


## LAG Meeting

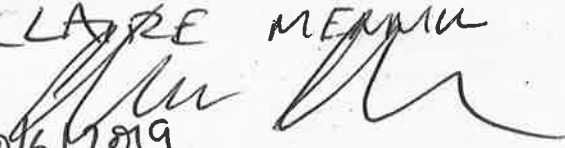
Date and Venue: 14<sup>th</sup> March 2019, Glenbervie Golf Club, Larbert

<b>Present</b>	Ian Howarth (Chair)	Falkirk community	Non Public
	Claire Mennim	Falkirk Community Trust	Non Public
	Mike Ewart	Central Scotland Green Network Trust	Non Public
	Victoria McRae	CVS Falkirk & District	Non Public
	Ian Jarvis	Friends of Kelvin Valley	Non Public
	Paul Bishop	East Dunbartonshire Heritage & History	Non Public
	Ellen Archibald	North Lanarkshire Council	Public
	Neil Christison	Visit Scotland	Public
<b>Attending</b>	Tom Rutherford	Programme Manager, Falkirk Council	
	Rachel Sedman	Development Officer, Falkirk Council	
	Ross Wilson	Business Support - Falkirk Council	
	Jenny Fenwick	Crowdfunder (Scotland)	
<b>Apologies</b>	Pete Reid	Falkirk Council	Public
	Lynne Cooper	Scottish Enterprise	Public
	Frances Tonner	East Dunbartonshire Council	Public
	Katie O'Donnell	Scottish Waterways Trust	Non Public

### Minutes Approved by (at subsequent LAG meeting):

Name: *MICHAEL BOWMAN*  
Signature:   
Date: *20/6/2019*

### Minutes Seconded by (at subsequent LAG meeting):

Name: *CLAIRE MENNIM*  
Signature:   
Date: *20/6/2019*

	Action
<p><b>1.0 Welcome and apologies and assessment of quorum:</b></p> <p>IH opened the meeting and welcomed those in attendance Apologies were noted from PR, FT, LC and KO'D. TR confirmed this meeting is fully quorate.</p> <p><b>2.0 Previous Minutes and Matters Arising:</b></p> <p>IH asked the Members for any corrections to the draft Minutes from the previous LAG Meeting. With no changes indicated, the minute was agreed around the table. Subsequently, the minute was proposed by CM and seconded by VMcR.</p> <p>There were no matters arising that won't be dealt with later this meeting.</p> <p><b>3.0 Members Declaration of Interest:</b></p> <p>TR confirmed the only conflicts of interest was for CM and the Kinneil Hidden Heritage Project, of which FCT/CM is the applicant.</p> <p><b>4.0 LDS/Governance update, including change to Governance rules:</b></p> <p>TR explained that a change to the Business Plan/Constitution had been proposed due to the LAG potentially only having a small number of projects to assess and/or having the need to assess projects quickly, should extra budget become available to KVF LAG. Other LAGs are able to approve projects by written procedure, and have this phrase inserted into their constitution, "LAG decisions can be quorate through written procedures - i.e. decisions can be mandated by email"</p> <p>Everyone felt the change would be a good thing as the ability to do things by e-mail would be easier, and would only be used if required. The change is not part of LDS, just part of the business plan.</p> <p>There may be the need for an additional meeting to ratify the minute but TR will check this with the Scottish Government, with the aim of getting it in place before May.</p> <p>Noting there was no opposition to the change, IH advised this was therefore passed accordingly.</p> <p><b>5.0 Programme Update:</b></p> <p>Contracted LAG funds are £2,119,672.49. This meeting is now looking at spending Admin money that we have calculated will not be required. Our admin calculations have taken into account the new local authority pay deal and, as advised by Scottish Government, the staff will be</p>	<p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p>TR to check with SG if additional meeting required.</p> <p>TR to change the Business Plan / Constitution</p>

contracted to March 2021.

This leaves approximately £150,000 available to allocate to projects today. LAG Members were comfortable with this assessment of the finances.

## 6.0 Scottish Government update: Accountable Bodies meeting, Co-ordinators meeting:

IH and TR attended the LEADER 25 celebration at Holyrood. All MSPs for LAG area were invited but sadly not many turned up. Mairi Gougeon MSP said she was keen to see things “on the ground” and it was proposed we invite her for a tour of Kelvin Valley as it is a different kind of ‘rural’ to the areas she was talking about at the reception.

The key message from Scottish Government is the need to spend and claim. Targets have been set and KVF is on track to meet these.

Since January, we have hit all our milestones and can see which projects are trailing behind on LARCs. We are also getting through some of the big claims.

The main points from the most recent Accountable Bodies meeting was that all co-operative projects are to be contracted by March 2019 and all other projects by June 2019. The funding re-allocation process should be fast but we have no further details at present.

Referring to the pie chart / papers handed out, TR confirmed that the we are spending above and beyond our profile targets and are in the top 5 performing LAGs in Scotland.

IH feels it is very satisfactory as to how we have performed as a new LAG.

We would like to bid for more for the Canal project (co-operation). IH felt the project should “tick all the boxes” when it came to extra funding being agreed.

ME asked about more clarification on the timescales and also if the re-allocation of funds can only be for co-operation projects. TR said that present co-operation needs committed by the end of March. After that, any money in the general fund afterwards needs allocated by the end of June. TR pointed out Steps 1-5 on the final page of the handout and said that while it was a bit “wooly”, at least they had thought about it. TR advised that although SG were committed by the EU to spend 5% on co-operation, the EU looks at targets in terms of the UK and there have been no co-operation funds spent in England.

RS advised that Highland had recently indicated they would be unable to spend all their allocated co-operation money. TR felt that there might be more feedback from another meeting being at the beginning

TR to contact Mairi Gougeon

of May.

In regards to the future of LEADER, IH advised the Minister had indicated she would fight the LEADER corner and she was fully committed to this. In terms of the UK Prosperity Fund it is clear that what DEFRA wants for England is not the same as the Scottish Government and ourselves want for Scotland. We will need to lobby to ensure our voice is heard.

## 7.0 Approved Projects update:

3 Kings (Sheildhill) had been delayed for a year due to SEPA issues. During this time the costs and VAT status changed, so a new Offer Letter was drawn up and signed, keeping the grant amount the same, and changing the % intervention by approximately 1%. The project construction works have now started and will finish in the summer.

Bridge over Carron - the final costs were greater than originally applied for, so in order to complete the project and grant claim in the smoothest and most sensible way possible, a new offer letter was issued reflecting the new costs, keeping the grant amount the same and changing the % intervention, fairly drastically lower (from roughly 42% to 27%) than it was before. This increases the amount of match funding required (which had been secured before the project started) and makes our funds leveraged in stats look good too.

STS CIC (Bo'ness) now have their match funding and planning and have sought quotes for the work. They are just ironing out the final issues, such as what Council are doing with the rest of the site. They are also awaiting a building warrant. Once these details are complete, LARCs will be updated with the new timescales.

Central Canal Co-operation project - RS advised there had been a recent conference call between the key people involved as well as a Stakeholder meeting in January. The project has been split into 5 key areas - website marketing/branding; facilities mapping; infrastructure; events and connections/accessibility. In terms of the Visit Scotland/Sustrans micro sites, RS advised this partnership were trying to create "go-to" places for cycling advice as well as links to local amenities. Richard Millar has very much bought into this idea as well.

IJ said it was important to ensure people using the Canal are aware of what amenities are just off the Canal in order to maximise use of local facilities/businesses. In terms of signage, he said some of it had been there for decades and had survived well and some had not. PB argued against excessive signage but felt there was an enormous amount of stuff (historical etc) that could be brought to peoples' attention when on or around the Canal. In terms of shelters, IH felt this was an important consideration for walkers as well as cyclists. IJ advised that these tended to be expensive and it would be a case of prioritising the money.

## Crowdfund Scotland

IH welcomed JF to give an overview of what Crowdfund Scotland do. JF advised that Crowdfunder was based in Cornwall but she was our local “coach”. She gave a brief overview of what crowdfunding was all about and how she could help us, as her local LAG, in terms of coaching, events and grants for projects. She detailed some of the events she had already been involved in and some that were upcoming. RS will send out links to future Crowdfund events. EA advised she has already done so and circulated information on the next event, which is taking place in North Lanarkshire, via social media.

IH thanked JF for her input.

### **8.0 Projects For Assessment:**

RS advised these would be presented in order of overall score, highest to lowest.

### **8.1 Fishing The Forth**

Fishing is well promoted in Scotland generally in terms of tourism but not on the Forth. Fishing in the Forth is an exciting new project which will work with wild fishery owners throughout the Forth District (all rivers which flow into the Estuary and Firth of Forth) to sustainably promote rod and line fishing.

This is a Cooperation project split between Forth Valley and Lomond, Tyne Esk, both paying largest proportions and West Lothian and ourselves both paying around 15%. Fife is not included as the Forth is in an ineligible part. The project will create a marketing plan and a website with marketing content which can be used by individual fisheries and the Forth Rivers Trust to promote fishing in the Forth. The website will have booking facility and a fee will be charged to maintain the site and for promotional costs.

The project is **£58,107.79** overall, of which we are requested to fund **£10,459.40**. Pre-LAG scores totalled 45.

Discussion around the website: Forth Rivers Trust will be taking forward website, separate to their own website which mainly deals with conservation issues. Part of the project is to encourage self-promotion by clubs and associations. Visit Falkirk have already said they will be happy to use the content on their own website. In terms of sustainability, Falkirk Rivers Trust will maintain the website going forward. ME has reservations that they will make enough income to support this going forward, but in their application, applicant organisation has committed to do this.

The LAG voted unanimously to approve this Application with Standard Conditions.

Standard Conditions:	8
Specific Conditions:	0
Deferred:	0
Rejected:	0

**Project approved with Standard Conditions**

At this point in proceedings, CM left the meeting.

## 8.2 Kinneil Hidden Heritage Activity Trail

1<sup>st</sup> phase in a bigger project aiming to re-discover and promote the wealth of heritage from different centuries within the Kinneil Estate, making it a more attractive destination for tourists and the local community. This is being taken forward on a slow but steady basis to ensure greater engagement with the Friends of Kinneil and new volunteers from the community:

Proposed outcomes are: Heritage from Kinneil; Social Media promotion; Volunteers; Interpretation on site; Fully costed plan for activity/play trail.

This has been knocked back by WREN for £75,000 but they have been encouraged to go back once a fully costed plan is in place.

LAG comments have all been positive - only concern is they don't try to reinvent the wheel in terms of website/app/interpretation. It wasn't completely clear on the application what their intention is, but based on their limited budget and time allowance, we would recommend putting content on the platforms that people will easily find and could continue to find beyond this project, rather than build a standalone app or website.

Costs are £30,061.60 of which we are being asked to fund £10,973.60. Everything expected to be completed in 2019. Pre-LAG score - 44.3.

The LAG voted unanimously to approve this Application with Standard Conditions.

Standard Conditions:	7
Specific Conditions:	0
Deferred:	0
Rejected:	0

**Project approved with Standard Conditions**

Claire Mennim returned to the meeting.

## 8.3 Cairnfold Cabins

Cairnfold Cabins will be located on a 14 acre small holding and consist of 3 high quality glamping pods, to include: Accommodation for larger families of up to 6; Private hot tub (at two cabins); Private insulated dog kennel at each cabin; Private lockable bike storage at each cabin. It is situated in the Kilsyth Hills, near to Burnhead Bothy. They are in the process of getting planning permission and a building warrant - there will be a few requirements but they are sorting out. Scottish Water have been consulted over the mains supply and whether this will be suitable or if a private supply will be required. Scottish Water's response is still awaited.

It was noted this is the type of project we have funded in the past, although with its own USP, and that it will be good for the area.

Project total cost £142,830. Total grant requested £50,000. Pre-LAG score of 41.5.

The LAG voted unanimously to approve this Application with Standard Conditions.

Standard Conditions:	8
Specific Conditions:	0
Deferred:	0
Rejected:	0

**Project approved with Standard Conditions**

#### 8.4 SailingFast

Based at Standburn this is a primarily online and mobile business, selling dingys and related equipment, as well as stand up paddleboarding equipment which is looking to expand but is limited in their recruitment by not having a suitable office. The applicant is a marketing expert but is too busy processing orders in a shed with no utilities to take a more strategic look at the business. They want to convert a shed next to their current office space into business premises with heating, toilet and kitchen and have seen an opportunity to at the same time make it into a welcoming place where they could display stock, meet with clients etc. Planning/Building Warrant applications have been submitted and an external design company has been appointed. They are engaging with Business Gateway in Falkirk who helping where they can for several years. This is an existing business that need help to get to the next level in their development.

Total cost £113,590.24. Leader grant requested £47,528.59. Pre-LAG score, 36.8.

Discussion followed.

- Paddleboarding is a growth area and there was the potential for a lot of spin-offs in the local community

- while the project technically fits our remit, not that comfortable approving it. Unsure if we would be helping the wider community or just helping the applicants make more money themselves.
- Given skill level and hrs offered, they would be providing jobs for people in the local community.
- application was poorly put together - there was no explanation of sales forecasts for instance. Learned more at today's meeting than from the official application.

Standard Conditions: 7  
 Specific Conditions: 0  
 Deferred: 0  
 Rejected: 1

**Project approved with Standard Conditions**

### 8.5 People United for Banton (P.U.B)

RS recapped by saying the local community had bought out The Swan Inn at Banton and had previously been awarded a grant of £115,880. Costs have risen hugely since the initial application to LEADER and the Big Lottery Fund, and an error with VAT have exacerbated this. Big Lottery have increased their grant by £111,000 to deal with the VAT shortfall. PUB had come back to LEADER at the previous LAG meeting to request converting some of their (revenue) LEADER grant to capital (approved by LAG). However they still face a shortfall in the construction. They have scaled back plans and re-tendered but neither have made a significant reduction in costs. They have other grant applications pending but have requested LEADER look to up their grant as much as possible.

IH suggested we should be looking to give them as much as we can afford and proposed £32,000 (approx. £150,000 available minus the amounts approved today), and (if required, on our advice) to allow them to convert their whole grant to the capital works for this project. This was agreed unanimously around the table.

LEADER staff with oversee this process with a Change Request in due course.

**TR/RS to do Change Request with PUB.**

### 9.0 A.O.C.B

No other LAG meetings for 2019 yet set. IH requested RS to send doodle poll for June and September. These dates can be cancelled nearer the time if they are not required.

**RS to send doodle poll.**

Tom advised that at the recent LEADER Celebration, the European Rural Representative had said LEADER could still continue as an entity after Brexit, as non-EU countries could still take part.