



**Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde LAG
Minutes of Meeting: Thursday 4th October 2018 (Renfrewshire House)**

1. Present:

Non-Public:

Fraser Lang	Private Business – IT Consultant (LAG Chair)
Bill McCallum	West Region Scouts
David Blair	Renfrewshire Independent Resident (Kilbarchan)
Stuart Miller	Engage Renfrewshire
Daniel McCusker	Renfrewshire Independent Resident (Lochwinnoch)
Charles Brindley	Uplawmoor Community Council
Tam Henderson	Eaglesham & Waterfoot Community council

Public:

Laura Moir	East Renfrewshire Council
Gordon Smith	Visit Scotland

Others Present:

Keren Ferguson	LEADER Programme Coordinator
Colin Pomeroy	LEADER Project Development
Tracey Parker	LEADER Finance

Table Plan:

Fraser Lang (Chair)	Colin Pomeroy	Daniel McCusker	Gordon smith	Stuart Miller	Tam Henderson
Keren Ferguson	Tracey Parker	Laura Moir	David Blair	Bill McCallum	Charles Brindley

- i. **Quorum:** the meeting was quorate
- ii. **Non-public/public ratio:** 7 non-public and 2 public

2. Apologies

Lisa Roberts	National Farmers Union
Gary Kenyon	Renfrewshire Council
Will Nisbet	Inverclyde Council

3. Financial Update:

There is £1,167,667.31 available to commit to projects. Approvals to date include four projects based in Renfrewshire, five projects based in Inverclyde and two projects based in East Renfrewshire. There are potentially ten projects in the pipeline with a combined value of approximately £676,310.00 and several expressions of interest received in the last few weeks. The LAG will decide on two applications tonight with a total LEADER value of £367,450.78.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Minutes from the previous LAG meeting on Thursday 12th June were agreed and signed by the LAG Chair and co-signed by a second LAG member, Laura Moir.

5. Matters Arising:

The LAG welcomed new LAG member Tam Henderson and new Development Assistant Colin Pomeroy.

The LAG was informed of Scottish Governments decision to extend the LEADER programme from 29th March 2019 to December 2019. Decisions were made at the Accountable Bodies meeting held in Sauchton on 4th October, meaning all Cooperation budgets must be committed to by the end of March 2019 and full commitment of other budgets by end June 2019. Cooperation underspend will be reallocated after March 2019 to those who are in a position to develop cooperation projects.

If LAGs are in favour of using the new budget allocations of 5% for cooperation and 20% for combined farm diversification and rural enterprise then a LDS Change Request should be submitted the LEADER Team at Scottish Government via LARCs. GRI LAG has decided to go ahead with this.

The LAG was asked if it remained flexible in terms of approving projects asking for more than 50% and/or£125K. The LAG confirmed that it did remain open to applications of this status as it is getting more difficult for applicants to secure match funding due to high demand. LM added that Big Lottery has made huge cuts to its funding and didn't mind higher value applications as long as the applicants could justify that they worked hard to get match funding and the project was worthwhile in terms of delivering the objectives in the GRI Local Development Strategy.

6. Project Presentations

Kilbarchan Amateur Athletics Club (KAAC) – Indoor Training Facility

LAG member Stuart Miller declared an interest in this project as Engage Renfrewshire has assisted the applicant secure match funding for this project.

Five representatives of KAAC turned up to present and show their support for the project. These were;

- Colin Hutchison, Head of Development at Scottish Athletics Ltd
- Andrew Murphy, Decathlete for Great Britain
- Janet Gillan, Local GP and community/parent representative
- Jim Goudie, Volunteer Athletics Coach and Project Manager
- John Roger, Volunteer Endurance Coach at KAAC

John Rodger kicked off the presentation by explaining to the LAG that KAAC were in pursuit of excellence by delivering this indoor practice facility and sees it as a real legacy project. He explained that the facility would not only service elite athletes but will be open to all levels and it is hoped will inspire the local community, especially children, to enhance their personal fitness and general well-being.

Colin Hutchison added that there has been a 19% growth in the last 5 years in Scottish Athletics and there is a shortage of indoor training facilities. Venues such as the Emirates stadium in Glasgow are often unavailable as it is mainly an events venue.

Colin went on to state that he sees this project as a Regional Centre of Excellence and such a facility is required to allow our athletes to become world class if that is their aim.

Andrew Murphy introduced himself and made the point that athletes like him need consistency in accessing training venues. At the moment, he needs to go to Grangemouth to do inside pole vault training and further afield for other disciplines, which is not ideal when you stay in the west of Scotland.

Janet Gillen added to the conversation from not only a GP point of view but as a parent. She reiterated how important it is to get children and others into sport and how having an indoor facility would help retain their interest over the winter months.

John highlighted that KAAC produce performance athletes such as Jemma Reekie, Callum and Derek Hawkins and Colin Hutchison. It would be great to meet the demand and create opportunities for others to come through and compete world-wide.

Jim Goudie introduced himself. He has been a volunteer with KAAC since 1978 and has had various roles. As well as being a coach he would be managing the project. He informed the LAG that to date £57K had been spent on architect's fees and ground works. The preferred site was unsuitable due to underground mines being identified but a suitable site has been identified to the east of the running track at the Onnex Leisure Centre, Linwood.

The Applicants wrapped up the presentation by inviting questions from the LAG.

DM made a point that KAAC would be contributing to savings towards the NHS etc by providing the services required to inspire and maintain the public health, fitness and well-being.

LM asked how the facility would be split in terms of time spent there by professionals and the general public. John replied by explaining that generally 8am – 4pm would be community groups, Active Schools and Renfrewshire Local Health Partnership. 4pm onwards would usually be when the athletes use the facility. John was confident that the facility would be able to facilitate community groups and professionals at the same time should the need occur.

John went on to explain that recently they have been encouraged to accommodate under 9s and so opened this up to test the community interest and received 154 responses. The new facility would allow KAAC to take on all these children without putting them on a waiting list and hopefully retain at least 50% if an indoor facility was available.

LAG member CB asked how many people the facility would be able to accommodate at one time. The coaches were confident all disciplines and levels could be accommodated at the same time. This is possible because of the way they train. For example, 100 sprinters could train at any one time as well as multiple groups. There would be separate areas for throws and conditioning suite.

LAG member TH asked how much does it cost. Jim Goudie provided the answer as £12 per calendar month for one person or £24 per month family membership (no limit for no. of children). It is proposed that a single membership will increase to £16 per month if the new facility is built. Two hours professional coaching is included in the membership fee.

LAG member BM commented on the applicants SWOT analysis. He highlighted that he was surprised to see, under 'weaknesses', they have included that some influential people are not fully invested in the proposal and could he have further explanation on this. John replied by saying that unfortunately this is the way of things in a voluntary group and it is the minority. He went on to say there is no point in doing a SWOT analysis if you're not going to be honest and try and address the weaknesses. He went on to explain that there are 11 people on the committee and there are 42 coaches, all volunteers. Scottish

Athletics have recently decided to create a full-time volunteer coordinator to attract more volunteers to their cause.

LAG Decision: Approved - A unanimous approval from the LAG on condition the lease for the ground is issued in November.

Richard and Alison Close – Nethermill Lodges

Richard Close introduced himself and his wife Alison. Richard is a livestock auctioneer and runs his own pedigree sheep enterprise. Alison is a social worker at North Ayrshire Council but is currently on maternity leave and planning to go back to work on a part time basis in the new year.

Richard explained that the funding application was for 3 holiday lodges on their land that will predominantly be marketed at the 5-star luxury couples market as that is where they have identified a gap in the market within the LAG area. Each lodge will have a hot tub and guests will be welcomed with a hamper of local produce.

Richard went on to explain why they chose the tourism route. He said they undertook a lot of research into the tourism market and found that self-catering accommodation was expanding in Scotland and especially the couples market. They have land to spare with breath taking views of the river Clyde and Lomond hills. They are in a semi-rural location but near tourist attractions in Inverclyde, East Renfrewshire and Renfrewshire, Glasgow Airport, cycle routes, golf courses and core paths. It is hoped that eventually either Richard or Alison will be able to be employed full time in the business. Other benefits that the project will bring are business to local tradesmen, cleaning companies and local food suppliers. As this type of accommodation is lacking in the area it is hoped that guest who would have otherwise visited somewhere else will be attracted to the LAG area instead. Thus, meeting the increasing day visitors and tourism objective of the LAG LDS.

LAG member GS enquired about the projections being based on 7 night stays. He put it to Richard and Alison that people are generally looking for shorter breaks which might mean they incur more costs for cleaning etc. Richard said that the advice from Holidaycottages.co.uk was to charge a minimum of 4 nights when guest requested to visit for this amount of time or less. Richard and Alison are also willing to listen to the market and change their marketing to short stays if need be.

LAG member LM was pleased to see that options were being kept open to respond to the market and approved of the idea that pull-down beds or similar would be incorporated as an option should they be required.

LAG member FL asked whether pets would be welcome and was told that one lodge will be pet friendly and again Richard and Alison are willing to respond to the market if necessary.

LAG member CB commented on the research being capped to one age group, the 'Millennials' (those born between 1980 & 1994). Richard said that the lodges will not be marketed to just one age group but the research they did considered the spending power of that age group.

LAG member TH suggested they consider the UK and foreign market and the business market. He suggested airlines such as Emirates work with local businesses by promoting their holiday lets to Emirates members here on business trips.

LAG member DM enquired as to whether they had looked into ECO lodges and sustainable products. Richard said they had looked at a few ECO lodges but they didn't provide the luxury for the market they were trying to target.

LAG member LM thought it was probably better value for money going from one lodge to three and enquired whether they see the business expanding. Richard and Alison said they have 12 acres of land to spare so if the business was to grow then it would be something they would consider in the future.

After some discussion, including concerns that this may be a lot to take on for a young family the LAG decided that they came across as hard workers and were deserving of the grant. They had evidenced the gap in the market and hopefully the LAG has assisted a small business to start up and grow and made it possible for new visitors to be attracted to the LAG area for holidays and take day visits from the location provided by Richard and Alison Close.

LAG Decision: **Approved** – on condition that planning permission is granted and that Richard and Alison sit with someone from Visit Scotland to work on their marketing plan and projections.

8. AOCB:

9. Date of Next Meeting:

Thursday 13th December 2018



