



## Heart of Wessex Interim Executive Committee Meeting

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2015

### Minutes

**SSDC Offices, Churchfields, Wincanton, Somerset BA9 9AG.**

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#### 1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting extending a warm welcome to Jenny Pitcher, Senior Economic Development Manager at Mendip District Council as she was attending her first meeting. JP stated that her colleague John Parham was also due to attend but that he may have been held up and if so, she would report back to him. All members of the Committee then introduced themselves for the benefit of JP.

MM explained for those not present at the recent LAG Forum that elections had taken place for the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the LAG Forum and that Lizzy Ralph and Jeremy Gaunt had been duly elected to stand as Chair and Vice Chair. In their absence, MM extended his congratulations to both. SDB expressed the importance of all Executive Committee Members attending as many LAG Forum's as possible.

**Present:** Michael Mounde (Chair), John Holman, Simon Cullum, Mark Helyar, Susan Jonas, Jenny Pitcher, Helen Rutter, Dan Templar and Peter Wheelhouse

**In attendance:** Sarah Dyke-Bracher – Programme Manager  
Emma Curtis – Programme Officer

**1a. Apologies:** Jean Boulton, Anne Carney, Jaki Farrell, Sue Place, Lizzy Ralph, Vicki Templar, Alan Titcombe, Caroline Wheatley-Hubbard and Martin Woods

**1b. Declarations of Interest:** No Declarations of Interest were received. However, SDB distributed a copy of the Declarations of Interest Form to those members who had yet to sign it. All members were reminded they needed to sign and return the form before they could vote on any projects or their vote would not be valid. SDB also shared a copy of the Register of Interests Form which any person declaring an interest at a meeting would need to sign.

**1c. Minutes of the last meeting:** Were approved and signed as a correct record of the meeting.

**1d. Matters Arising:** None



2. **Update from the RPA/Defra:** MM commented that he was disappointed that AT from the RPA was not present at the meeting but that he had spoken with AT who had confirmed he was happy and impressed at the way the LAG Forum was conducted the previous week. No further update was received.
3. **Update from the Accountable Body:** AM from the Accountable Body stated she did not have an update but confirmed that the programme was moving forward nicely. AM gave details about a new webpage on the Wiltshire Council website giving details on rural funding and that she would forward the link in an email for it to be shared. AM asked if there were any questions she could answer. No questions were asked however MM commented that at the next LAG Forum in March AM would be giving a presentation on Swindon & Wiltshire LEPs Growth Funding. HR suggested that a representative from the Heart of the South West LEP could give a similar presentation at a future meeting. SDB confirmed that this would be arranged for a future meeting held in Somerset.
4. **Programme Update:** SDB gave her report. See Appendix 1.

John Holman arrived at this point.

#### 5. **Running Costs and Administration**

SDB presented a spreadsheet detailing the profiled costs for the next two years of the programme. SDB confirmed that the RCA claim covering the period of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015 had been processed by the Accountable Body and paid to the Managing Agent and that the claim for 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015 had recently been submitted to the AB. AM gave a brief description of how the claims are managed and dealt with at Wiltshire Council. The spreadsheet showed that at present the programme was running under profiled budget. HR asked for clarification on the 18% of RCA costs over the programme. SDB confirmed that 18% of the total programme allocation could be spent on RCA and the RPA required LAGs to profile this 18% spend across the whole programme up to 2020. RCA spend was not linked to the amount of project spend during a specific period. No further questions were asked but a discussion took place about how complex the LEADER process appeared to be. The amount of work and time put in to applying for LEADER funding could be disproportionate to the amount of grant requested. It was noted that there may be easier ways for projects to be funded. JP suggested that the struggle in applying for LEADER grants may effect Economic Development in LEP areas and that it may be an idea for LAGs to work together and voice their concerns and frustrations at a LEP level. SDB commented she would also speak to other Programme Managers.

#### 6. **Project Enquiries**

SDB presented a spreadsheet showing the latest project pipeline which showed that currently there were 57 projects which may be eligible for funding. SDB explained the different types of project on the spreadsheet included those at the enquiry stage, those at the Outline Application stage and those at the endorsed stage. SDB commented that the endorsed projects were those which had presented at the LAG Forum and had now been invited to go forward to the Full Application stage, of which there were currently two. DT asked what the upper limit for funding was. SDB replied the funding amounts could potentially range from £5,000 to £100,000, usually at a maximum of 40% grant intervention rate and stressed the importance of all Executive Committee Members reading the Applicant Handbook and programme documentation so that they are aware of the funding criteria.

#### 7. **Items requested by members:** None

#### 8. **Any other business:** None

#### 9. **Date of the next meeting:** The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2016 at 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 19:40hrs

Approved as a correct record:

Signed:

Date:

Interim LAG Executive Chairman

