

**LEADER + (SCOTLAND)**  
**PROGRAMME MONITORING COMMITTEE**  
**Tuesday 10 May 2005, New Lanark Mill Hotel, South Lanarkshire**

**Present**

Brian Wither (Convener)	Scottish Executive
Frank Burns	South Lanarkshire LAG
John Grieve	UK Leader+ Network
Bryan McGrath	Scottish Borders LAG
Joyce Simpson	Cairngorm LAG
Jane Thomas	Northern Isles LAG
Sheila Scobie	Scottish Executive
Gillian Dalgetty (for Tony Fitzpatrick)	Dumfries and Galloway LAG
Neil Ferguson	Scottish Enterprise

**In attendance**

Neil Bain	European Commission
Wilma Garbett	Scottish Executive
Lynsey Morgan	Scottish Executive

**Apologies**

Frank Gaskill	Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Richard Robinson	Scottish Natural Heritage
Helen Betts-Brown	SCVO
Jim Millard	Scottish Executive

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

1.1 The Convener opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to New Lanark Mill Hotel. A warm welcome was extended to Neil Bain, who replaces Tanja Viljanen as desk officer for Leader+, and to Sheila Scobie, who represents SEERAD. He also welcomed Gillian Dalgetty, substituting for Tony Fitzpatrick.

1.2 The Convener noted apologies from Jim Millard, Richard Robinson, Helen Betts-Brown and Frank Gaskill.

**2. Matter arising**

2.1 The Convener confirmed that all Action Points from the last meeting had been completed.

### **3. Minute of last meeting**

3.1 (2.7) The Convener clarified the discussion held at the last PMC regarding the absence of representatives from SEERAD. He stated that the PMC requested that the discussion be noted.

3.2 (3.4) Joyce Simpson asked that the final sentence be amended to read:

“In addition, he stated that local authority administrative processes are not always appropriate for LAGs and can result in delays in payment.”

3.3 (6) Sheila Scobie sought clarification on the Leader Post 2006 Conference. The Convener confirmed that, at the time of the last PMC, the conference was aspirational and after planning became the Airth event. He confirmed that the conference was a joint SEERAD / LRP event and that this would be reflected in the minute for this meeting.

3.4 (8.2) Jane Thomas stated that she continued to experience difficulties accessing the UK Leader+ website. John Grieve confirmed that feedback regarding access problems have decreased and there appears to be greater satisfaction with the site. The Convener suggested that Jane contact Ros McNay at Dumfries and Galloway LAG, who sits on the website user group.

3.5 The minute was agreed with the suggested update from Joyce Simpson.

### **4. N+2 Update**

4.1 The Convener confirmed that the target was met at Scotland level in November 2004.

4.2 Two papers were tabled. The first detailed the financial picture to December 2004. The second detailed actual expenditure to December 2004 and estimated expenditure to September 2005 against the N+2 target for this year.

4.3 The forward look suggests that the N+2 target for 2005 will be met by September 2005. The Convener informed members that he will be meeting with North Highland and East Fife to discuss their progress against their individual N+2 targets.

4.4 The Convener confirmed that the tables do not include commitment under Action 3 and Technical Assistance, and expenditure under both will contribute to the total N+2 target.

4.5 Bryan McGrath sought clarification on whether the figures tabled included advance payments to LAGs. The Convener confirmed that the financial picture is better than the tables suggest as the figures do not include advance payments and are based on expenditure only. He asked that members remind LAGs that the N+2 target must be met by September 2005.

4.6 The PMC asked that a letter be issued to all LAGs congratulating them on their combined efforts resulting in the Programme meeting the target at Scotland level.

**Action Point – Brian Wither to send letter to all LAGs**

## **5. Allocation of Action 1 funds**

5.1 The Convener confirmed that bids were received from all LAGs and, following Ministerial approval of the recommendations, all LAGs had been informed of the revised budgets. He informed the meeting that the additional allocation was not fixed and will be reviewed annually against progress.

## **6. Mid Term Evaluation Update**

6.1 John Grieve outlined progress to date. He confirmed that the draft socio-economic analysis had been completed, and expected the research phase to be completed in May.

6.2 He confirmed that interviews with LAGs were almost complete and that the volume of information provided was significant. He noted that a comprehensive analysis of data was challenging given the resources available to RDC and Fraser Associates. He expected a final draft report to be available from mid-June.

## **7. AIR**

7.1 The first draft of the 2004 AIR was emailed to members on Friday 6 May. The Convener asked that members consider the draft and make comment by 13 May.

7.2 Members discussed the earning data included in the draft.

7.3 Neil Ferguson sought clarification as figures suggested that certain targets were not being met. The Convener clarified that certain targets would not be met until the end of the Programme. He suggested that there may be differing interpretations of how to report outputs against indicators as certain targets were being significantly exceeded.

7.4 The Convener confirmed that the revised SPD tables had been approved. The Programme Complement will be amended but revised targets will not be amended until the mid term evaluation completed..

7.5 The Convener informed members that the final draft will be circulated for approval by written procedure by Friday 27 May and submitted to the Commission by the end of June.

## **8. UK Network**

8.1 John Grieve confirmed that the attendance at Network events has become quite strong with an increasing number of LAGs participating.

8.2 Previous events:

### **Wales – Anglesey – Beaumaris – National workshop – Development of innovation**

A very successful national workshop was held in Beaumaris in Anglesey focusing on the development of innovation, advanced planning, 6 Scottish groups were present, two LAGs made short presentations.

## **Northern Ireland – Armagh – National workshop – Building LAG capacity for post 2006**

A UK workshop for LAG members was held in Armagh in early March, the theme was Building LAG Capacity for post 2006, representatives of 8 Scottish LAGs attended. John was involved in the design of the programme and presented a perspective on LEADER in the UK Post 2006 highlighting the challenges to LAGs. Workshop discussion of this resulted in a commitment to holding some form of event with LAGS to develop their involvement and input to the new Scottish RDP process (and in the other parts of the UK).

8.3 Two large scale events have been instigated through Network activity, the Airth Summit (for LAG, LRPs and agencies) and the Birnam LAG event LEADER Post 2006: Developing Input. In both cases we were successful in securing additional funding and support which allowed these important events to be delivered, a further LAG event is planned for early August.

8.4 Forthcoming events

### **LAG Co-ordinators meeting**

The next meeting of LAG co-ordinators will be held at the event in Peebles on 21 – 23 June, with a meeting being arranged for Shetland in September.

### **Post 2006 follow up event**

Discussion continue with SEERAD around how Leader+ will go forward post 2006, with the possibility of a follow up to the Birnam event being held late this year.

## **9. AOB**

9.1 The PMC agreed to grant delegated authority to the Managing Authority to approve previous and forthcoming Technical Assistance application for information workshops for LAGs.

9.2 The PMC discussed the current structure of monthly, quarterly and annual reports required by the Scottish Executive. Members raised concerns about the pressure on smaller LAGs to meet reporting requirements. The Convener explained the function of the reports and clarified the reporting requirements of the Commission.

9.3 Members raised the issue of the 15% cap on administrative costs. The Convener confirmed that the 15% cap was fixed but that LAGs could find additional public funding for administrative costs.

9.4 John Grieve informed the meeting that English LAGs had raised issues around administrative costs through the MTU. He confirmed that any issues highlighted through LAG interviews will be reported in the MTU.

9.5 The Convener suggested that LAGs experiencing difficulties should contact the Scottish Executive, but that issues should be raised at LAG level to investigate the availability of more resources for administration.

9.6 The Convener confirmed that these issues will be discussed as part of the Article 4 checks to be conducted by the Scottish Executive.

**Action Point: Brian Wither to review reporting requirements to consider if streamlining is possible**

**Action Point: John Grieve to look at the issue of administration in greater detail as part of the MTU.**

9.7 Joyce Simpson asked SEERAD to report on the progress of plans for Leader+ post 2006.

9.8 Sheila Scobie confirmed that SEERAD do not expect a gap in Leader activity following the hand over, but that they recognise a need for capacity building in areas not currently covered by Leader+. She confirmed that SEERAD would be undertaking a consultation on the development of the SRDP.

9.9 Bryan McGrath asked that a PMC representative be included in any key stakeholder groups.

**Action Point: Brian Wither to propose Bryan McGrath as PMC representative on the stakeholder group.**

Next meeting Tuesday 11 October in Glasgow. Scottish Executive to confirm venue.

SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE  
JUNE 2005