



Heart of Wessex Executive Committee Meeting

Wednesday 23rd March 2016

Minutes

SSDC Offices, Churchfields, Wincanton, Somerset BA9 9AG

Present: Andy Fussell, Jeremy Gaunt, Mike Lewis, Michael Mounde (Chair), John Parham, Jenny Pitcher (advisor), Sue Place, Lizzy Ralph, Dan Templar, Susan Jonas, Andrea Witcombe and Martin Woods (advisor).

In attendance: Sarah Dyke-Bracher – Programme Manager
Emma Curtis – Programme Officer
Ali Morgan – Wiltshire Council

1. **Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman:** Sarah Dyke-Bracher (SDB) took the opportunity to thank those members of the Executive Committee who had assisted during the transition phase from the Sowing SEEDS programme to the Heart of Wessex programme by acting as a member of the Interim Executive Committee. SDB confirmed that currently only Michael Mounde (MM) and Dan Templar (DT) had elected themselves for the roles of Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively, and asked if anyone else present wished to nominate themselves. With no further members wishing to stand for election, SDB asked for a show of hands in electing MM and DT as Chairman and Vice-Chairman. All voted in favour of electing MM as Chairman and DT as Vice-Chairman, therefore as Chairman, MM commenced chairing the meeting.
2. **Welcome and Introductions:** MM welcomed all new members of the Executive Committee. As the Committee had been newly elected and there had been some changes, MM requested that everyone introduce themselves.
 - 2a. **Apologies:** Jean Boulton, Anne Carney, Simon Cullum, Helen Rutter, Alan Titcombe and Peter Wheelhouse
 - 2b. **Declarations of Interest:** No Declarations of Interest were received.
 - 2c. **Minutes of the previous meeting:** Were approved and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.
- 2d. **Matters Arising:** None.
3. **Update from RPA/Defra:** As Alan Titcombe was absent, no update was received.

Susan Jonas joined the meeting as this point.

4. **Update from the Accountable Body:** On behalf of Wiltshire Council (WC), the Accountable Body (AB), Ali Morgan (AM) gave an update detailing that the agreement between Defra and Wiltshire Council had now been signed and that the recent Heart of Wessex (HoW) RCA claim 2 had been approved by WC. AM gave information on funding issues and stated that it was an RPA

requirement that other funding sources were investigated prior to applying to LEADER. AM confirmed that a list was being compiled of 10 other funding sources and although not yet complete the document would show the complexity of funding issues. AM confirmed she was a representative at the LEADER Exchange Group in February and referred all present to the notes of the meeting she had circulated. AM confirmed that along with Alan Truscott, she was a member of the Working Group to try to develop a simpler application process for smaller grants. AM gave a brief update on EAFRD stating that although it was hoped the first Call for Applications would be in September 2016 that further detail on the programme would be available after 11th April 2016. Martin Woods (MW) asked AM if there was a risk of the EAFRD and LEADER programmes overlapping to which AM replied that an applicant could apply to both programmes depending on dual funding checks but that LEADER would usually look at smaller funding requests. Jenny Pitcher (JP) asked AM if applicants were checked for other public funding sources and AM confirmed that thorough checks were undertaken and that other funding has to be indicated on application forms.

5. **Programme Update:** SDB gave her report using and expanding on the speaking notes at Annex A attached. Members noted the report. AM recommended that the LAG should wait until after the appraisal training on 30th March to see whether the volunteers were content to go ahead with voluntary appraisals. If they were not content, or if the post-appraisal QCs were unsatisfactory, the LAG would need to consider paying independent appraisers to carry out the full appraisal process.
6. **Annual Delivery Plan and Attestation Report:** SDB referred all to the draft Annual Delivery Plan and the Delivery plan financial tables which had been circulated prior to the meeting. SDB explained that the Annual Delivery Plan needed to be approved by the Executive Committee before being submitted to the RPA and requested all members review and comment on the draft copy and pass any comments to the Programme Management Team by Friday 1st April 2016. SDB asked members to particularly note the changes with the spend profile in the Delivery Plan Tables. The 2015 spend profile had forecast 17% of the project budget to be spent during 2016/17, however, due to the significant delays to the start of the programme and the increased scrutiny on compliance, project applications were taking much longer to work up than expected. SDB therefore proposed that the spend profile be reduced to 8% over the same period. SDB had discussed this with other LAG managers and that this was a realistic projection, in line with other LAGs. Spend profiles for the remaining years have been amended to 31%, 31% and 30%, which does put pressure on the Programme Delivery Team in the final year of the programme, however, it is hoped that as the Programme settles in and if the RPA can support the delivery of the programme, with a more streamlined approach, efficiencies will be seen. SDB also asked members to note that no changes had been made to the programme outputs at in this Delivery Plan, but possible changes may be required for the 2017 Delivery Plan. SDB then asked members to give consent to MM to sign the Delivery Plan once all comments had been received after the 1st April. This was authorised by all.
7. **Programme Running Costs & Animation (RCA):** SDB referred everyone to the RCA spreadsheets which had been circulated. SDB confirmed that the second claim of the programme had been submitted in January 2016 and had been approved and paid in full. AM commented that the claims submitted had been good quality with little issues. SDB mentioned that it was approaching the end of the current quarter so the next claim would soon be submitted.
8. **Project enquiries and progress:** SDB presented a spreadsheet detailing statistics on the current number of project enquiries, outline applications and those passed through to the full application stage.
9. **Items requested by members:** None
10. **Any Other Business:** None
11. **Date of the next meeting:** Wednesday 25th May 2016 at 6.30pm, Churchfields, Wincanton, BA9 9AG

There being no further business the Chairman thanked SSDC for the use of the meeting room. He then closed the meeting at 19:45

Approved as a correct record:

Signed:

Date:

LAG Executive Chairman



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