

**North York Moors, Coast & Hills LEADER Programme
Executive Group Meeting
NPA Offices, Helmsley, 10.00 – 12.30 pm
26 July 2016**

Notes of the meeting

Attending:

Name	Representing
Liz Barker	North Yorkshire County Council / York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership
Malcom Bowes (Chair)	Community and Voluntary Sector
Nick Cooke	Forestry
Liz Dowson	Scarborough Borough Council
Chris James	Rural Action Yorkshire
Rita Lawson	Tees Valley Rural Community Council
Anna Lupton	Tourism and the Visitor Economy
Helen Patchett (non-voting)	North Yorkshire County Council – Accountable Body
David Renwick	North York Moors National Park Authority
Lydia Scarth	Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council
Rob Sim	Micro and Small Businesses
Abigail Stokell -Beckett	Micro and Small Businesses
Amy Thomas (non-voting)	LEADER Co-ordinator / Programme Manager
Howard Wallis	Ryedale District Council
Will Watts (Vice Chair)	Tourism and the Visitor Economy

Apologies:

Name	Representing
Steve Arnold	Community and Voluntary Sector
Robin Asquith	Agriculture
Tony Gatehouse	Community and Voluntary Sector
Helen Gundry	Community and Voluntary Sector
Helen Kemp	Hambleton District Council

(1) Welcome and apologies

MB welcomed the Group, with particular welcome to Rob Sim who joins to represent Micro and Small Businesses. Apologies had been received as listed above.

(2) Minutes from the last meeting of 19 January 2015

The minutes of 19 January 2016 were agreed as accurate.

(3) Matters arising from the minutes of 19 January 2016

All matters arising from the last minutes were dealt with on the agenda.

(4) Programme Update

HP presented the report that had been circulated, which outlined the current position.

With regard to the outcome of the EU referendum, the RPA had written to all LAGs to say that the restrictions of purdah remained in place. Decisions could be made but no decisions could be communicated to applicants.

MB took comments at this point. It was agreed that a letter would be sent to Andy Tordoff of the RPA to express the concerns of the LAG, and the letter would go as jointly endorsed by the two LAGs of the North York Moors, Coast & Hills and the Yorkshire Dales. The letter should allude to the need for consistency with applicants who may be approaching other ESIF funds. It should also place a marker down to state that the outputs are very challenging and flexibility will be needed.

Action: AET

The processes are very onerous and are causing a low conversion rate from outline application to full. Applicants need to evidence why a bank loan would be unviable / unobtainable as part of their justification for LEADER being a fund of last resort. The situation will be re-assessed in September when the current tranche of Full Applications are received and processed, but it is considered likely that there may be an underspend, even on the reduced budgets that were submitted in the 2016/17 Delivery Plan.

It was suggested that there was an inherent level of distrust in the application forms from funder to applicant.

The Delivery Plan for 2016/17 was submitted with budgets across all priorities reduced by one-third, as agreed in the meeting of 19 January 2016. It was submitted on 15 April and a decision was expected within 4 weeks. Due to other pressing commitments, RPA staff members were diverted to other priorities and the Delivery Plan is as yet unapproved. We are still able to progress, but are (in theory) working to the commitments in the 2015/16 Delivery Plan.

Concern was expressed that we reserve the right to re-profile – it was confirmed that the RPA could be approached at any point in the year to request a renegotiation, but that the annual delivery plan provided the standard mechanism to do this. The situation would be unknown prior to September.

The electronic Handbook would be circulated and would include:

- Local Development Strategy (includes maps)
- Current Year Delivery Plan
- Full Application Appraisal Guidance (scoring system)

- Standard offer letter to applicants, with associated terms and conditions
- Executive Group Terms of Reference, including Conflict of Interest Policy
- List of Executive Group current membership, with contact details
- List of eligible / ineligible items of equipment (specific to certain priorities)
- Applicant Handbook

Given the size of the collective documents, and also the amount of papers that may be sent for future meetings, HP would arrange for an NY Drive to be created (cloud drive through NYCC), which would allow for the upload and download of documents to be shared.

Action: HP

HP also reported on an application which had failed its Quality Check of the Eligibility & Completeness Check. It was noted that no declarations of interest need to be reported for this project as no decisions were to be made; the situation was being reported for information.

(5) Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made for the projects on the agenda.

(6) Full Applications for consideration

(a) 103588 Toad Hole Farm Mobile Handling Pens

It was agreed to approve the project 103588 Toad Hole Farm Mobile Handling Pens. There are no specific conditions to be associated with this project.

Action: HP

(b) 103544 Wildon Grange Dairy Farm Centre

It was agreed to approve the project 103544 Wildon Grange Dairy Farm Centre, subject to the existing condition suggested, that the beneficiary shall obtain planning permission for alterations (to original approval) prior to grant funding agreement, or proof that this is not necessary.

Action: HP

It was emphasised that applicants are not able to be told of these decision as yet, due to the restrictions in place from the RPA. Additionally, all decisions are to be communicated as Group decisions.

(7) Executive Group discussion – Lessons Learnt for NYMCH LEADER programme

AET presented a paper, looking at the possible projects that may be coming forward in 2016/17 and comparing against this year's budget. Given the anticipated underspend (yet to be confirmed dependent on actual full applications to be received), she proposed a further two calls for projects this year, under Farm Productivity and Forestry Productivity. In both cases, the calls would focus on capital equipment only, based on a specific list of eligible expenditure, and could only be advertised when the restrictions of purdah were to be lifted by the RPA.

It was unanimously agreed to advertise further calls under Farm Productivity and Forestry Productivity once the programme is able to undertake publicity.

Action: AET

AET also pointed out that the agenda for the September meeting would include draft calls for activity in 2017-18.

(8) Communication and Publicity

It was reiterated that no communication activity can take place at the moment.

Once restrictions are lifted, publicity will resume, starting with the new calls for projects.

(9) Dates of 2017 Executive Group meetings

In addition to the dates in the papers, an additional meeting was agreed for January in case of the need to consider full applications which could spend on capital equipment before March. Should any meeting not be necessary, it would be cancelled in advance to avoid wasting Executive Group members' time. The full list for 2017 is as follows:

- 10 January 2017
- 7 February 2017
- 14 March 2017
- 9 May 2017
- 4 July 2017
- 5 September 2017
- 7 November 2017

(10) Any other business

No other business was raised.

(11) Date of next meeting

The next meeting would take place on 27 September 2016 at 10 am. A venue other than NYMNPA offices would be found. Requests were made to ensure adequate parking at an alternative venue.

Action: AET

Summary of Action Points

	Action	To be completed by
1	Draft letter to RPA to express concerns, to be endorsed by Yorkshire Dales Chair.	AET
2	Collate documents for Handbook and share via specific drive to be created by NYCC	HP
3	Grant funding agreement to Toad Hole Mobile Handling Pens, when restrictions of purdah are lifted by RPA	HP
4	Grant funding agreement to Wildon Grange Dairy Farm Centre, when restrictions of purdah are lifted by RPA and the grant condition has been met	HP
5	Recommendations to Wildon Grange Dairy Farm Centre to be sent by email, when restrictions of purdah are lifted by RPA	HP
6	New calls for projects to be made under Farm Productivity and Forestry Productivity, when restrictions of purdah are lifted by RPA	AET
7	Book different venue with parking for meeting of 27 September 2016	AET

*Helen Patchett,
NYCC, 8/8/2016*