



**North York Moors, Coast & Hills LEADER Programme
Executive Group Meeting
NPA Offices, Helmsley, 10.00 – 12.00 pm
15 July 2015**

Notes of the meeting

Attending:

Name	Representing
Steve Arnold	Community and Voluntary Sector
Malcom Bowes	Community and Voluntary Sector
Liz Dowson	Scarborough Borough Council
Helen Gundry	Community and Voluntary Sector
Chris James	Rural Action Yorkshire
Helen Kemp	Hambleton District Council
Anna Lupton	Tourism and the Visitor Economy
Helen Patchett (non-voting)	North Yorkshire County Council – Accountable Body
Lydia Scarth	Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council
Peter Spencer	Tees Valley Rural Community Council
Abigail Stokell Beckett	Micro and Small Businesses
Amy Thomas (non-voting)	LEADER Co-ordinator / Programme Manager
Howard Wallis	Ryedale District Council
Will Watts	Tourism and the Visitor Economy

Apologies:

Name	Representing
Robin Asquith	Agriculture
Liz Barker	North Yorkshire County Council / York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership
Nick Cooke	Forestry
Tony Gatehouse	Community and Voluntary Sector
David Renwick	North York Moors National Park Authority
Jo Swift	Micro and Small Businesses
Will Terry	Agriculture

(1) Welcome and apologies

MB welcomed the Group and introductions were made.

Apologies had been received from 7 members, as listed above.

(2) Minutes from the last meeting of 8 April 2015

The minutes of 8 April 2015 were agreed as accurate.

(3) Matters arising from the minutes of 8 April 2015

With regard to the matters arising from the minutes, the following was reported:

- (i) HP reported that the draft Terms of Reference (including guidance on Declarations of Interest) was an agenda item at this meeting.
- (ii) The Register of Interests had been circulated with the papers and would be discussed as part of the Delivery Plan agenda item.
- (iii) Example project applications and appraisals would not be shown to the Group as previously envisaged; rather, once appraisal training had been delivered by DEFRA, we would together hold a familiarisation session with the new paperwork.
- (iv) Detailed Output Guidance was not yet available.
- (v) With regard to proceeding with strategic projects, AET had emailed the Task & Finish Groups in May to advise not to proceed in the light of the uncertainties regarding funding eligibility.
- (vi) LD reported that the BE Group were aware that a report was invited, but it was felt that it may not be relevant (in light of latest RPA guidance).
- (vii) The question of liability in the event of failed RPA payments had been asked, but no answer given as yet.
- (viii) As (v).
- (ix) The Delivery Plan was to be discussed as an agenda item.
- (x) The southern parishes of the Scarborough Borough had been written to by AET. They joined the Executive Group in their feelings of disappointment at the direction that LEADER seemed to be going.
- (xi) AET suggested working as a small group to discuss the refreshing of the logo.

(4) Draft Terms of Reference and Conflict of Interest Policy

The Draft Terms of Reference presented with the papers was broadly agreed, with the following amendments.

Of particular discussion was proposed para 7.13, which stated “In the case of a lack of quorum for a decision, the attending members of the Executive Group will discuss the application and submit their votes. The discussion will be minuted and sent to the absent members, with a request for their votes. A final vote will therefore be established through an element of written procedures, whilst still allowing for discussion and communication of this discussion.”

This was felt to be an uncomfortable position and after a debate, it was agreed to replace this wording with “if a quorum was not achieved, public sector members would be asked to share a vote. If public sector members were not in agreement, then the decision would then be considered by written procedures”.

With the amend of para 7.13; the re-numbering of the paragraphs to correctly format the document; and the correction of a couple of typing errors, the Terms of Reference were agreed by the Group.

An amended version would be signed by the Chair to be submitted alongside the Delivery Plan (see agenda item 6).

Action: HP

(5) Programme Update

HP presented the report that had been circulated, outlining the requirements of the Delivery Plan, and the training that had been given by DEFRA / RPA to date.

Several strong concerns were expressed amongst the Executive Group at the prescriptive nature of the guidance now being received, of the late nature of this guidance and of how this conflicts with the bottom-up nature of the Local Development Strategy.

It was agreed that a letter would be drafted to Andy Tordoff from Malcolm Bowes, the Chair, drafted by AET, and would be copied to Keith Harrison (LEADER representative on PMC), other local LAGs and local MPs.

Action: AET

(6) The Application Process

AET presented a paper which outlined the application process. In particular, it drew attention to a choice of procedure, which was whether the Executive group wished to see Outline Applications, for a decision on whether to invite them to Full Application. If this was the case, then an appraisal and scoring process would be undertaken by AET prior to them being considered by the Executive Group. NYCC would undertake appraisals on all Full Applications.

The Executive Group chose to consider Outline Applications in certain circumstances, where it was felt that the 'early viewing' may save some applicants undue work and raise awareness of projects coming forward.

The circumstances agreed for the Outline Application to be considered by the Executive Group were (for 2016/17):

- For Farm Productivity or Forestry: If a project requested 50% or more of the annual budget for that priority, ie if a farm productivity project requested €31,250 (£25,000) or more, and if a forestry project requested €18,750 (£15,000) or more.
- For Micro and Small Enterprises and Rural Tourism: If a project requested 25% or more of the annual budget for that priority, ie if micro and small businesses requested €45,316 (£36,253) or more, and if a tourism project requested €43,750 (£35,000) or more.

For all amounts lower than this, all Outline Applications that had passed the Eligibility & Completeness Check would proceed to Full Application without viewing by the Executive Group.

The Delivery Plan would be amended accordingly to reflect this decision.

Action: HP

(7) Draft Delivery Plan

HP presented the Draft Delivery Plan, which was included with the papers.

The Delivery Plan was agreed as presented, although there was a discussion around outputs and whether they are now achievable, given recent guidance. It was agreed that, whilst the output levels seemed ambitious, it was the least risky strategy, given the continued lack of guidance. Forecast outputs would be monitored carefully to ascertain whether output figures would need to be revised in future delivery plans.

Action: HP

(8) 2016-17 Call for Projects

AET presented a discussion paper, considering the ways in which calls for projects would be made for each of the four priorities to be funded in 2016-17.

For Farm Productivity, the paper was agreed, with the amendment to not set a maximum grant rate.

For Micro and Small Business and Farm Diversification, with the amendments of (a) no maximum grant rates and (b) an intervention rate of up to 95% for non-profit making investments, with the addition that 'grants of more than 95% will not normally be considered'.

For Rural Tourism, the call for projects was agreed without amendment.

For Forestry, the paper was agreed, with the amendment to not set a maximum grant rate. It was also be clarified whether social enterprises would be eligible for a higher intervention rate, as in the case of micro businesses.

The Calls for Projects would be amended accordingly.

Action: AET

(9) Any other business

AET requested a small group to consider the various new logo proposals. Volunteers were Will Watts, Abigail Stokell Beckett, Chris James, Malcolm Bowes, Steve Arnold and Anna Lupton.

AET would correspond by email to the group.

Helen Gundry commented that the co-operation event had been inspiring. AET added that co-operation wouldn't be coming on stream until 2017 so was 'on the back-burner' at the moment. This was a separate pot to apply for.

(10) (10) Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting was set for Tuesday 27th October 2015 at 10 am at Helmsley.

Summary of Action Points

	Action	To be completed by
1	Amend the Terms of Reference, as per discussion and submit to DEFRA with Delivery Plan (p3)	HP
2	Draft letter to Andy Tordoff (p3)	AET / MB
3	Amend Delivery Plan to reflect discussion and decision on Outline Applications (p3)	HP
4	Submit agreed Delivery Plan (p4)	HP
5	Amend Calls for Projects in readiness for launch	AET

*Helen Patchett,
NYCC, 5/8/2015*