (North East Scotland Outdoor Learning Group)

This project would provide a training course for adults working in Early Years settings, e.g., social care, preschool and nurseries providing participants knowledge and understanding of the outdoor environment, enabling them to create outdoor play and learning opportunities in their own settings.

The training venue was identified as Camphill School, Murtle Estate, Aberdeen subsequently this location rendered the application invalid.

It was suggested that the applicants be made aware that contacting the Forestry Commission would be the best approach to support this type of project.

The PAC agreed that no scoring would be recorded.

THE PAC AGREED THE APPLICATION WAS INVALID ON THE BASIS OF THE PROJECT BEING OUT WITH THE SALAG AREA AND RECOMMEND REJECTION.

4.7. **SALAG/2016/R1/006 – Ringlink Internship (Ringlink)**

This project aims to reverse the decline in the rural workforce by providing an agricultural and land-based internship programme. The organisation has successfully ran a three year pilot internship programme and are looking to build on the success of this. Ringlink are no longer in a position to co-ordinate a future programme without additional funding for the staffing infrastructure to drive the project forward. The previous LEADER programme did not allow for certified training projects but it was confirmed that this is no not an issue for this application. The PAC view was that this was potentially a good project given the aging farming workforce and assisting young adults overcoming obstacles into farming.

The application requests funding of £58k – this is over the SALAG agreed funding cap of £50k for businesses.

Applicant required to provide information and consider the following;

- Match funding – evidence required although match is confirmed
- Staffing – salary information required along with job descriptions etc.
- Knowledge Transfer and Innovation fund (KTIF) – evidence of conversation required on the lack of fit with KTIF
- Training – only to be delivered in South Aberdeenshire farm locations
- Bank balance – clarification on funds available for this project
- Project costs to be revised – due to South location restriction
- Time-sheeted activity – would be required in order to evidence where the training takes place

The PAC were required to score this project.

THE PAC WAS SUPPORTIVE IN PRINCIPAL BUT RECOMMEND FURTHER INFORMATION BE REQUESTED FOR THE LAG MEETING.

4.8. **SALAG/2016/R1/007 – A Day Out In Kintore (Royal Northern Agricultural Society)**

The project is a repeat of an earlier, successful Countryside Live event to engage with farmers, visitors and school children by promoting all kinds of farming and land management, crop quality, livestock welfare and farming practice. The event is scheduled to happen in May 2016. The project fits well with the Local Development Strategy.

It is unclear if the project has already started given that an event of this size would have required planning and agreements with costs incurred prior to the application submission.

Queries were raised regarding the following;

- Additionality – will the project go ahead without LEADER funding?
- Procurement – clarification required on the tendering, quotes and costings provided along with venue and staff time queries.

- Advertisement – event appears to be widely advertised therefore the project has started; clarity sought on this
- Costs incurred – written evidence would be required advising that no costs have been incurred to date

The PAC were required to score this project.

THE PAC RECOMMEND THAT THE APPLICANT WITHDRAW THE APPLICATION.

4.9. **SALAG/2016/R1/008 – Conversion To Operations (Stonehaven Town Partnership)**

This project is for the conversion of an old Court Building, of historical interest, in Stonehaven with STP who, after conducting a Feasibility study, will develop and rent out office space to the community after conversion. The local development trust are taking on a building of this nature to convert and let office space out to community organisations and small businesses. The project will cover costs associated for a Project Manager who will oversee the refurbishment of the building. Prospective tenants have been identified.

The PAC felt the project was invalid as it stood currently based on what they have asked for.

Queries were raised by the PAC regarding the following;

- Building – the group are not in control of the asset
- Match funding – no confirmation, evidence required
- Costings – not factually based
- Financial projections – clarity required as it appears projections are only valid for the building after its development
- Cash flow – none identified for the duration of the project
- Costs – do not appear to match the project description
- Project – ineligible as not yet at planning application stage
- Feasibility Study – project does not identify which direction the group are taking from the outcome of the study

The PAC were agreed that they would not score.

THE PAC RECOMMEND THE APPLICATION BE DEFERRED.

4.10. **SALAG/2016/R1/009 – St James Church (Stonehaven Town Partnership)**

This group is looking to provide a history tourism project by developing a Grade A listed church. The project is dual aspect with exhibitions on the history of the Episcopal Church being displayed and the church organ being the other display. The project will also include building refurbishment works.

The application was considered to be incomplete and not yet ready for PAC assessment. As the application was not fit for purpose it was agreed that the

applicants be advised on the following areas for consideration when reworking their application;

- Building consents – not in place, nor evidence of application
- Match Funding – not in place
- Project vision – was unclear
- Cash flow/Milestones/Polices – not submitted
- Accounts – only partial accounts submitted

The PAC agreed that no scoring would be recorded.

THE PAC RECOMMEND THE APPLICATION BE DEFERRED.

4.11. SALAG/2016/R1/010 – Indoor Riding and Driving Arena (Strathorn Farm)

The project is a farm diversification type project expanding and developing their riding school business. To include creation of an Indoor riding and Driving Arena for use by Garioch Carriage Riding for the Disabled and other users. They are also looking to build up their business with the enhancement of the indoor arena.

It was noted on the application that the project is likely to go ahead without LEADER funding; bringing into question additionality with regard to the basis for LEADER funding application. PAC members felt quantification on the added value with the LEADER funding would be useful.

Applicant required to provide information and expand on the following queries;

- Planning permission – not yet submitted for their plan of work
- Cashflow – profit and loss projections for a 3rd year would be beneficial
- Retirement – clarification required on the ownership of the project/business i.e. a succession plan is required
- Engagement – further information required on community engagement i.e. who can access the facility
- Quotes – further quotes required
- Finances – clarification on current finances required

The PAC were required to score this project.

THE PAC WAS SUPPORTIVE IN PRINCIPAL BUT RECOMMEND FURTHER INFORMATION BE REQUESTED FOR THE LAG MEETING.

5. Next Steps

5.1. Alasdair advised that project applicants will be informed in writing of the PAC's outcome.

5.2. Applicants will be requested where necessary to submit further information to the PAC in advance of the SALAG meeting of Tuesday 22nd March 2016.

6. AOCB

- 6.1. Scoring sheets are required to be completed and submitted to the SALAG@Aberdeenshire.gov.uk email address by Monday 29th February.
- 6.2. The PAC were advised that all applicants would be required to provide data relating to the outputs in the Local Development Strategy; this wasn't clear in the government application form. This will align outputs recorded.
- 6.3. The PAC were asked to consider changing the meeting date of 23 August 2016 to 30 August 2016 – the PAC were in agreement with this change request.
- 6.4. Clarity was sought on the level of interaction with project applicants and Co-ordinators in advance of applications being submitted. Alasdair advised that this varied by project but on the whole little prior contact had been made by some applicants.
- 6.5. The Chair reminded all present that the discussions and outcomes of today's meeting were to be treated as confidential and not for wider discussion.
- 6.6. A request was made for SALAG member application forms to be recirculated in order for amendments to be made regarding member substitutes and deputies.



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