

ARIA Fund LAG (A-LAG) MEETING

7th Feb 2023

14:00 – 16:15

Teams

Attendees

LAG Members			
Non- Public Sector	Attended	Public Sector	Attended
Jean Brown (JB)		Eddie Bulik (EB)	X
Kevin Brown (KB)	X	Bruce Davidson (BD)	X
Barbara Conner (BC)	X	Emma McMullen (EM)	X – until 15:00
Chris Campbell (CC)	X	Jamie Tait (JT)	X
Claire Donaldson (CD)	X		
Holly Fitzsimmons (HF)	X		
Neil McKenna (NM)	X – until 15:00		
Angela McWhinnie (AM)			
Jim Watson (JW)	X		
LAG Advisors			
		Mhairi Paterson (MP)	X – until 15:00
		Sarah Smillie (SS)	X
Lead Partner Representative(s)			
		Kevin Anderson (KA)	X – from 15:10
		Mike Newall (MN)	X – from 15:10

LAG Staff/Contractors	Attended
Angela Lamont (AL)	X
Marie Oliver (MO)	X
Ann Wilson (AW)	X

Apologies

Angela McWhinnie (AM)

Acronyms

CLLD Community Led Local Development
CWB Community Wealth Building
EAC East Ayrshire Council
NAC North Ayrshire Council
NFUS National Farmers' Union of Scotland
SAC South Ayrshire Council
SG Scottish Government
SRUC Scotland's Rural College

Welcome	Actions
JW welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
Quorum The meeting started with 11 LAG Members so was quorate with at least 50% of the 13 standing members. This comprised 7 non-public sector and 3 public sector, fulfilling the minimum	

51%:49% non-public: public requirement. 2 Members left at 15:00 with approvals on the final 3 projects pending. The meeting remained quorate though with 9 of the 13 standing LAG Members remaining, 6 non-public and 3 public sector.

Register of Interests

No changes to the standing register of interests were noted.

Conflicts of Interest

1 conflict was noted: EM for the Arran Development Trust project. She had informed AL of this when scoring applications and did not score this 1.

Minutes of Last Meeting

The meeting minutes of previous, 2nd Nov 22 LAG meeting were approved.

AL ran through the actions:

Continued

- AL to pursue LAG Advisor representation for new priority themes, disability groups and groups from areas of deprivation from autumn 22. **Continued. Procurement for LAG refresh work had not been undertaken but AL said this would be actioned in quarter 1 of 23/24 when the new ARIA strategy was complete. She reported the LAG was expanding naturally and explained further under LAG Member Changes.**
- KB/MN/JW to establish MoU/amend constitution in short life working group with deadline of mid-Sept 22. **Continued.** Internal Audit action that the constitution and MoU are in place prior to allocation of grants. **To be actioned by AL/JW following meeting on 9th Feb 23.**
- LP representative's non-voting role on LAG to be made clear in constitution/MoU. **Continued.**
- AL to make changes to final fund documents and circulate to the LAG. **Completed.**

New

- AL to update on recruitment of AADA CEO as LAG tourism rep. **Completed. CD is new tourism rep.**
- AL to contact NFUS late Nov/early Dec 22 for CCu replacement LAG Member. **Completed, HF stands as the replacement.**
- AL to check on term of 'lease' given in clawback agreement on Jack's Alt Stays project and feedback if concern over meeting fund requirements. **Completed.**
- EM to seek NAC Senior Islands Officer comment on Visit Arran application overlap with Green Islands Programme. **Completed.**
- AL to circulate Doodle Poll/invite for Jan 23 LAG meeting. **Completed.**
- AL to set conditions on:
 - Hareshaw
 - Ayr Gaiety Partnership
 - Crossroads and
 - Girvan Town Team projectsand pre-approval conditions on:
 - Dunlop Dairy
 - Kirkmichael Village Renaissance and
 - Newmilns Regeneration Association projects.**Completed.**

LAG Member Updates

- JW/AL welcomed 3 new LAG Members: CD, rural tourism lecturer at SRUC Ayr to represent tourism; HF, replacing Christine Cuthbertson as the new NFUS representative; and NM, replacing Elaine Stewart as a community representative for East Ayrshire. NM

AL/JW to consolidate amends to constitution and forward to LAG with Memorandum of Understanding.

also represents the arts via Darvel Music Company/Festival. New LAG Advisor MP was also introduced, from NAC, to advise on CWB.

- AL/JW also introduced the possibility of Alistair Henry, SG CLLD/ex-LEADER divisional head joining the LAG. Alistair currently lived in West Lothian but was from Ayrshire and would be moving back following his retirement from SG in March/April 23. His background was farming and he still had strong links with Ayrshire, visiting regularly and forming part of the community. JW suggested with this and his SG background Alistair would be an asset and asked for objections to him joining on his retirement. CC raised the fact that Alistair did not currently live in Ayrshire, and asked if he had affiliation to any organisations in Ayrshire. AL/JW said they would seek this and revert.

AL to seek information on potential LAG Member Alistair Henry's affiliation with Ayrshire orgs and feed back.

Applications Assessment – Extra Capital Fund

AL began with a request on approval for a small change of wording to the grant award letter, removing dates changes from eligible change requests. This was due to the extremely narrow window for delivery between grant award (WC 6th Feb 23) and end date (10th March 23). This was approved by all members present. She reported the other change was removal of the milestones section, this had not been asked for in the application form.

Projects

- Rowarden & Hall's Affordable Housing Project, Arran Development Trust (ADT), Arran, North Ayrshire**

Grant Request (100% of Project Costs)	£7,256.50
Applicant Type	Charity/Company Ltd by Guarantee
Main Costs	IT equipment to help deliver affordable housing project
Delivery of Items	Soon after order

AL to inform all projects of decision and where relevant, conditions.

EM left the meeting because of the conflict of interest.

Score: 2.91/5

Issues Raised at Technical Check:

- Costs not directly cost-of living but would facilitate ADT to deliver ambitious cost-of-living project.
- ADT operating from home at time of meeting, items stored/used there. No deeds/lease given.
- 4 of the 8 costs were >£1,000 per item. Applicant advised to provide 3 quotes but reported could not provide like-for-like.
- Accounts not so healthy but evidenced ADT need the funding?

LAG Discussion:

While the LAG thought the main project, the affordable housing project was laudable, the following issues were raised:

- Insufficient justification in the application of the link between the IT equipment and the cost-of-living crisis project. This was felt tenuous;
- Insufficient justification in the application as to the choice of Apple products, a more expensive brand of IT equipment. The need for this to read architects' drawings etc was queried; the Quantity Surveyor LAG Member said it was not necessary.
- Value for money had not been sufficiently demonstrated with 3 quotes not provided for items > £1,000, a fund requirement laid out in the guidance.

Decision: The project was rejected unanimously on the above grounds.

- **Remote Access to Wellbeing Services for People Affected by Cancer, Ayrshire Cancer Support (ACS), centres in Ayr & Kilmarnock but services pan-Ayrshire.**

Grant Request (100% of Project Costs)	£5,479
Applicant Type	Charity/Company Ltd by Guarantee
Main Costs	IT equipment to improve team ability to deliver services remotely
Delivery of Items	Upon purchase

Score: 3.22/5

Issues Raised at Technical Check:

- Healthy accounts, was the applicant in need of the funding?
- Costs cost-of-living indirectly.
- No item >£1,000 but 2/3 collectively >£1,000. 3 quotes not requested – not specified in guidance.

LAG Discussion:

- As with the previous application, though the whole service was seen as exemplary but the direct link of the costs to the cost-of-living crisis was questioned.
- The ACS service covers the whole of Ayrshire, not just the ARIA eligible rural area. The coverage of this was queried, with particular reference to North Ayrshire where there is no centre.
- Project assisting sustainability of service and lessening burden (by reducing travel) on service users praised.

Decision:

Decision on this project was initially deferred until other projects had been heard. At this point it was put to a vote, with 6 members approving, 3 rejecting. It was therefore approved with the condition that the applicant provide evidence of coverage in the ARIA eligible rural area with particular reference to North Ayrshire.

- **Catrine AMBI Warm Space, Catrine Community Trust, East Ayrshire**

Grant Request (100% of Project Costs)	£5,331.58
Applicant Type	Charity/Company Ltd by Guarantee
Main Costs	Fit out of warm space – Audio Visual (AV)/gaming/heating equipment
Delivery of Items	Within days of order

Score: 3.33/5

Issues Raised at Technical Check:

- Did gaming equipment address the cost-of-living crisis? The applicant had explained the need to cater for whole family and provide activities for extended periods of time in the warm space to make it fully welcoming in their application.

LAG Discussion:

- Positive comments on project as costs were directly related to cost-of-living crisis.
- Running costs of the warm space queried. The EAC communities officer LAG Member explained the warm space was not established yet.

- Use of warm spaces in general queried – this was countered with evidence of their use as extensive/growing. They were reported as not just warm spaces but also critical spaces for friendship/reducing isolation.

Decision:

The project was approved unanimously with the condition that the applicant provide assurance the warm space would be established/running by projects end date 10th March 23.

- **Carrick Remade, Crag Community Arts, Girvan, South Ayrshire**

Grant Request (100% of Project Costs)	£5,333.45
Applicant Type	Charity
Main Costs	Equipment for remake/repair/arts workshops – specific + general – benches/urns etc
Delivery of Items	Upon purchase

Score: 3.92/5

Issues Raised at Technical Check:

The month-on-month lease provided was raised but deeds/lease 5 years post-project completion had only been requested where items required installation.

LAG Discussion:

- Positive comments, this was the first project the LAG was fully behind.
- Positive re: CWB and the Circular Economy, would like to encourage a follow up project in subsequent years.
- Need for PAT tester questioned at first, countered by the explanation this is a health and safety requirement for equipment used by the public.

Decision: The project was approved unanimously with no conditions.

- **North Ayrshire Table Tennis Club, various locations, North Ayrshire**

Grant Request (100% of Project Costs)	£6,659.90
Applicant Type	Constituted community group
Main Costs	Table tennis equipment for Bat & Chat table tennis sessions in 1 centre – West Kilbride Community Centre
Delivery of Items	5 – 7 days after order

Score: 2.81/5

Issues Raised at Technical Check:

- Were costs addressing the cost-of-living crisis? Bat & Chat promoted to all ages/abilities and explained in the application as providing a warm space – hot drinks etc. But would table tennis be attractive to all?
- Application previously covered 3 centres in North Ayrshire but this was reduced to 1.
- Items would be stored in the premises of West Kilbride Community Centre. Informal annual agreement provided, nothing more.

LAG Discussion:

- The amount of equipment requested was questioned for the space/scope to deliver in West Kilbride Community Centre.
- The appeal of table tennis was questioned, this could be limited, as was the reach of delivery from only 1 centre.
- The project was however praised for providing an alternate means of interaction.

Decision: The project was rejected unanimously on the above grounds.

At this point EM and NM left, but as discussed the meeting remained quorate with 8 of the 13 standing LAG Members remaining, 6 non-public and 3 public sector (fulfilling the 50%/ 51%: 49% non-public: public split requirements). LAG Advisor MP also left.

- **Warm Hub – Netherthird, Netherthird Initiative for Community Empowerment (NICE), East Ayrshire**

Grant Request (100% of Project Costs)	£8,275.68
Applicant Type	Charity
Main Costs	AV/heating equipment plus chairs for the warm hub and office
Delivery of Items	Upon purchase

Score: 3.53/5

Issues Raised at Technical Check:

- All costs hitting cost-of-living crisis apart from office chairs not explained in the application. Needed by the organisation for implementation?

LAG Discussion:

- Good project, warm space confirmed as up and running already.
- Need for more expensive Dyson heater questioned. Follow on comment to this was that it was also a cooling device so would be useful in summer as well as winter.

Decision: The project was approved unanimously with no conditions.

- **Old Pinwherry School Cozy Space, Pinwherry/Pinmore Community Development Trust (PPCDT), South Ayrshire**

Grant Request (100% of Project Costs)	£6,710.56
Applicant Type	Charity
Main Costs	Fit out items for main cozy space plus computer chairs for cozy working space
Delivery of Items	Within 1 / 2 weeks of purchase

Score: 3.73/5

Issues Raised at Technical Check: N/A

LAG Discussion:

The project was praised, but the fact the cozy space was again not yet established was raised as an issue.

Decision: The project was approved unanimously with the condition that the applicant provide assurance the warm space would be established/running by projects end date 10th March 23.

- **Garnock Valley Energy, Radio City Association, Kilbirnie, North Ayrshire**

Grant Request (100% of Project Costs)	£7,361.37
Applicant Type	Charity/Company
Main Costs	Energy efficiency materials for households - draft excluders/infrared heaters/LED bulbs etc
Delivery of Items	Within 3 weeks of purchase

Score: 3.5/5

Issue Raised at Technical Check:

The month-on-month lease provided was raised but deeds/lease 5 years post-project completion had only been requested where items required installation.

LAG Discussion:

- Project praised for taking practical steps to help people, the first of this kind in the application round.
- The need for the applicant to have initiated distribution of items by projects end date 10th March 23 was highlighted.

Decision: The project was approved unanimously with the condition that the applicant confirm they would begin distribution of items before 10th March 23. This should be balanced with the requirement that items are witnessed in a monitoring visit before final payment.

- **Local Compost, Woodside Arran, CIC, Arran, North Ayrshire**

Grant Request (100% of Project Costs)	£8,963.71
Applicant Type	Community Interest Company
Main Costs	Equipment to produce own compost and avoid passing costs of produce onto consumers
Delivery of Items	Within 3 days of purchase. Some items presumed soon after order.

Score: 3.5/5

Issues Raised at Technical Check:

Last year of accounts provided was May 20 – May 21; subsequent year would have been expected by time of application. Accounts appeared not so healthy, but evidence the applicant's need of the funding?

LAG Discussion:

- Direct link with cost-of-living queried; this was countered by avoidance of buying in compost at increasing prices, so this cost not being passed onto the consumer, and project addressing cost-of-living crisis for applicant, very real.
- The potential for the pilot study described in application to become national model was noted.
- Economies of scale were questioned for ramp up of pilot project. This was countered with the comment that the application had not mentioned/did not deal with this.

Decision: The project was approved unanimously with the condition that May 21 – May 22 accounts be provided.

Summary – Projects Approved		
Project	Organisation	Approved Grant
Remote Access to Wellbeing Services for People Affected by Cancer	Ayrshire Cancer Support	£5,479.00
Catrine AMBI Warm Space	Catrine Community Trust	£5,331.58
Carrick Remade	CRAG Community Arts	£5,333.45
Warm Hub - Netherthird	Netherthird Initiative for Community Empowerment (NICE)	£8,275.68
Old Pinwherry School Cozy Space	Pinwherry/Pinmore Community Development Trust (PPCDT)	£6,710.56
Garnock Valley Energy	Radio City Association	£7,361.37
Local Compost	Woodside Arran CIC	£8,963.71
TOTAL		£47,455.35
BUDGET		£57,535.51

<p>Governance – Constitution</p> <p>As discussed, AL conveyed she and JW were meeting to consolidate the amends to the constitution and this, along with the proposed Memorandum of Understanding, would be forwarded to the LAG before the 17th Feb 23 Strategy/Governance Workshop for discussion/approval. KB reported he also had amends to the constitution which he would forward to JW/AL.</p>	
<p>23/34:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revenue Funding <p>JW covered this item. He reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The allocation figure received by SG was the same as 22/23, £533,604. It was unclear if Inspiring Scotland/other would receive a portion for distribution or if it would all come to ARIA. The funding for 23/24 would be revenue, no capital. It was unclear what this constituted: guidance from SG was awaited. AL said she would re-contact them. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staffing <p>MN reported funding for staff had been confirmed for 23/24, so a co-ordinator’s post would be created within SAC. The job advert would go out soon concluding with an appointment early March, to start 1st April 23. Support staff eg: a project officer would follow this.</p> <p>MN added that KA would be the new Lead Partner representative from 1st April 23. AL to send key invites to familiarise KA with the role.</p>	<p>AL to recontact SG for clarity on 23/24 allocation and guidance on revenue funding.</p> <p>AL to send key invites to KA to familiarise with Lead Partner role.</p>
<p>AOCB & Next Meeting</p> <p>Projects Update</p> <p>AL gave a brief projects update and confirmed on JW’s request that this and a budget update would become a standing agenda item. She revisited updates previously communicated by email:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carrick Rugby FC & Visit Arran change requests Crossroads fantastic delivery for their community as reported in their January 23 monitoring report Little Peru Ayrshire Post article, contributed to/passed on by SS promoting the business <p>She additionally reported that Little Peru and Jack’s Alt Stays had now completed and were pending monitoring visits. She/KB has visits scheduled for WC 27th Feb 23 which would be circulated to the LAG once the capital project visits had been scheduled.</p>	<p>AL to circulate dates of monitoring visits once established.</p>

Date of Next Meeting	
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Set as AM of 22nd March 2023.

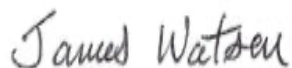
Actions

Continued

- AL to pursue LAG Advisor representation for new priority themes, disability groups and groups from areas of deprivation from autumn 22. **Continued. Procurement for LAG refresh work had not been undertaken but AL said this would be actioned in quarter 1 of 23/24 when the new ARIA strategy was complete. She reported the LAG was expanding naturally and explained further under LAG Member Changes.**
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- LP representative's non-voting role on LAG to be made clear in constitution/MoU. **Continued.**
- AL to make changes to final fund documents and circulate to the LAG. **Completed.**

New

- AL to seek information on potential LAG Member Alistair Henry's affiliation with Ayrshire orgs and feed back.
- AL to inform all projects of decision and where relevant, conditions.
- AL to recontact SG for clarity on 23/24 allocation and guidance on revenue funding.
- AL to send key invites to KA to familiarise with Lead Partner role.
- AL to circulate dates of monitoring visits once established.



Jim Watson
ARIA LAG Chair

22nd Mar 23