

**Draft Minutes of Cairngorms New LEADER Local Action Group
Held at the Lecht Ski Centre on
20th February 2008 at 10am**

Present

Kate Adamson	Association of Cairngorms Communities
Cattie Anderson	Scottish National Heritage
Judy Aylett	Marr Area Partnership
Linda Caston	Angus Council
Pamela Grant	Cairngorms Chamber of Commerce
Andrew Harper	Cairngorm National Park Authority & Interim Chair
Lee Haxton	Angus Council
Joyce Lyle	Association of Cairngorms Communities
Frances Powell	Inclusive Cairngorms (Women)
John Rainy Brown	Voluntary Action Badenoch & Strathspey
Franziska Smith	HIE Moray
Deborah Tait	Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey Enterprise

In Attendance

John Armstrong	ON TRACK Training & Coaching Ltd
Jackie Farquhar	Cairngorm National Park Authority
Patricia Methven	Cairngorm National Park Authority
Emma Mulraine	Cairngorm National Park Authority

Apologies

Keith Aitchison	Crofters Commission
Les Allan	Aberdeenshire Council
Jim Booth	Scottish Agricultural Organisation Society
Jill Catto	Scottish Rural Property and Business Association
Debbie Cooper	Cairngorms Chamber of Commerce
Pierre Masson	Moray Council
Sue Palmer	Highland Council
Rebecca Reid	Cairngorms Chamber of Commerce
Scott Sangster	Inclusive Cairngorms (Youth)
Vicky Thomson	Aberdeenshire Council
Malcolm Wield	Forestry Commission
Ian Wilson	National Farmers Union
Clair Wright	Scottish Enterprise Grampian

Welcome and Apologies

1. Interim Chair, Andrew Harper, welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted.

Action

2. The minutes of the previous LAG meeting on the 25 October 2007 had been circulated but unfortunately had been omitted from the agenda. The minutes will be approved at the next LAG meeting.

AH

Programme -Timing & News

3. Iain Matheson of the Scottish Government had let Andrew know that the unsuccessful LAGs had already been informed; Andrew therefore told the group that he was confident that Cairngorms had been successful in their bid for funding.

4. Andrew advised the group that they should hear how much funding is to be allocated to Cairngorms LAG by early March 08.

AH

5. Iain Matheson had asked Andrew if Cairngorms LAG could take more Convergence funding than was detailed in the bid. Andrew agreed that this would be acceptable.

6. The LAG was also advised that the draft guidance should be available in the near future and would be circulated in due course.

PM

7. The Scottish Government had been in touch requesting a date for a capacity building meeting with the LAG and dates were canvassed at the end of the meeting and confirmed on email.

PM

8. The group discussed how secure the funding offer from Scottish Enterprise Grampian was given the recent steer from the Scottish Government to the Enterprise agencies on what types of activities they could fund

9. Clair Wright from Scottish Enterprise Grampian was not at the meeting to comment on this and the group agreed that they should still request match funding for administration and projects.

Paper 1 Chairing Arrangements

10. Andrew Harper read out email comments from absent LAG members on the topic of chairing arrangements.

11. The group discussed the chairing arrangements and agreed that:
 - The chair should be experienced in running meetings
 - The chair should have the time to commit to the LAG

- The chair should come from within the LAG
 - The chair should be appointed for a period of 2 years with re appointment after this time being an option
 - The chair should have 2 deputies to stand in when required
 - The chair of the LAG should not be involved in the PAAG
 - One of the deputy LAG chairs should chair the PAAG
12. The group agreed that the LAG chair would be selected by a process of nominations followed by a secret ballot.
13. All agreed that Andrew Harper should act as chair for next few meetings to let members get to know each other with the nominations and ballot to be held after April LAG meeting.

Paper 2 Partnership Name and Link to National Park Brand

14. Andrew read out email comments from absent LAG members and asked the group for their thoughts.
15. The group agreed that National Park need not be in the name of the group and voted by a show of hands (including votes received from members not present) on the names suggested in the Paper 2.
16. The results were as follows:
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|---|---------|
| • Cairngorms LAG (with National Park removed) | 8 votes |
| • Cairngorms Partnership (with National Park removed) | 0 votes |
| • Cairngorms Rural Development Partnership | 7 votes |
| • Cairngorms Plus | 0 votes |
| • Cairngorms Investment Programme Partnership | 0 votes |
17. The group agreed that Cairngorms LAG should be the new name for the group.
18. Andrew Harper introduced the possibility of the partnership using the Cairngorms National Park Brand and asked the group for their views.
19. Following a discussion the group agreed to use the National Park Brand in conjunction with the partnership name.

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| 20. Andrew Harper asked the group if they had any issues or concerns which they would like addressed regarding acknowledgement of partners financial and time contributions to the work of partnership. | |
| 21. The group were content that the appropriate level of acknowledgment would be put in place. | PM |
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Paper 3 Project Handling | |
| 22. The group agreed that the Project Appraisal and Advisory Group (PAAG) should continue as it worked well for LEADER+. | |
| 23. The group agreed that the make up of the PAAG should be as suggested in Paper 3. | |
| 24. Cattie Anderson confirmed that Scottish Natural Heritage were content to attend all PAAG meetings to provide their specialist input. | |
| 25. All agreed that the PAAG should have a delegated authority to approve projects up to the value of £5,000. | |
| 26. The group agreed that Andrew Harper should chair the first PAAG until the deputy chairs are in place. | |
| 27. The group discussed how project applications should be assessed and agreed that there should be a standard which had to be met and a possible scoring system which would give transparency to the applicants. | |
| 28. The group felt that it was important that grants were not awarded just because the money was there but that the successful applications should be of a high quality. | |
| 29. As the guidance is not yet available from the Scottish Government the group agreed to wait to see what would have to be provided/collected before finalising the method for assessing projects. | |
| 30. Andrew Harper and Patricia Methven said that they would work with the Scottish Government to ensure that the application form is appropriate. | AH, PM |

Maximum Level of Grant

31. Patricia Methven informed the group that the Scottish Government would allow a maximum of 95% funding with the remaining 5% to be provided by the applicant from other sources.
32. In some instances applicants could provide and in kind contribution to the project to make up their contribution of 5%. However this would have to be carefully handled to ensure that the applicant still achieved the cash required.
33. The group discussed what level of funding they would be happy to award to projects and agreed that they would be happy to fund up to 95% using other funders contributions.

Partnership Handbook

34. Patricia Methven advised the group that a Partnership Handbook containing all procedural information and guidance would be distributed to all LAG members in due course. PM

Partnership Training Requirements

35. Patricia Methven asked the group if they had any particular training requirements which would assist them in their work for the partnership.
36. In addition to training linked to procedures the group thought that it would be good to have a basic induction for new LAG members and perhaps an interim refresher. PM

Promotions - Links

37. Andrew Harper informed the group that a promotional plan was being drafted re: LEADER in the context of the SRDP. SAC have already held 2 meetings in the National Park area on the SRDP. These meetings were not only for land managers but also aimed at communities to explain about LEADER as well as Rural Development Contracts.
38. Andrew Harper also informed the group that 2 Land Management Support Officers were being put in place by the Cairngorms National Park Authority to work primarily with land based people and advise and direct applications to either Rural Development Contracts or LEADER.
39. The group agreed that it was a good idea to participate, with partners, in an Information Road-show around the Cairngorms National Park. This PM

will most likely take place April/May and will be made up of 6-8 sessions. This will be a good opportunity to make best use of LAG partners and the networks they have.

Proposed Partnership Meeting Dates:

40. The group agreed the dates for the LAG and PAAG as detailed on the Agenda.

Project Approval & Advisory Group	Local Action Group
24 April*	29 May
26 June	31 July
28 August	25 September
30 October	28 November
18 December	

41. ** Following responses from LAG members on suitable dates for the Scottish Government capacity building meeting this date was subsequently changed to 11 April and will be a full LAG meeting.*

42. *It will also be necessary to consider several project applications at this time and therefore the meeting on 11 April 2008 will be an all day event.*

43. *Consideration will be given to holding a PAAG mid May.*

44. The group discussed whether to rotate the meetings around the National Park or to have one location. No decision was made.

45. Video conferencing was put forward as an idea which may be especially useful in times of bad weather. The group agreed that this could be an option but not in the first year as it would be better for the LAG members to meet in person so they can get to know each other.

46. The group agreed that Patricia Methven should put together a grouping for the PAAG.

PM

The meeting closed at 12:00 for lunch and was followed by a facilitated workshop session by John Armstrong.